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THE

WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

PRINTED BY JULES DIDOT, SENIOR,
PRINTER TO HIS MAJESTY, RUE DU PONT DE LODI, N°. 6.

Stewart ac Pinxt. J.T. Wedgwood sculpt.

LORD BYRON.

THE

WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON

INCLUDING

The Suppressed Poems.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

PARIS

PUBLISHED BY A. AND W. GALIGNANI,

N° 18, RUE VIVIENNE.

1826.

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Contents.

	Page.
HOURS OF IDLENESS.	
On leaving Newstead Abbey	1
Epitaph on a Friend	*ib.*
A Fragment	2
The Tear	*ib.*
An Occasional Prologue	*ib.*
On the Death of Mr Fox	3
Stanzas to a Lady	*ib.*
To M***	*ib.*
To Woman	4
To M. S. G.	*ib.*
Song	*ib.*
To ***	*ib.*
To Mary	5
Damætas	*ib.*
To Marion	*ib.*
Oscar of Alva	6
To the Duke of D.	8
TRANSLATIONS AND IMITATIONS.	
Adrian's Address to his Soul, when dying	10
Translation	*ib.*
Translation from Catullus	*ib.*
Translation of the Epitaph on Virgil and Tibullus	*ib.*
Translation from Catullus	*ib.*
Imitated from Catullus	*ib.*
Translation from Anacreon	*ib.*
Ode III	11
The Episode of Nisus and Euryalus	*ib.*
Translation from the Medea of Euripides	14
FUGITIVE PIECES.	
Thoughts suggested by a College Examination	15
To the Earl of ***	16
Granta, a Medley	17
Lachin y Gair	18
To Romance	*ib.*
Elegy on Newstead Abbey	19
To E. N. L., Esq.	20
To——	21
Stanzas	*ib.*
Lines written beneath an Elm in the Churchyard of Harrow on the Hill	22
The Death of Calmar and Orla	*ib.*
CRITIQUE extracted from the Edinburgh Review, No. 22, for January 1808	24
ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS	26
Postscript	37
CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE	38
Notes	85
THE GIAOUR.	132
Notes	143
THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS	146
Notes	156
THE CORSAIR	160
Notes	175
LARA	177
Notes	188
THE CURSE OF MINERVA	189
Notes	191
THE SIEGE OF CORINTH	192
Notes	201
PARISINA	202
Notes	207
THE PRISONER OF CHILLON	208
Notes	211
BEPPO	213
Notes	220
MAZEPPA	221
MANFRED	228
Notes	241
MARINO FALIERO	242
Notes	280
Appendix	281
SARDANAPALUS	290
Notes	326
THE TWO FOSCARI	327
Appendix	354
CAIN	361
WERNER	384
THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED	427
HEAVEN AND EARTH	445
THE PROPHECY OF DANTE	457
Notes	463
THE ISLAND	464
Appendix	476
THE AGE OF BRONZE	480
THE VISION OF JUDGMENT	487
MORGANTE MAGGIORE	495
WALTZ	502
Notes	505
THE LAMENT OF TASSO	506
HEBREW MELODIES	
She walks in beauty	508
The harp the monarch Minstrel swept	509
If that high world	*ib.*
The wild gazelle	*ib.*
Oh! weep for those	*ib.*
On Jordan's banks	*ib.*
Jephtha's daughter	*ib.*
Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom	510
My soul is dark	*ib.*
I saw thee weep	*ib.*
Thy days are done	*ib.*
Song of Saul before his last battle	*ib.*
Saul	*ib.*
"All is vanity, saith the preacher"	511

CONTENTS.

Page.

When coldness wraps this suffering clay 511
Vision of Belshazzar . . . . . ib.
Sun of the sleepless . . . . . ib.
Were my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be 512
Herod's lament for Mariamne . . . ib.
On the day of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus . . . . . ib.
By the rivers of Babylon we sat down and wept . . . . . ib.
The destruction of Sennacherib . . . ib.
From Job 513

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

Ode to Napoleon Buonaparte . . . 513
Monody on the death of the Right Hon. R. B. Sheridan 514
The Irish Avatar 515
The Dream 516
Ode 518
Lines written in an Album 519
Romance muy doloroso del sitio y toma de Alhama 520
A very mournful ballad on the siege and conquest of Alhama . . . . . ib.
Sonetto di Vittorelli 522
Stanzas . . . . . ib.
Translation from Vittorelli . . . . ib.
Stanzas . . . . . ib.
To *** 523
Lines written at Athens . . . . . ib.
—— written beneath a picture . . . ib.
—— written after swimming from Sestos to Abydos 524
Ζώη μοῦ σὰς ἀγαπῶ . . . . . ib.
Translation of a Greek war song . . ib.
Translation of a Romaic song . . . 525
On parting . . . . . ib.
To Thyrza . . . . . ib.
Stanzas 526
To Thyrza . . . . . ib.
Euthanasia . . . . . ib.
Stanzas 527
—— . . . . . ib.
On a cornelian heart which was broken . 528
To a youthful friend . . . . . ib.
To **** 529
From the Portuguese . . . . . ib.
Impromptu, in reply to a friend . . . ib.
Address, spoken at the opening of Drury-lane Theatre . . . . . ib.
To Time 530
Translation of a Romaic Love Song . . ib.
A song 531
On being asked what was the «origin of love» . . . . . ib.
Remember him, etc. . . . . ib.
Lines inscribed upon a cup formed from a skull . . . . . ib.
On the death of Sir Peter Parker, Bart. . 532

Page.

To a Lady weeping 532
From the Turkish . . . . . ib.
Sonnet . . . . . ib.
—— . . . . . ib.
Inscription on the monument of a Newfoundland dog . . . . . ib.
Farewell 533
Bright be the place of thy soul . . . ib.
When we two parted . . . . . ib.
Stanzas for music . . . . . ib.
—— 534
Fare thee well . . . . . ib.
To *** . . . . . ib.
Ode (from the French) 535
From the French 536
On the Star of the Legion of Honour . ib.
Napoleon's Farewell 537
Sonnet . . . . . ib.
Written on a blank leaf of The Pleasures of Memory . . . . . ib.
Stanzas to *** . . . . . ib.
Darkness 538
Churchill's grave . . . . . ib.
Prometheus 539
Ode . . . . . ib.
Windsor Poetics 540
A sketch from private life . . . . . ib.
Carmina Byronis in C. Elgin 541
Lines to Mr Moore . . . . . ib.
On this day I complete my thirty-sixth year ib.

LETTER TO *** ***** ON BOWLES' STRICTURES ON POPE 542

A FRAGMENT 552

PARLIAMENTARY SPEECHES 553

DON JUAN 561
Notes 704

POEMS, ATTRIBUTED TO LORD BYRON . 711
Childish Recollections . . . . . ib.
Lord Byron to his Lady . . . . . ib.
Ode to the Island of St Helena . . . ib.
To the Lily of France 712
Madame Lavalette . . . . . ib.
Adieu to Malta . . . . . ib.
Enigma 713
The Triumph of the Whale . . . . ib.
To Jessy . . . . . ib.
To my Daughter 714
To Lady Caroline Lamb 715
The Farewell . . . . . ib.
Lines . . . . . ib.
Verses . . . . . ib.
To a Lady 716
Stanzas . . . . . ib.
Lines found in the Traveller's Book at Chamouni . . . . . ib.
Lines found in Lord Byron's Bible . . . ib.

Sir,

In various numbers of your Journal I have seen mentioned a work entitled "the Vampire" with the addition of my name as that of the Author. — I am not the author and never heard of the work ~~book~~ in question until now. In a mae recent paper I perceive a formal announciation of "the Vampire" with the addition of an account of my "residence in the Island of Mitylene" an Island which I have occasionally sailed by in the course of travelling some years ago through the Levant — and where I should have no objection to reside — but where I have never yet resided. — — Neither of these performances are mine — and I presume that it is neither unjust nor ungracious to request that you will favour me by contradicting the advertisement to which I allude. — If the book is clever it would be base to deprive the real writer — whoever he may be — of his honours; — and if stupid — I desire the responsibility of nobody's dullness but my own. — — — You will excuse

You will oblige me by complying with my request of contradiction — I assure you that I know nothing of the work or works in question — and have the honour to be — (as the commandants of Magazines say) "your constant reader" and very

obed.t

humble Serv.t

Byron

To the Editor of Galignani's Messenger

&c &c &c

Venice. April 27th 1819. — —

the trouble I give you, — the imputation is of no great importance, — and as long as it was confined to surmises and reports — I should have received it as I have received many others, in silence. — But the formality of a public advertisement of a book I never wrote — and a residence where I never resided — is a little too much — particularly as I have no notion of the contents of the one — nor the incidents of the other. — I have besides a personal dislike to "Vampires" and the little acquaintance I have with them would by no means induce me to divulge their secrets. — — You did me a much less injury by stifling your paragraphs about "my devotion" and "abandonment of Society for the Sake of religion" — which appeared in your Messenger during last Lent; — all which are not unfounded on fact — — [illegible] — You see I do not contradict them, — because they are merely personal, whereas the others in some degree concern the reader — — — —

Paris.

A Monsieur

Monsieur Galignani -

18 Rue Vivienne.

Paris.

The Life of Lord Byron.

O'er the harp, from earliest years beloved,
He threw his fingers hurriedly, and tones
Of melancholy beauty died away
Upon its strings of sweetness.

It was reserved for the present age to produce one distinguished example of the Muse having descended upon a bard of a wounded spirit, and lent her lyre to tell afflictions of no ordinary description, afflictions originating probably in that singular combination of feeling with imagination which has been called the poetical temperament, and which has so often saddened the days of those on whom it has been conferred. If ever a man was entitled to lay claim to that character in all its strength and all its weakness, with its unbounded range of enjoyment, and its exquisite sensibility of pleasure and of pain, that man was Lord Byron. Nor does it require much time or a deep acquaintance with human nature to discover why these extraordinary powers should in so many cases have contributed more to the wretchedness than to the happiness of their possessor.

The « imagination all compact » which the greatest poet who ever lived has assigned as the distinguishing badge of his brethren, is in every case a dangerous gift. It exaggerates, indeed, our expectations, and can often bid its possessor hope, where hope is lost to reason; but the delusive pleasure arising from these visions of imagination resembles that of a child whose notice is attracted by a fragment of glass to which a sun-beam has given momentary splendour. He hastens to the spot with breathless impatience, and finds the object of his curiosity and expectation is equally vulgar and worthless. Such is the man of quick and exalted powers of imagination: his fancy over-estimates the object of his wishes; and pleasure, fame, distinction, are alternately pursued, attained, and despised when in his power. Like the enchanted fruit in the palace of a sorcerer, the objects of his admiration lose their attraction and value as soon as they are grasped by the adventurer's hand, and all that remains is regret for the time lost in the chase, and astonishment at the hallucination under the influence of which it was undertaken. The disproportion between hope and possession which is felt by all men, is thus doubled to those whom nature has endowed with the power of gilding a distant prospect by the rays of imagination.

We think that many points of resemblance may be traced between Byron and Rousseau. Both are distinguished by the most ardent and vivid delineation of intense conception, and by an intense sensibility of passion rather than of affection. Both, too, by this double power, have held a dominion over the sympathy of their readers, far beyond the range of those ordinary feelings which are usually excited by the mere efforts of genius. The impression of this interest still accompanies the perusal of their writings; but there is another interest, of more lasting and far stronger power, which each of them possessed, —which lies in the continual embodying of the individual character, it might almost be said of the very person of the writer. When we speak or think of Rousseau or Byron, we are not conscious of speaking or thinking of an author. We have a vague but impassioned remembrance of men of surpassing genius, eloquence, and power, — of prodigious capacity both of misery and happiness. We feel as if we had transiently met such beings in real life, or had known them in the dim and dark communion of a dream. Each of their works presents, in succession, a fresh idea of themselves; and, while the productions of other great men stand out from them, like something they have created, theirs, on the contrary, are images, pictures, busts of their living selves, —clothed, no doubt, at different times, in different drapery, and prominent from a different back-ground,—but uniformly impressed with the same form, and mien, and lineaments, and not to be mistaken for the representations of any other of the children of men.

But this view of the subject, though universally felt to be a true one, requires perhaps a little explanation. The personal character of which we have spoken, it should be understood, is not altogether that on which the seal of life has been set, —and to which, therefore, moral approval or condemnation is necessarily annexed, as to the language or conduct of actual existence. It is the character, so to speak, which is prior to conduct, and yet open to good and to ill,—the constitution of the being in body and in soul. Each of these illustrious writers has, in this light, filled his works with expressions of his own character, —has unveiled to the world the secrets of his own

being, the mysteries of the framing of man. They have gone down into those depths which every man may sound for himself, though not for another; and they have made disclosures to the world of what they beheld and knew there—disclosures that have commanded and forced a profound and universal sympathy, by proving that all mankind, the troubled and the untroubled, the lofty and the low, the strongest and the frailest, are linked together by the bonds of a common but inscrutable nature.

Thus, each of these wayward and richly-gifted spirits has made himself the object of profound interest to the world, and that too during periods of society when ample food was every where spread abroad for the meditations and passions of men.

Although of widely dissimilar fortunes and birth, a close resemblance in their passions and their genius may be traced too between Byron and Robert Burns. Their careers were short and glorious, and they both perished in the « rich summer of their life and song,» and in all the splendour of a reputation more likely to increase than diminish. One was a peasant, and the other was a peer; but nature is a great leveller, and makes amends for the injuries of fortune by the richness of her benefactions: the genius of Burns raised him to a level with the nobles of the land; by nature, if not by birth, he was the peer of Byron. They both rose by the force of their genius, and both fell by the strength of their passions; one wrote from a love, and the other from a scorn of mankind; and they both sung of the emotions of their own hearts with a vehemence and an originality which few have equalled, and none surely have surpassed.

The versatility of authors who have been able to draw and support characters as different from each other as from their own, has given to their productions the inexpressible charm of variety, and has often secured them from that neglect which in general attends what is technically called mannerism. But it was reserved for Lord Byron (previous to his Don Juan) to present the same character on the public stage again and again, varied only by the exertions of that powerful genius, which, searching the springs of passion and of feeling in their innermost recesses, knew how to combine their operations, so that the interest was eternally varying, and never abated, although the most important person of the drama retained the same lineaments.

« But that noble tree will never more bear fruit or blossom! It has been cut down in its strength, and the past is all that remains to us of Byron. That voice is silent for ever, which, bursting so often on our ear, was often heard with rapturous admiration, sometimes with regret, but always with the deepest interest.»—Yet the impression of his works still remains vivid and strong. The charm which cannot pass away is there,—life breathing in dead words,—the stern grandeur—the intense power and energy—the fresh beauty, the undimmed lustre—the immortal bloom, and verdure, and fragrance of life, all those still are there. But it was not in these alone, it was in that continual impersonation of himself in his writings, by which he was for ever kept brightly before the eyes of men.

It might, at first, seem that his undisguised revelation of feelings and passions, which the becoming pride of human nature, jealous of its own dignity, would in general desire to hold in unviolated silence, could have produced in the public mind only pity, sorrow, or repugnance. But in the case of men of real genius, like Byron, it is otherwise: they are not felt, while we read, as declarations published to the world, but almost as secrets whispered to chosen ears. Who is there that feels for a moment, that the voice which reaches the inmost recesses of his heart is speaking to the careless multitudes around him? Or if we do so remember, the words seem to pass by others like air, and to find their way to the hearts for whom they were intended; kindred and sympathetic spirits, who discern and own that secret language, of which the privacy is not violated, though spoken in hearing of the uninitiated, because it is not understood. A great poet may address the whole world in the language of intensest passion, concerning objects of which rather than speak face to face with any one human being on earth, he would perish in his misery. For it is in solitude that he utters what is to be wafted by all the winds of heaven: there are, during his inspiration, present with him only the shadows of men. He is not daunted, or perplexed, or disturbed, or repelled by real living breathing features. He can updraw just as much of the curtain as he chouses that hangs between his own solitude and the world of life. He there pours his soul out partly to himself alone; partly to the ideal abstractions and impersonated images that float around him at his own conjuration; and partly to human beings like himself, moving in the dark distance of the every-day world. He confesses himself, not before men, but before the spirit of humanity; and he thus fearlessly lays open his heart, assured that nature never prompted unto genius that which will not triumphantly force its wide way into the human heart.

We have admitted that Byron has depicted much of himself in all his heroes; but when we seem to see the poet shadowed out in all those states

of disordered being which his Childe Harolds, Giaours, Conrads, Laras, and Alps, exhibit, we are far from believing that his own mind has gone through those states of disorder, in its own experience of life. We merely conceive of it as having felt within itself the capacity of such disorders, and therefore exhibiting itself before us in possibility. This is not general,—it is rare with great poets. Neither Homer, nor Shakspeare, nor Milton, ever so show themselves in the characters which they portray. Their poetical personages have no references to themselves; but are distinct, independent creatures of their minds, produced in the full freedom of intellectual power. In Byron there does not seem this freedom of power:—there is little appropriation of character to events. Character is first, and all in all. It is dictated, compelled by some force in his own mind necessitating him,—and the events obey. His poems, therefore, excepting Don Juan, are not full and complete narrations of some one definite story, containing within itself a picture of human life. They are merely bold, confused, and turbulent exemplifications of certain sweeping energies and irresistible passions. They are fragments of a poet's dark dream of life. The very personages, vividly as they are pictured, are yet felt to be fictitious, and derive their chief power over us from their supposed mysterious connexion with the poet himself, and, it may be added, with each other. The law of his mind was to embody his peculiar feelings in the forms of other men. In all his heroes we accordingly recognise, though with infinite modifications, the same great characteristics: a high and audacious conception of the power of the mind,—an intense sensibility of passion,—an almost boundless capacity of tumultuous emotion,—a boasting admiration of the grandeur of disordered power, and, above all, a soul-felt, blood-felt delight in beauty;—a beauty, which, in his wild creation, is often scared away from the agitated surface of life by stormier passions, but which, like a bird of calm, is for ever returning, on its soft, silvery wings, ere the black swell has finally subsided into sunshine and peace.

These reflexions naturally precede the sketch we are about to attempt of Lord Byron's literary and private life: indeed they are in a manner forced upon us by his poetry, by the sentiments of weariness of existence and enmity with the world which it so frequently expresses, and by the singular analogy which such sentiments hold with the real incidents of his life.

Lord Byron was descended from an illustrious line of ancestry. From the period of the conquest his family were distinguished, not merely for their extensive manors in Lancashire and other parts of the kingdom, but for their prowess in arms. John de Byron attended Edward the first in several warlike expeditions. Two of the Byrons fell at the battle of Cressy. Another member of the family, Sir John de Byron, rendered good service in Bosworth field, to the Earl of Richmond; and contributed, by his valour, to transfer the crown from the head of Richard the third to that of Henry the seventh. This Sir John was a man of honour, as well as a brave warrior. He was very intimate with his neighbour Sir Gervase Clifton; and, although Byron fought under Henry, and Clifton under Richard, it did not diminish their friendship, but, on the contrary, put it to a severe test. Previous to the battle, the prize of which was a kingdom, they had mutually promised that whichever of them was vanquished, the other should endeavour to prevent the forfeiture of his friend's estate. While Clifton was bravely fighting at the head of his troop, he was struck off his horse, which Byron perceiving, he quitted the ranks and ran to the relief of his friend, whom he shielded, but who died in his arms. Sir John de Byron kept his word; he interceded with the king: the estate was preserved to the Clifton family, and is now in the possession of a descendant of the gallant Sir Gervase.

In the wars between Charles the first and the parliament, the Byrons adhered to the royal cause. Sir Nicholas Byron, the eldest brother and representative of the family, was an eminent loyalist, who, having distinguished himself in the wars of the Low Countries, was appointed governor of Chelsea in 1642. He had two sons, who both died without issue; and his younger brother, Sir John, became their heir. This person was made a knight of the Bath at the coronation of James the first. He had eleven sons, most of whom distinguished themselves for their loyalty and gallantry on the side of Charles the first. Seven of these brothers were engaged at the battle of Marston-moor, of whom four fell in defence of the royal cause. Sir John Byron, one of the survivors, was appointed to many important commands, and on the 26th of October, 1643, was created Lord Byron, with a collateral remainder to his brothers. On the decline of the king's affairs, he was appointed governor to the Duke of York, and, in this office, died without issue, in France, in 1652;—upon which his brother Richard, a celebrated cavalier, became the second Lord Byron. He was governor of Appleby Castle, and distinguished himself at Newark. He died in 1697, aged seventy-four, and was succeeded by his eldest son William, who married Elizabeth, the daughter of John Viscount Chaworth, of

the kingdom of Ireland, by whom he had five sons, all of whom died young except William; whose eldest son, William, was born in 1722, and came to the title in 1736.

William, Lord Byron, passed the early part of his life in the navy. In 1763 he was made master of the stag hounds; and in 1765 was sent to the Tower, and tried before the House of Peers for killing his relation and neighbour, Mr Chaworth, in a duel.—The following details of this fatal event are peculiarly interesting from subsequent circumstances connected with the subject of our sketch.

The old Lord Byron belonged to a club of which Mr Chaworth was also a member. It met at the Star and Garter tavern, Pall Mall, once a month, and was called the Nottinghamshire Club. On the 29th January, 1765, they met at four o'clock to dinner as usual, and every thing went agreeably on, until about seven o'clock, when a dispute arose betwixt Lord Byron and Mr Chaworth concerning the quantity of game on their estates. The dispute rose to a high pitch, and Mr Chaworth, having paid his share of the bill, retired. Lord Byron followed him out of the room in which they had dined, and, stopping him on the landing of the stairs, called to the waiter to show them into an empty room. They were shown into one, and a single candle being placed on the table,—in a few minutes the bell was rung, and Mr Chaworth found mortally wounded. He said that Lord Byron and he entered the room together, Lord Byron leading the way; that his lordship, in walking forward, said something relative to the former dispute, on which he proposed fastening the door; that on turning himself round from this act, he perceived his lordship with his sword half drawn, or nearly so: on which, knowing his man, he instantly drew his own, and made a thrust at him, which he thought had wounded or killed him; that then, perceiving his lordship shorten his sword to return the thrust, he thought to have parried it with his left hand; that he felt the sword enter his body and go deep through his back; that he struggled, and being the stronger man, disarmed his lordship, and expressed a concern, as under the apprehension of having mortally wounded him; that Lord Byron replied by saying something to the like effect, adding at the same time, that he hoped «he would now allow him to be as brave a man as any in the kingdom.»

For this offence he was unanimously convicted of manslaughter, but, on being brought up for judgment, pleaded his privilege as a peer, and was, in consequence, discharged. After this affair he was abandoned by his relations, and retired to Newstead Abbey; where, though he lived in a state of perfect exile from persons of his own rank, his unhappy temper found abundant exercise in continual war with his neighbours and tenants, and sufficient punishment in their hatred. One of his amusements was feeding crickets, which were his only companions. He had made them so tame as to crawl over him; and used to whip them with a wisp of straw, if too familiar. In this forlorn condition he lingered out a long life, doing all in his power to ruin the paternal mansion for that other branch of the family to which he was aware it must pass at his death, all his own children having descended before him to the grave.

John, the next brother to William, and born in the year after him, that is in 1723, was of a very different disposition, although his career in life was almost an unbroken scene of misfortunes. The hardships he endured while accompanying Commodore Anson in his expedition to the South Seas are well known, from his own highly popular and affecting narrative. His only son, born in 1751, who received an excellent education, and whose father procured for him a commission in the guards, was so dissipated that he was known by the name of «mad Jack Byron.» He was one of the handsomest men of his time; but his character was so notorious that his father was obliged to desert him, and his company was shunned by the better part of society. In his twenty-seventh year he seduced the Marchioness of Carmarthen; who had been but a few years married to a husband with whom she had lived in the most happy state, until she formed this unfortunate connexion. After one fruitless attempt at reclaiming his lady, the marquis obtained a divorce; and a marriage was brought about between her and her seducer; which, after the most brutal conduct on his part, and the greatest misery and keenest remorse on hers, was dissolved in two years by her sinking to the grave, the victim of a broken heart. About three years subsequent, Captain Byron sought to recruit his fortunes by matrimony, and having made a conquest of Miss Catherine Gordon, an Aberdeenshire heiress, (lineally descended from the Earl of Huntley and the Princess Jane, daughter of James II. of Scotland) he united himself to her, ran through her property in a few years, and, leaving her and her only child, the subject of this memoir, in a destitute and defenceless state, fled to France to avoid his creditors, and died at Valenciennes, in 1791.

In Captain Medwin's «Conversations of Lord Byron,» the following expressions are said to have fallen from his lordship on the subject of his unworthy father:—

«I lost my father when I was only six years of age. My mother, when she was in a rage

with me (and I gave her cause enough), used to say, 'Ah! you little dog, you are a Byron all over; you are as bad as your father!' It was very different from Mrs Malaprop's saying, 'Ah! good dear Mr Malaprop! I never loved him till he was dead.' But, in fact, my father was, in his youth, any thing but a 'Cælebs in search of a wife.' He would have made a bad hero for Hannah More. He ran out three fortunes, and married or ran away with three women; and once wanted a guinea, that he wrote for: I have the note. He seemed born for his own ruin, and that of the other sex. He began by seducing Lady Carmarthen, and spent for her four thousand pounds a-year; and, not content with one adventure of this kind, afterwards eloped with Miss Gordon. This marriage was not destined to be a very fortunate one either, and I don't wonder at her differing from Sheridan's widow in the play; they certainly could not have claimed 'the flitch.'»

George Byron Gordon (for so he was called on account of the neglect his father's family had shown to his mother) was born at Dover, on the 22d of January, 1788. On the unnatural desertion of his father, the entire care of his infant years devolved upon his mother, who retired to Aberdeen, where she lived in almost perfect seclusion, on the ruins of her fortune. Her undivided affection was naturally concentred in her son, who was her darling; and when he only went out for an ordinary walk, she would entreat him, with the tear glistening in her eye, to take care of himself, as «she had nothing on earth but him to live for;» a conduct not at all pleasing to his adventurous spirit; the more especially, as some of his companions, who witnessed the affectionate scene, would laugh and ridicule him about it. This excessive maternal indulgence, and the absence of that salutary discipline and control, so necessary to childhood, doubtless contributed to the formation of the less pleasing features of Lord Byron's character. It must, however, be remembered, in Mrs Byron's extenuation, not only that the circumstances in which she had been left with her son were of a very peculiar nature, but also that a slight malformation of one of his feet, and great weakness of constitution, naturally solicited for him in the heart of a mother a more than ordinary portion of tenderness. For these latter reasons he was not sent very early to school, but was allowed to expand his lungs, and brace his limbs, upon the mountains of the neighbourhood. This was evidently the most judicious method for imparting strength to his bodily frame; and the sequel showed that it was far from the worst for giving tone and vigour to his mind. The savage grandeur of nature around him; the feeling that he was upon hills where

«Foreign tyrant never trod,
But Freedom, with her falchion bright,
Swept the stranger from her sight;»

his intercourse with a people whose chief amusements consisted in the recital of heroic tales of other times, feats of strength, and a display of independence, blended with the wild supernatural stories peculiar to remote and thinly-peopled districts;—all these were calculated to foster that poetical feeling innate in his character.

When George was seven years of age, his mother sent him to the grammar-school at Aberdeen, where he remained till his removal to Harrow, with the exception of some intervals of absence, which were deemed requisite for the establishment of his health. His progress beyond that of the general run of his class-fellows was never so remarkable as after those occasional intervals, when, in a few days, he would master exercises which, in the school routine, it had required weeks to accomplish. But when he had overtaken the rest of the class he always relaxed his exertions, and, contenting himself with being considered a tolerable scholar, never made any extraordinary effort to place himself at the head of the highest form. It was out of school that he aspired to be the leader of every thing; in all boyish games and amusements he would be first if possible. For this he was eminently calculated; quick, enterprising, and daring, the energy of his mind enabled him to overcome the impediments which nature had thrown in his way. Even at that early period (from eight to ten years of age), all his sports were of a manly character; fishing, shooting, swimming, and managing a horse, or steering and trimming the sails of a boat, constituted his chief delights, and, to the superficial observer, seemed his sole occupations.

He was exceedingly brave, and in the juvenile wars of the school, he generally gained the victory; upon one occasion a boy pursued by another took refuge in Mrs Byron's house: the latter, who had been much abused by the former, proceeded to take vengeance on him even on the landing-place of the drawing-room stairs, when George interposed in his defence, declaring that nobody should be ill-used while under his roof and protection. Upon this the aggressor dared him to fight, and, although the former was by much the stronger of the two, the spirit of young Byron was so determined, that after the combat had lasted for nearly two hours, it was suspended because both the boys were entirely exhausted.

A school-fellow of Byron's had a very small Shetland pony which his father had bought him, and one day they went to the banks of the Don to bathe, but having only one pony, they were obliged to follow the good old practice, called in Scotland « ride and tie. » When they came to the bridge over that dark romantic stream, Byron bethought him of the prophecy which he has quoted in Don Juan:

> « Brig of Balgounie, *black* 's your *wa'*;
> Wi' a wife's *ae son* and a mear's *ae foal*,
> Doun ye shall fa'. »

He immediately stopped his companion, who was then riding, and asked him if he remembered the prophecy, saying, that as they were both only sons, and as the pony might be « a mare's ae foal, » he would rather ride over first; because he had only a mother to lament him, should the prophecy be fulfilled by the falling of the bridge, whereas the other had both a father and a mother to grieve for him.

It is the custom of the grammar-school at Aberdeen, that the boys of all the five classes of which it is composed should be assembled for prayers in the public school at eight o'clock in the morning; after prayers a censor calls over the names of all, and those who are absent are punished. The first time that Lord Byron had come to school after his accession to his title, the rector had caused his name to be inserted in the censor's book, Georgius Dominus de Byron, instead of Georgius Byron Gordon as formerly. The boys, unaccustomed to this aristocratic sound, set up a loud and involuntary shout, which had such an effect on his sensitive mind that he burst into tears, and would have fled from the school had he not been restrained by the master.

An answer which Lord Byron made to a fellow scholar, who questioned him as to the cause of the honorary addition of « Dominus de Byron» to his name, served at that time, when he was only ten years of age, to point out that he would be a man who would think, speak, and act for himself; who, whatever might be his sayings or his doings, his vices or his virtues, would not condescend to take them at second hand. This happened on the very day after he had been menaced with being flogged round the school for a fault which he had not committed; and when the question was put to him he replied, « it is not my doing; Fortune was to whip me yesterday for what another did, and she has this day made me a lord for what another has ceased to do. I need not thank her in either case, for I have asked nothing at her hands. »

On the 17th of May, 1798, William, the fifth Lord Byron, departed this life at Newstead. As the son of this eccentric nobleman had died when George was five years old, and as the descent both of the titles and estates was to heirs male, the latter, of course, succeeded his great uncle. Upon this change of fortune Lord Byron, now ten years of age, was removed from the immediate care of his mother, and placed as a ward under the guardianship of the Earl of Carlisle, whose father had married Isabella, the sister of the preceding Lord Byron. In one or two points of character this great aunt resembled the bard: she also wrote beautiful poetry, and after adorning the gay and fashionable world for many years, she left it without any apparent cause and with perfect indifference, and in a great measure secluded herself from society.

The young nobleman's guardian decided that he should receive the usual education given to England's titled sons, and that he should in the first instance be sent to the public school at Harrow. He was accordingly placed there under the tuition of the Rev. Dr Drury, to whom he has testified his gratitude in a note to the fourth canto of Childe Harold, in a manner which does equal honour to the tutor and the pupil. A change of scene and of circumstances so unforeseen and so rapid, would have been hazardous to any boy, but it was doubly so to one of Byron's ardent mind and previous habits. Taken at once from the society of boys in humble life, and placed among youths of his own newly-acquired rank, with means of gratification, which to him must have appeared considerable, it is by no means surprising that he should have been betrayed into every sort of extravagance; none of them appear, however, to have been of a very culpable nature.

« Though he was lame, » says one of his schoolfellows, « he was a great lover of sports, and preferred hockey to Horace, relinquished even Helicon for ' duck-puddle,' and gave up the best poet that ever wrote hard Latin for a game of cricket on the common. He was not remarkable (nor was he ever) for his learning, but he was always a clever, plain-spoken, and undaunted boy. I have seen him fight by the hour like a Trojan, and stand up against the disadvantage of his lameness with all the spirit of an ancient combatant. ' Don't you remember your battle with Pitt?' (a brewer's son) said I to him in a letter (for I had witnessed it), but it seems that he had forgotten it. ' You are mistaken, I think,' said he in reply; ' it must have been with Rice-Pudding Morgan, or Lord Jocelyn, or one of the Douglases, or George Raynsford, or Pryce (with whom I had two conflicts), or with Moses Moore (the *clod*), or with somebody else, and not with Pitt; for with all the above-named and other worthies of the fist had I an

interchange of black eyes and bloody noses, at various and sundry periods; however, it may have happened for all that.'»

The annexed anecdotes are characteristic:

The boys at Harrow had mutinied, and in their wisdom had resolved to set fire to the scene of all their ills and troubles—the school-room: Byron, however, was against the motion, and by pointing out to the young rebels the names of their fathers on the walls, he prevented the intended conflagration. This early specimen of his power over the passions of his school-fellows, his lordship piqued himself not a little upon.

Byron long retained a friendship for several of his Harrow school-fellows; Lord Clare was one of his constant correspondents; Scroope Davies was also one of his chief companions before his lordship went to the continent; this gentleman and Byron once lost all their money at « chicken hazard,» in one of the hells of St. James's, and the next morning Davies sent for Byron's pistols to shoot himself with; Byron sent a note refusing to give them, on the ground that they would be forfeited as a deodand. This comic excuse had the desired effect.

Byron, whilst living at Newstead during the Harrow vacation, saw and became enamoured of Miss Chaworth: she is the Mary of his poetry, and his beautiful « Dream» relates to their loves. Miss Chaworth was older than his Lordship by a few years, was light and volatile, and though, no doubt, highly flattered by his attachment, yet she treated our poet less as an ardent lover than as a younger brother. She was punctual to the assignations which took place at a gate dividing the grounds of the Byrons from the Chaworths, and accepted his letters from the confidants; but her answers, it is said, were written with more of the caution of coquetry than the romance of « love's young dream;» she gave him, however, her picture, but her hand was reserved for another.

It was somewhat remarkable that Lord Byron and Miss Chaworth should both have been under the guardianship of Mr White. This gentleman particularly wished that his wards should be married together; but Miss C., as young ladies generally do in such circumstances, differed from him, and was resolved to please herself in the choice of a husband. The celebrated Mr M., commonly known by the name of Jack M., was at this time quite the rage, and Miss C. was not subtle enough to conceal the *penchant* she had for this jack-a-*dandy;* and though Mr W. took her from one watering-place to another, still the lover, like an evil spirit, followed, and at last, being somehow more persuasive than the « child of song,» he carried off the lady, to the great grief of Lord Byron. The marriage, however, was not a happy one; the parties soon separated, and Mrs M. afterwards proposed an interview with her former lover, which, by the advice of his sister, he declined.

From Harrow Lord Byron was removed, and entered of Trinity College, Cambridge; there, however, he did not mend his manners, nor hold the sages of antiquity in higher esteem than when under the command of his Reverend tutor at Harrow. He was above studying the poetics, and held the rules of the Stagyrite in as little esteem as in after life he did the « invariable principles» of the Rev. Mr Bowles. Reading after the fashion of the studious men of Cam was to him a bore, and he held a senior wrangler in the greatest contempt. Persons of real genius are seldom candidates for college prizes, and Byron left « the silver cup» for those plodding characters who, perhaps, deserve them, as the guerdon of the unceasing labour necessary to overcome the all but invincible natural dulness of their intellects. Byron, instead of reading what pleased tutors, read what pleased himself, and wrote what could not fail to displease those political weathercocks. He did not admire their system of education, and they, as is the case with most scholars, could admire no other. He took to quizzing them, and no one likes to be laughed at; doctors frowned, and fellows fumed, and Byron at the age of nineteen left the university without a degree.

Among other means which he adopted to show his contempt for academical honours, he kept a young bear in his room for some time, which he told all his friends he was training up for a fellowship; but however much the fellows of Trinity may claim acquaintance with the « ursa major,» they were by no means desirous of associating with his lordship's *élève.*

When about nineteen years of age, Lord Byron bade adieu to the university, and took up his residence at Newstead Abbey. Here his pursuits were principally those of amusement. Among others he was extremely fond of the water. In his aquatic exercises he had seldom any other companion than a large Newfoundland dog, to try whose sagacity and fidelity he would sometimes fall out of the boat, as if by accident, when the dog would seize him, and drag him ashore. On losing this dog, in the autumn of 1808, he caused a monument to be erected, with an inscription commemorative of its attachment. (See page 532 of this edition.)

The following descriptions of Newstead's hallowed pile will be found interesting:

This abbey was founded in the year 1170, by

Henry II., as a priory of Black Canons, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary. It continued in the family of the Byrons until the time of the late lord, who sold it first to Mr Claughton for the sum of 140,000*l.*, and on that gentleman's not being able to fulfil the agreement, and thus paying 20,000*l.* of a forfeit, it was afterwards sold to another person, and most of the money vested in trustees for the jointure of the Hon. Mrs Byron. The greater part of the edifice still remains. The present possessor, Major Wildman, is, with a genuine Gothic taste, repairing this beautiful specimen of architecture. The late Lord Byron repaired a considerable part of it; but, forgetting the roof, he had turned his attention to the inside, and the consequence was that, in a few years, the rain paying a visit to the apartments, soon destroyed all those elegant devices which his lordship had contrived. His lordship's own study was a neat little apartment, decorated with some good classic busts, a select collection of books, an antique cross, a sword in a gilt case, and, at the end of the room, two finely polished skulls on a pair of light fancy stands. In the garden, likewise, was a great number of these skulls, taken from the burial-ground of the abbey, and piled up together; but afterwards they were recommitted to the earth. A writer, who visited it soon after Lord Byron had sold it, says: « In one corner of the servants' hall lay a stone coffin, in which were fencing gloves and foils, and on the walls of the ample but cheerless kitchen was painted in large letters ' Waste not,—want not.' During the minority of Lord Byron, the abbey was in the possession of Lord G——, his hounds, and divers colonies of jackdaws, swallows, and starlings. The internal traces of this Goth were swept away; but without, all appeared as rude and unreclaimed as he could have left it. With the exception of the dog's tomb, a conspicuous and elegant object, I do not recollect the slightest trace of culture or improvement. The late lord, a stern and desperate character, who is never mentioned by the neighbouring peasants without a significant shake of the head, might have returned and recognized every thing about him, except, perhaps, an additional crop of weeds. There still slept that old pond, into which he is said to have hurled his lady in one of his fits of fury, whence she was rescued by the gardener, a courageous blade, who was the lord's master, and chastised him for his barbarity. There still, at the end of the garden, in a grove of oak, two towering satyrs, he with his goat and club, and Mrs Satyr with her chubby cloven-footed brat, placed on pedestals at the intersections of the narrow and gloomy pathways, struck for a moment, with their grim visages, and silent shaggy forms, the fear into your bosom which is felt by the neighbouring peasantry at ' th 'oud laird's devils.' I have frequently asked the country people near Newstead, what sort of a man his lordship (our Lord Byron) was. The impression of his eccentric but energetic character was evident in the reply ' He's the devil of a fellow for comical fancies. He flogs the oud laird to nothing; but he 's a hearty goodfellow for all that.'»

Walpole, who had visited Newstead, gives, in his usual bitter, sarcastic manner, the following account of it:

« As I returned I saw Newstead and Althorpe; I like both. The former is the very abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire, the refectory entire, the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it: it has a private chapel quite perfect. The park, which is still charming, has not been so much unprofaned. The present lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks, five thousand pounds worth of which have been cut near the house. *En revanche,* he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for damage done to the navy, and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like ploughboys dressed in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals. The refectory, now the great drawing-room, is full of Byrons: the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor.»

This is a careless but happy description of one of the noblest mansions in England, and it will now be read with a far deeper interest than when it was written. Walpole saw the seat of the Byrons, old, majestic, and venerable; but he saw nothing of that magic beauty which fame sheds over the habitations of genius, and which now mantles every turret of Newstead Abbey. He saw it when decay was doing its work on the cloister, the refectory, and the chapel, and all its honours seemed mouldering into oblivion. He could not know that a voice was soon to go forth from those antique cloisters, that should be heard through all future ages, and cry, 'Sleep no more to all the house.' Whatever may be its future fate, Newstead Abbey must henceforth be a memorable abode. Time may shed its wild flowers on the walls, and let the fox in upon the courtyard and the chambers; it may even pass into the hands of unlettered pride, or plebeian opulence; but it has been the mansion of a mighty poet. Its name is associated to glories that cannot perish, and will go down to posterity in one of the proudest pages of our annals.

Lord Byron showed, even in his earliest years,

that nature had added to the advantages of high descent the richest gifts of genius and of fancy. His own tale is partly told in two lines of Lara:

> «Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,
> Lord of himself, that heritage of woe.»

His first literary adventure and its fate are well remembered. The poems which he published in his minority had, indeed, those faults of conception and diction which are inseparable from juvenile attempts, and in particular might rather be considered as imitative of what had caught the ear and fancy of the youthful author, than as exhibiting originality of conception and expression. It was like the first essay of the singing-bird, catching at and imitating the notes of its parent, ere habit and time have given the fulness of tone, confidence, and self-possession which render assistance unnecessary. Yet though there were many, and those not the worst judges, who discerned in his « Hours of Idleness» a depth of thought and felicity of expression which promised much at a more mature age, the errors did not escape the critical lash of the « Scotch Reviewers,» who could not resist the opportunity of pouncing upon a titled poet, of showing off their own wit, and of seeking to entertain their readers with a flippant article, without much respect to the feelings of the author, or even to the indications of merit which the work displayed. The review was read, and excited mirth; the poems were neglected, the author was irritated, and took his revenge in keen iambics, which, at the same time, proved the injustice of the offending critic and the ripening talents of the bard. Having thus vented his indignation against the reviewers and their readers, and put all the laughter on his side, Lord Byron went abroad, and the controversy was for some years forgotten.

It was at Newstead, just before his coming of age, he had planned his future travels, and his original intention included a much larger portion of the world than that which he afterwards visited. He first thought of Persia, to which idea indeed he for a long time adhered. He afterwards meant to sail for India, and had so far contemplated this project as to write for information from the Arabic professor at Cambridge, and to ask his mother to enquire of a friend who had lived in India, what things would be necessary for his voyage. He formed his plan of travelling upon very different grounds from those which he afterwards advanced. All men should travel at one time or another, he thought, and he had then no connexions to prevent him; when he returned he might enter into political life, for which travelling would not incapacitate him, and he wished to judge of men by experience.

At length, in July, 1809, in company with John Cam Hobhouse, esq. (with whom his acquaintance commenced at Cambridge), Lord Byron embarked at Falmouth for Lisbon, and thence proceeded, by the southern provinces of Spain, to the Mediterranean. The objects that he met with as far as Gibraltar seem to have occupied his mind, to the temporary exclusion of his gloomy and misanthropic thoughts; for a letter which he wrote to his mother from thence contains no indication of them; but, on the contrary, much playful description of the scenes through which he had passed. At Seville, Lord Byron lodged in the house of two single ladies, one of whom, however, was about to be married. Though he remained there only three days, she paid him the most particular attentions, and, at their parting, embraced him with great tenderness, cutting off a lock of his hair, and presenting him with one of her own. With this specimen of Spanish female manners, he proceeded to Cadiz, where various incidents occurred to confirm the opinion he had formed at Seville of the Andalusian belles, and which made him leave Cadiz with regret, and determine to return to it. Lord Byron wrote to his mother from Malta, announcing his safety, and again from Previsa, in November. Upon arriving at Yanina, Lord Byron found that Ali Pacha was with his troops in Illyrium, besieging Ibrahim Pacha in Berat; but the vizier having heard that an English nobleman was in his country, had given orders at Yanina to supply him with every kind of accommodation, free of expense. From Yanina, Lord Byron went to Tepaleen. Here he was lodged in the palace, and the next day introduced to Ali Pacha, who declared that he knew him to be a man of rank from the smallness of his ears, his curling hair, and his white hands, and who sent him a variety of sweetmeats, fruits, and other luxuries. In going in a Turkish ship of war, provided for him by Ali Pacha, from Previsa, intending to sail for Patras, Lord Byron was very near lost in but a moderate gale of wind, from the ignorance of the Turkish officers and sailors, and was driven on the coast of Suli. An instance of disinterested hospitality in the chief of a Suliote village occurred to Lord Byron, in consequence of his disasters in the Turkish galliot. The honest Albanian, after assisting him in his distress, supplying his wants, and lodging him and his suite, refused to receive any remuneration. When Lord Byron pressed him to take money, he said: «I wish you to love me, not to pay me.» At Yanina, on his return, he was introduced to Hussein Bey and Mahmout Pacha, two young children of Ali Pacha. Subsequently, he visited Smyrna, whence he went in the Salsette frigate to Constantinople.

On the 3d of May, 1810, while this frigate was lying at anchor in the Dardanelles, Lord Byron, accompanied by Lieutenant Ekenhead, swam the Hellespont from the European shore to the Asiatic — about two miles wide. The tide of the Dardanelles runs so strong, that it is impossible either to swim or to sail to any given point. Lord Byron went from the castle to Abydos, and landed on the opposite shore, full three miles below his meditated place of approach. He had a boat in attendance all the way; so that no danger could be apprehended even if his strength had failed. His lordship records, in one of his minor poems, that he got the ague by the voyage; but it was well known, that when he landed, he was so much exhausted, that he gladly accepted the offer of a Turkish fisherman, and reposed in his hut for several hours; he was then very ill, and as Lieutenant Ekenhead was compelled to go on board his frigate, he was left alone. The Turk had no idea of the rank or consequence of his inmate, but paid him most marked attention. His wife was his nurse, and, at the end of five days, he left the shore, completely recovered. When he was about to embark, the Turk gave him a large loaf, a cheese, and a skin filled with wine, and then presented him with a few praes (about a penny each), prayed Allah to bless him, and wished him safe home. His lordship made him no return to this, more than saying he felt much obliged. But when he arrived at Abydos, he sent over his man Stefano, to the Turk, with an assortment of fishing-nets, a fowling piece, a brace of pistols, and twelve yards of silk to make gowns for his wife. The poor Turk was astonished, and said, « What a noble return for an act of humanity ! » He then formed the resolution of crossing the Hellespont, and, in *propria personæ*, thanking his lordship. His wife approved of the plan; and he had sailed about half way across, when a sudden squall upset his boat, and the poor Turkish fisherman found a watery grave. Lord Byron was much distressed when he heard of the catastrophe, and, with all that kindness of heart which was natural to him, he sent to the widow fifty dollars, and told her he would ever be her friend. This anecdote, so highly honourable to his lordship's memory, is very little known. Lieutenant Hare, who was on the spot at the time, furnished the particulars, and added, that in the year 1817, Lord Byron, then proceeding to Constantinople, landed at the same spot, and made a handsome present to the widow and her son, who recollected the circumstance, but knew not Lord Byron, his dress and appearance having so altered him.

It was not until after Lord Byron arrived at Constantinople that he decided not to go on to Persia, but to pass the following summer in the Morea. At Constantinople, Mr Hobhouse left him to return to England. On losing his companion, Lord Byron went again, and alone, over much of the old track which he had already visited, and studied the scenery and manners, of Greece especially, with the searching eye of a poet and a painter. His mind appeared occasionally to have some tendency towards a recovery from the morbid state of moral apathy which he had previously evinced, and the gratification which he manifested on observing the superiority, in every respect, of England to other countries, proved that patriotism was far from being extinct in his bosom. The embarrassed state of his affairs, at length, induced him to return home, to endeavour to arrange them; and he arrived in the Volage frigate on the 2d of July, 1811, having been absent exactly two years. His health had not suffered by his travels, although it had been interrupted by two sharp fevers; but he had put himself entirely on a vegetable diet, and drank no wine.

Soon after his arrival, he was summoned to Newstead, in consequence of the serious illness of his mother; but on reaching the abbey, found that she had breathed her last. He suffered much from this loss, and from the disappointment of not seeing her before her death; and while his feelings on the subject were still very acute, he received the intelligence, that a friend, whom he highly esteemed, had been drowned in the Cam. He had, not long before, heard of the death, at Coimbra, of a school-fellow, to whom he was much attached. These three melancholy events, occurring within the space of a month, had, no doubt, a powerful effect on Lord Byron's feelings.

Towards the termination of his « English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, » the noble author had declared, that it was his intention to break off, from that period, his newly-formed connexion with the Muses, and that, should he return in safety from the « Minarets » of Constantinople, the « Maidens » of Georgia, and the « Sublime Snows » of Mount Caucasus, nothing on earth should tempt him to resume the pen. Such resolutions are seldom maintained. In February, 1812, the first two cantos of « Childe Harold's Pilgrimage » (with the manuscript of which he had presented his friend Mr Dallas) made their appearance, producing an effect upon the public equal to that of any work which had been published within this or the last century.

This poem is perhaps the most original in the English language, both in conception and execution. It is no more like Beattie's Minstrel than Paradise Lost — though the former production was in the noble author's mind when first thinking of Childe Harold. A great poet, who gives

himself up free and unconfined to the impulses of his genius, as Byron did in the better part of this singular creation, shows to us a spirit as if sent out from the hands of nature, to range over the earth and the societies of men. Even Shakspeare himself submits to the shackles of history and society. But here Byron has traversed the whole earth, borne along by the whirlwind of his own spirit. Wherever a forest frowned, or a temple glittered—there he was privileged to bend his flight. He suddenly starts up from his solitary dream, by the secret fountain of the desert, and descends at once into the tumult of peopled, or the silence of deserted cities. Whatever actually lived—had perished heretofore—or that had within it a power to kindle passion, became the *materiel* of his all-embracing song. There are no unities of time or place to fetter him—and we fly with him from hill-top to hill-top, and from tower to tower, over all the solitude of nature, and all the magnificence of art. When the past pageants of history seemed too dim and faded, he would turn to the splendid spectacles that have dignified our own days; and the images of kings and conquerors of old gave place to those that were yet living in sovereignty and exile. Indeed much of the power which Byron possessed was derived from this source. He lived in a sort of sympathy with the public mind—sometimes wholly distinct from it—sometimes acting in opposition to it—sometimes blending with it,—but, at all times, in all his thoughts and actions, bearing a reference to the public mind. His spirit needed not to go back into the past,—though it often did so,—to bring the objects of its love back to earth in more beautiful life. The existence he painted was—the present. The objects he presented were marked out to him by men's actual regards. It was his to speak of all those great political events which were objects of such passionate and universal sympathy. But chiefly he spoke our own feelings, exalted in thought, language, and passion. His travels were not, at first, the self-impelled act of a mind severing itself in lonely roaming from all participation in the society to which it belonged, but rather obeying the general notion of the mind of that society.

The indications of a bold, powerful, and original mind which glanced through every line of Childe Harold, electrified the mass of readers, and placed at once upon Lord Byron's head the garland for which other men of genius have toiled long, and which they have gained late. He was placed pre-eminent among the literary men of his country by general acclamation. Those who had so rigorously censured his juvenile essays, and perhaps « dreaded such another field,» were the first to pay warm homage to his matured efforts; while others, who saw in the sentiments of Childe Harold much to regret and to censure, did not withhold their tribute of applause to the depth of thought, the power and force of expression, and the energy of sentiment which animated the «Pilgrimage.» Thus, as all admired the poem, all were prepared to greet the author with that fame which is the poet's best reward. It was amidst such feelings of admiration that Lord Byron fully entered on that public stage where, to the close of his life, he made so distinguished a figure.

Every thing in his manner, person, and conversation tended to maintain the charm which his genius had flung around him; and those admitted to his conversation, far from finding that the inspired poet sunk into ordinary mortality, felt themselves attached to him, not only by many noble qualities, but by the interest of a mysterious, undefined, and almost painful curiosity.

It is well known how wide the doors of society are opened in London to literary merit, even of a degree far inferior to Lord Byron's, and that it is only necessary to be honourably distinguished by the public voice to move as a denizen in the first circles. This passport was not necessary to Lord Byron, who possessed the hereditary claims of birth and rank. But the interest which his genius attached to his presence, and to his conversation, was of a nature far beyond what these hereditary claims could of themselves have conferred, and his reception was enthusiastic beyond any thing imaginable. Lord Byron was not one of those literary men of whom it may be truly said, *minuit præsentia famam*. A countenance, exquisitely modeled to the expression of feeling and passion, and exhibiting the remarkable contrast of very dark hair and eye-brows, with light and expressive eyes, presented to the physiognomist the most interesting subject for the exercise of his art. The predominating expression was that of deep and habitual thought, which gave way to the most rapid play of features when he engaged in interesting discussion; so that a brother poet compared them to the sculpture of a beautiful alabaster vase, only seen to perfection when lighted up from within. The flashes of mirth, gaiety, indignation, or satirical dislike which frequently animated Lord Byron's countenance, might, during an evening's conversation, be mistaken by a stranger for its habitual expression, so easily and so happily was it formed for them all; but those who had an opportunity of studying his features for a length of time, and upon various occasions, both of rest and emotion, knew that their proper language was that of melancholy. Sometimes shades of this gloom interrupted even his gayest and most happy mo-

ments; and the following verses are said to have dropped from his pen to excuse a transient expression of melancholy which overclouded the general gaiety.

> « When from the heart where Sorrow sits,
> Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
> And o'er the changing aspect flits,
> And clouds the brow, or fills the eye—
> Heed not the gloom that soon shall sink,
> My thoughts their dungeon know too well;
> Back to my breast the captives shrink,
> And bleed within their silent cell. »

It was impossible to notice a dejection belonging neither to the rank, the age, nor the success of this young nobleman, without feeling an indefinable curiosity to ascertain whether it had a deeper cause than habit or constitutional temperament. It was obviously of a degree incalculably more serious than that alluded to by Prince Arthur—

> ——— I remember when I was in France,
> Young gentlemen would be as sad as night,
> Only for wantonness———————

But howsoever derived, this, joined to Lord Byron's air of mingling in amusements and sports as if he contemned them, and felt that his sphere was far above the fashionable and frivolous crowd which surrounded him, gave a strong effect of colouring to a character whose tints were otherwise decidedly romantic. Noble and far descended, the pilgrim of distant and savage countries, eminent as a poet among the first whom Britain has produced, and having besides cast around him a mysterious charm arising from the sombre tone of his poetry, and the occasional melancholy of his deportment, Lord Byron occupied the eyes, and interested the feelings of all. The enthusiastic looked on him to admire, the serious with a wish to admonish, and the soft with a desire to console. Even literary envy, a base sensation, from which, perhaps, this age is more free than any other, forgave the man whose splendour dimmed the fame of his competitors. The generosity of Lord Byron's disposition, his readiness to assist merit in distress, and to bring it forward where unknown, deserved and obtained general regard; while his poetical effusions, poured forth with equal force and fertility, showed at once a daring confidence in his own powers, and a determination to maintain, by continued effort, the high place he had attained in British literature.

At one of the fashionable parties where the noble bard was present, His Majesty, then Prince Regent, entered the room : Lord Byron was at some distance at the time, but, on learning who he was, His Royal Highness sent a gentleman to him to desire that he would be presented. Of course the presentation took place; the Regent expressed his admiration of « Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, » and entered into a conversation which so fascinated the poet, that had it not been for an accident which deferred a levee intended to have been held the next day, he would have gone to court. Soon after, however, an unfortunate influence counteracted the effect of royal praise, and Lord Byron permitted himself to write and speak disrespectfully of the prince.

The whole of Byron's political career may be summed up in the following anecdotes:

The Earl of Carlisle having declined to introduce Lord Byron to the House of Peers, he resolved to introduce himself, and accordingly went there a little before the usual hour, when he knew few of the lords would be present. On entering he appeared rather abashed and looked very pale, but passing the woolsack, where the Chancellor (Lord Eldon) was engaged in some of the ordinary routine of the house, he went directly to the table, where the oaths were administered to him in the usual manner. The Lord Chancellor then approached, and offered his hand in the most open familiar manner, congratulating him on his taking possession of his seat. Lord Byron only placed the tips of his fingers in the Chancellor's hand; the latter returned to his seat, and Byron, after lounging a few minutes on one of the opposition benches, retired. To his friend, Mr Dallas, who followed him out, he gave as a reason for not entering into the spirit of the Chancellor, « that it might have been supposed he would join the court party, whereas he intended to have nothing at all to do with politics. »

He only addressed the house three times : the first of his speeches was on the Frame-work Bill; the second in favour of the Catholic claims which gave good hopes of his becoming an orator; and the other related to a petition of Major Cartwright. Byron himself says, the Lords told him « his manner was not dignified enough for them, and would better suit the lower house; » others say, they gathered round him while speaking, listening with the greatest attention—a sign at any rate that he was interesting. He always voted with the opposition, but evinced no likelihood of becoming the blind partisan of either side.

The following is a pleasing instance of the generosity, the delicacy, and the unwounding benevolence of Byron's nature :

A young lady of considerable talents, but who had never been able to succeed in turning them to any profitable account, was reduced to great hardships through the misfortunes of her family. The only persons from whom she could have hoped for relief were abroad, and so urged on, more by the sufferings of those she held dear than by her own, she summoned up resolution to wait on Lord Byron at his apartments in the Albany, and ask his subscription to a volume of poems: she had no previous knowledge of him except from his works, but from the boldness and feeling expressed in them, she concluded that he must be a man of kind heart and amiable disposition. Experience did not disappoint her, and though she entered the apartment with faltering steps and a palpitating heart, she soon found courage to state her request, which she did in the most simple and delicate manner: he heard it with the most marked attention and the keenest sympathy; and when she had ceased speaking, he, as if to avert her thoughts from a subject which could not be but painful to her, began to converse in words so fascinating, and tones so gentle, that she hardly perceived he had been writing, until he put a folded slip of paper into her hand, saying it was his subscription, and that he most heartily wished her success: « but,» added he, « we are both young, and the world is very censorious, and so if I were to take any active part in procuring subscribers to your poems, I fear it would do you harm rather than good.» The young lady, overpowered by the prudence and delicacy of his conduct, took her leave, and upon opening in the street the paper, which in her agitation she had not previously looked at, she found it was a draft upon his banker for fifty pounds!

The enmity that Byron entertained towards the Earl of Carlisle was owing to two causes: the earl had spoken rather irreverently of the « Hours of Idleness,» when Byron expected, as a relation, that he would have countenanced it. He had moreover refused to introduce his kinsman to the House of Lords, even, it is said, somewhat doubting his right to a seat in that honourable house.

The Earl of Carlisle was a great admirer of the classic drama, and once published a sixpenny pamphlet, in which he strenuously argued in behalf of the propriety and necessity of small theatres: on the same day that this weighty publication appeared, he subscribed a thousand pounds for some public purpose. On this occasion Byron composed the following epigram:

« Carlisle subscribes a thousand pound
Out of his rich domains;
And for a sixpence circles round
The produce of his brains:
'T is thus the difference you may hit
Between his fortune and his wit.»

Byron retained his antipathy to this relative to the last. On reading some lines in the newspapers addressed to Lady Holland by the Earl of Carlisle, persuading her to reject the snuff-box bequeathed to her by Napoleon, beginning:

« Lady, reject the gift,» etc.

He immediately wrote the following parody:

« Lady, accept the gift a hero wore,
In spite of all this elegiac stuff:
Let not seven stanzas written by a bore
Prevent your ladyship from taking snuff.»

Sir Lumley Skeffington had written a tragedy, called, if we remember right, « The Mysterious Bride,» which was fairly damned on the first night: a masquerade took place soon after this fatal catastrophe, to which went John Cam Hobhouse as a Spanish nun who had been ravished by the French army, and was under the protection of his lordship. Skeffington, compassionating the unfortunate young woman, asked, in a very sentimental manner, of Byron, « who is she?» « The Mysterious Bride,» replied his lordship.

On Byron's return from his first tour, Mr Dallas called upon him, and, after the usual salutations had passed, enquired if he was prepared with any other work to support the fame which he had already acquired. Byron then delivered for his examination a poem, entitled « Hints from Horace,» being a paraphrase of the art of poetry. Mr Dallas promised to superintend the publication of this piece as he had done that of the satire, and accordingly it was carried to Cawthorn the bookseller, and matters arranged; but Mr Dallas, not thinking the poem likely to increase his lordship's reputation, allowed it to linger in the press. It began thus:

« Who would not laugh if Lawrence, hired to grace
His costly canvas with each flatter'd face,
Abused his art, till Nature with a blush
Saw cits grow centaurs underneath his brush?
Or should some limner join, for show or sale,
A maid of honour to a mermaid's tail;
Or low D*** (as once the world has seen)
Degrade God's creatures in his graphic spleen—
Not all that forced politeness which defends
Fools in their faults, could gag his grinning friends.
Believe me, Moschus, like that picture seems
The book which, sillier than a sick man's dreams,
Displays a crowd of figures incomplete,
Poetic night-mares, without head or feet.»

Mr Dallas expressed his sorrow that his lordship had written nothing else. Byron then told him that he had occasionally composed some verses in Spenser's measure, relative to the countries he

had visited. « They are not worth troubling you with,» said his lordship, « but you shall have them all with you: » he then took « Childe Harold's Pilgrimage» from a trunk, and delivered it to him. Mr Dallas having read the poem, was in raptures with it; he instantly resolved to do his utmost in suppressing the « Hints from Horace,» and to bring out Childe Harold. He urged Byron to publish this last poem; but he was unwilling, and preferred to have the « Hints» published. He would not be convinced of the great merit of the « Childe,» and as some person had seen it before Mr Dallas, and expressed disapprobation, Byron was by no means sure of its kind reception by the world. In a short time afterwards, however, he agreed to its publication, and requested Mr Dallas not to deal with Cawthorn, but offer it to Miller of Albemarle Street : he wished a fashionable publisher; but Miller declined it, chiefly on account of the strictures it contained on Lord Elgin, whose publisher he was. Longman had refused to publish « the Satire,» and Byron would not suffer any of his works to come from that house: the work was therefore carried to Mr Murray, who then kept a shop opposite St Dunstan's church in Fleet Street. Mr Murray had expressed a desire to publish for Lord Byron, and regretted that Mr Dallas had not taken the « English Bards and Scotch Reviewers» to him; but this was after its success.

Byron fell into company with Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, at the Lakes. The Shepherd was standing at the inn door of Ambleside when, forth came a strapping young man from the house, and off with his hat, and out with his hand. Hogg did not know him, and, appearing at a dead halt, the other relieved him by saying, « Mr Hogg, I hope you will excuse me; my name is Byron, and I cannot help thinking that we ought to hold ourselves acquainted.» The poets accordingly shook hands immediately, and, while they continued at the Lakes, were hand and glove, drank furiously together, and laughed at their brother bards. On Byron's leaving the Lakes, he sent Hogg a letter quizzing the Lakists, which the Shepherd was so mischievous as to show to them.

When residing at Mitylene in the year 1812, he portioned eight young girls very liberally, and even danced with them at the marriage feast; he gave a cow to one man, horses to another, and cotton and silk to several girls who lived by weaving these materials: he also bought a new boat for a fisherman who had lost his own in a gale, and he often gave Greek testaments to the poor children.

While at Metaxata, in 1823, an embankment, at which several persons had been engaged digging, fell in, and buried some of them alive: he was at dinner when he heard of the accident, and, starting up from the table, ran to the spot, accompanied by his physician, who took a supply of medicines with him. The labourers who were employed to extricate their companions, soon became alarmed for themselves, and refused to go on, saying, they believed they had dug out all the bodies which had been covered by the ruins. Lord Byron endeavoured to induce them to continue their exertions, but finding menaces in vain, he seized a spade and began to dig most zealously; at length the peasantry joined him, and they succeeded in saving two more persons from certain death.

It is stated in the « Conversations,» that Byron was engaged in several duels,—that in one instance he was himself principal in an « affair of honour » with Hobhouse,—and would have been so in another with Moore, if the Bard of Erin's challenge had been properly forwarded to him.

On the 2d of January, 1815, Lord Byron married, at Seaham, in the county of Durham, Anne Isabella, only daughter of Sir Ralph Millbank (since Noel), Bart. To this lady he had made a proposal twelve months before, but was rejected; well would it have been for their mutual happiness had that rejection been repeated. After their marriage Lord and Lady Byron took a house in London; gave splendid dinner-parties; kept separate carriages; and, in short, launched into every sort of fashionable extravagance. This could not last long; the portion which his lordship had received with Miss Millbank (ten thousand pounds) soon melted away; and, at length, an execution was actually levied on the furniture of his residence. It was then agreed that Lady Byron, who on the 10th of December, 1815, had presented her lord with a daughter, should pay a visit to her father till the storm was blown over, and some arrangements had been made with their creditors. From that visit she never returned, and a separation ensued, for which various reasons have been assigned; the real cause or causes, however, of that regretted event, are up to this moment involved in mystery, though, as might be expected, a wonderful sensation was excited at the time, and every description of contradictory rumour was in active circulation.

Byron was first introduced to Miss Millbank at Lady ——'s. In going up stairs he stumbled, and remarked to Moore, who accompanied him, that it was a bad omen; on entering the room, he perceived a lady more simply dressed than the rest sitting on a sofa. He asked Moore if she was a humble companion to any of the ladies.

The latter replied, « She is a great heiress; you'd better marry her, and repair the old place Newstead.»

The following anecdotes on the subject of this unfortunate marriage are given from Lord Byron's Conversations, in his own words:

« There was something piquant, and what we term pretty, in Miss Millbank; her features were small and feminine, though not regular; she had the fairest skin imaginable; her figure was perfect for her height, and there was a simplicity, a retired modesty about her, which was very characteristic, and formed a happy contrast to the cold artificial formality and studied stiffness which is called fashion: she interested me exceedingly. It is unnecessary to detail the progress of our acquaintance: I became daily more attached to her, and it ended in my making her a proposal that was rejected; her refusal was couched in terms that could not offend me. I was besides persuaded that in declining my offer she was governed by the influence of her mother; and was the more confirmed in this opinion by her reviving our correspondence herself twelve months after. The tenor of her letter was, that although she could not love me, she desired my friendship. Friendship is a dangerous word for young ladies; it is love full-fledged, and waiting for a fine day to fly.

« I was not so young when my father died, but that I perfectly remember him, and had very early a horror of matrimony from the sight of domestic broils; this feeling came over me very strongly at my wedding. Something whispered me that I was sealing my own death-warrant. I am a great believer in presentiments; Socrates' demon was not a fiction; Monk Lewis had his monitor; and Napoleon many warnings. At the last moment I would have retreated if I could have done so; I called to mind a friend of mine, who had married a young, beautiful, and rich girl, and yet was miserable; he had strongly urged me against putting my neck in the same yoke: and to show you how firmly I was resolved to attend to his advice, I betted Hay fifty guineas to one that I should always remain single. Six years afterwards I sent him the money. The day before I proposed to Lady Byron, I had no idea of doing so.

« It had been predicted by Mrs Williams, that twenty-seven was to be a dangerous age for me; the fortune-telling witch was right, it was destined to prove so. I shall never forget the 2d of January! Lady Byron (Byrn, he pronounced it); was the only unconcerned person present, Lady Noel, her mother, cried; I trembled like a leaf, made the wrong responses, and after the ceremony called her Miss Millbank.

« There is a singular history attached to the ring; the very day the match was concluded, a ring of my mother's that had been lost was dug up by the gardener at Newstead. I thought it was sent on purpose for the wedding; but my mother's marriage had not been a fortunate one, and this ring was doomed to be the seal of an unhappier union still.

« After the ordeal was over, we set off for a country seat of Sir Ralph's, and I was surprised at the arrangements for the journey, and somewhat out of humour to find a lady's maid stuck between me and my bride. It was rather too early to assume the husband, so I was forced to submit, but it was not with a very good grace.

« I have been accused of saying, on getting into the carriage, that I had married Lady Byron out of spite, and because she had refused me twice. Though I was for a moment vexed at her prudery, or whatever it may be called, if I had made so uncavalier, not to say brutal, a speech, I am convinced Lady Byron would instantly have left the carriage to me and the maid (I mean the lady's); she had spirit enough to have done so, and would properly have resented the affront.

« Our honey-moon was not all sunshine, it had its clouds; and Hobhouse has some letters which would serve to explain the rise and fall in the barometer; but it was never down at zero.

« A curious thing happened to me shortly after the honey-moon, which was very awkward at the time, but has since amused me much. It so happened that three married women were on a wedding visit to my wife (and in the same room at the same time), whom I had known to be all birds of the same nest. Fancy the scene of confusion that ensued.

« The world says I married Miss Millbank for her fortune, because she was a great heiress. All I have ever received, or am likely to receive (and that has been twice paid back too), was 10,000*l.*; my own income at this period was small and somewhat bespoke. Newstead was a very unprofitable estate, and brought me in a bare 1500*l.* a year; the Lancashire property was hampered with a law-suit, which has cost me 14,000*l.* and is not yet finished.

« I heard afterwards that Mrs Charlment had been the means of poisoning Lady Noel's mind against me; that she had employed herself and others in watching me in London, and had reported having traced me into a house in Portland-Place. There was one act unworthy of any one but such a confidante; I allude to the breaking open my writing-desk: a book was found in it that did not do much credit to my taste in literature, and some letters from a mar-

ried woman with whom I had been intimate before my marriage. The use that was made of the latter was most unjustifiable, whatever may be thought of the breach of confidence that led to their discovery. Lady Byron sent them to the husband of the lady, who had the good sense to take no notice of their contents. The gravest accusation that has been made against me is that of having intrigued with Mrs Mardyn in my own house, introduced her to my own table, etc.; there never was a more unfounded calumny. Being on the Committee of Drury-Lane Theatre, I have no doubt that several actresses called on me; but as to Mrs Mardyn, who was a beautiful woman, and might have been a dangerous visitress, I was scarcely acquainted (to speak) with her. I might even make a more serious charge against —— than employing spies to watch suspected amours. I had been shut up in a dark street in London writing 'The Siege of Corinth,' and had refused myself to every one till it was finished. I was surprised one day by a doctor and a lawyer almost forcing themselves at the same time into my room; I did not know till afterwards the real object of their visit. I thought their questions singular, frivolous, and somewhat importunate, if not impertinent; but what should I have thought if I had known that they were sent to provide proofs of my insanity? I have no doubt that my answers to these emissaries' interrogations were not very rational or consistent, for my imagination was heated by other things; but Dr Baillie could not conscientiously make me out a certificate for Bedlam, and perhaps the lawyer gave a more favourable report to his employers. The doctor said afterwards he had been told that I always looked down when Lady Byron bent her eyes on me, and exhibited other symptoms equally infallible, particularly those that marked the late king's case so strongly. I do not, however, tax Lady Byron with this transaction: probably she was not privy to it; she was the tool of others. Her mother always detested me, she had not even the decency to conceal it in her own house. Dining one day at Sir Ralph's (who was a good sort of man, and of whom you may form some idea, when I tell you that a leg of mutton was always served at his table, that he might cut the same joke upon it), I broke a tooth, and was in great pain, which I could not avoid showing. 'It will do you good,' said Lady Noel; 'I am glad of it!' I gave her a look!

« Lady Byron had good ideas, but could never express them; wrote poetry too, but it was only good by accident; her letters were always enigmatical, often unintelligible. She was easily made the dupe of the designing, for she thought her knowledge of mankind infallible. She had got some foolish idea of Madame de Stael's into her head, that a person may be better known in the first hour than in ten years. She had the habit of drawing people's characters after she had seen them once or twice. She wrote pages on pages about my character, but it was as unlike as possible. She was governed by what she called fixed rules and principles, squared mathematically. She would have made an excellent wrangler at Cambridge. It must be confessed, however, that she gave no proof of her boasted consistency; first she refused me, then she accepted me, then she separated herself from me—so much for consistency. I need not tell you of the obloquy and opprobrium that were cast upon my name when our separation was made public; I once made a list from the journals of the day of the different worthies, ancient and modern, to whom I was compared: I remember a few, Nero, Apicius, Epicurus, Caligula, Heliogabalus, Henry the Eighth, and lastly, the ——. All my former friends, even my cousin George Byron, who had been brought up with me, and whom I loved as a brother, took my wife's part: he followed the stream when it was strongest against me, and can never expect any thing from me; he shall never touch a sixpence of mine. I was looked upon as the worst of husbands, the most abandoned and wicked of men; and my wife as a suffering angel, an incarnation of all the virtues and perfections of the sex. I was abused in the public prints, made the common talk of private companies, hissed as I went to the House of Lords, insulted in the streets, afraid to go to the theatre, whence the unfortunate Mrs Mardyn had been driven with insult. The Examiner was the only paper that dared say a word in my defence, and Lady Jersey the only person in the fashionable world that did not look upon me as a monster."

« In addition to all these mortifications, my affairs were irretrievably involved, and almost so as to make me what they wished. I was compelled to part with Newstead, which I never could have ventured to sell in my mother's lifetime. As it is, I shall never forgive myself for having done so, though I am told that the estate would not now bring half as much as I got for it: this does not at all reconcile me to having parted with the old Abbey. I did not make up my mind to this step but from the last necessity; I had my wife's portion to repay, and was determined to add 10,000*l.* more of my own to it, which I did: I always hated being in debt, and do not owe a guinea. The moment I had put my affairs in train, and in little more than eighteen months after my marriage, I left Eng-

land, an involuntary exile, intending it should be for ever.»

We shall here avail ourselves of some observations by a powerful and elegant critic,[1] whose opinions on the personal character of Lord Byron, as well as on the merits of his poems, are, from their originality, candour, and keen discrimination, of considerable weight.

« The charge against Lord Byron,» says this writer, « is, not that he fell a victim to excessive temptations, and a combination of circumstances, which it required a rare and extraordinary degree of virtue, wisdom, prudence, and steadiness to surmount; but that he abandoned a situation of uncommon advantages, and fell weakly, pusillanimously, and selfishly, when victory would have been easy, and when defeat was ignominious. In reply to this charge, I do not deny that Lord Byron inherited some very desirable, and even enviable privileges in the lot of life which fell to his share. I should falsify my own sentiments if I treated lightly the gift of an ancient English peerage, and a name of honour and venerable antiquity; but without a fortune competent to that rank, it is not ' a bed of roses,' nay, it is attended with many and extreme difficulties, and the difficulties are exactly such as a genius and temper like Lord Byron's were least calculated to meet; at any rate, least calculated to meet under the peculiar collateral circumstances in which he was placed. His income was very narrow; his Newstead property left him a very small disposable surplus; his Lancashire property was, in its condition, etc. unproductive. A profession, such as the army, might have lessened, or almost annihilated the difficulties of his peculiar position; but probably his lameness rendered this impossible. He seems to have had a love of independence, which was noble, and probably even an intractability; but this temper added to his indisposition to bend and adapt himself to his lot. A dull, or supple, or intriguing man, without a single good quality of head or heart, might have managed it much better; he might have made himself subservient to government, and wormed himself into some lucrative place; or he might have lived meanly, conformed himself stupidly or cringingly to all humours, and been borne onward on the wings of society with little personal expense.

« Lord Byron was of another quality and temperament. If the world would not conform to him, still less would he conform to the world. He had all the manly, baronial pride of his ancestors, though he had not all their wealth, and their means of generosity, hospitality, and patronage. He had the will, alas! without the power.

« With this temper, these feelings, this genius, exposed to a combination of such untoward and trying circumstances, it would indeed have been inimitably praise-worthy if Lord Byron could have been always wise, prudent, calm, correct, pure, virtuous, and unassailable: — if he could have shown all the force and splendour of his mighty poetical energies, without any mixture of their clouds, their baneful lightnings, or their storms:—if he could have preserved all his sensibility to every kind and noble passion, yet have remained placid, and unaffected by the attack of any blameable emotion; — that is, it would have been admirable if he had been an angel, and not a man!

« Unhappily, the outrages he received, the gross calumnies which were heaped upon him, even in the time of his highest favour with the public, turned the delights of his very days of triumph to poison, and gave him a sort of moody, fierce, and violent despair, which led to humours, acts, and words, that mutually aggravated the ill will and the offences between him and his assailants. There was a daring spirit in his temper and his talents, which was always inflamed rather than corrected by opposition.»

« In this most unpropitious state of things, every thing that went wrong was attributed to Lord Byron, and, when once attributed, was assumed and argued upon as an undeniable fact. Yet, to my mind, it is quite clear, — quite unattended by a particle of doubt, — that in many things in which he has been the most blamed, he was the absolute victim of misfortune; that unpropitious trains of events (for I do not wish to shift the blame on others) led to explosions and consequent derangements, which no cold prudent pretender to extreme propriety and correctness could have averted or met in a manner less blameable than that in which Lord Byron met it.

« It is not easy to conceive a character less fitted to conciliate general society by his manners and habits than that of Lord Byron. It is probable that he could make his address and conversation pleasing to ladies when he chose to please; but, to the young dandies of fashion, noble and ignoble, he must have been very repulsive: as long as he continued to be the ton,—the lion, —they may have endured him without opening their mouths, because he had a frown and a lash which they were not willing to encounter; but when his back was turned, and they thought it safe, I do not doubt that they burst out into full cry! I have heard complaints of his vanity, his peevishness, his desire to monopolize distinction,

[1] Sir Egerton Brydges, Bart. who has written so diffusely and so ably on Lord Byron's genius and character.

his dislike of all hobbies but his own. It is not improbable that there may have been some foundation for these complaints: I am sorry for it if there was; I regret such littlenesses. And then another part of the story is probably left untold: we hear nothing of the provocations given him; —sly hints, curve of the lip, side looks, treacherous smiles, flings at poetry, shrugs at noble authors, slang jokes, idiotic bets, enigmatical appointments, and boasts of being senseless brutes! We do not hear repeated the jest of the glory of the Jew, that buys the ruined peer's falling castle; the d—d good fellow, that keeps the finest stud and the best hounds in the country out of the snippings and odds and ends of his contract; and the famous good match that the duke's daughter is going to make with Dick Wigly, the son of the rich slave merchant at Liverpool! We do not hear the clever dry jests whispered round the table by Mr——, eldest son of the new and rich Lord——, by young Mr——, only son of Lord—, the ex-lords A., B., and C., sons of the three Irish Union earls, great borough-holders, and the very grave and sarcastic Lord——, who believes that he has the monopoly of all the talents and all the political and legislative knowledge of the kingdom, and that a poet and a bellman are only fit to be yoked together!

« Thus, then, was this illustrious and mighty poet driven into exile! Yes, driven! who would live in a country in which he had been so used, even though it was the land of his nativity, the land of a thousand noble ancestors, the land of freedom, the land where his head had been crowned with laurels,—but where his heart had been tortured, where all his most generous and most noble thoughts had been distorted and rendered ugly, and where his slightest errors and indiscretions had been magnified into hideous crimes.»

Lord Byron's own opinions on the connubial state are thus related by Captain Parry:—

« There are,» said his lordship, « so many undefinable, and nameless, and not-to-be named causes of dislike, aversion, and disgust, in the matrimonial state, that it is always impossible for the public, or the best friends of the parties, to judge between man and wife. Theirs is a relation about which nobody but themselves can form a correct idea, or have any right to speak. As long as neither party commits gross injustice towards the other; as long as neither the woman nor the man is guilty of any offence which is injurious to the community; as long as the husband provides for his offspring, and secures the public against the dangers arising from their neglected education, or from the charge of supporting them; by what right does it censure him for ceasing to dwell under the same roof with a woman, who is to him, because he knows her, while others do not, an object of loathing? Can any thing be more monstrous than for the public voice to compel individuals who dislike each other to continue their cohabitation? This is at least the effect of its interfering with a relationship, of which it has no possible means of judging. It does not indeed drag a man to a woman's bed by physical force; but it does exert a moral force continually and effectively to accomplish the same purpose. Nobody can escape this force but those who are too high, or those who are too low, for public opinion to reach; or those hypocrites who are, before others, the loudest in their approbation of the empty and unmeaning forms of society, that they may securely indulge all their propensities in secret. I have suffered amazingly from this interference; for though I set it at defiance, I was neither too high nor too low to be reached by it, and I was not hypocrite enough to guard myself from its consequences.

« What do they say of my family affairs in England, Parry? My story, I suppose, like other minor events, interested the people for a day, and was then forgotten?» I replied, no; I thought, owing to the very great interest the public took in him, it was still remembered and talked about. I mentioned that it was generally supposed a difference of religious sentiments between him and Lady Byron had caused the public breach. « No, Parry,» was the reply; « Lady Byron has a liberal mind, particularly as to religious opinions; and I wish, when I married her, that I had possessed the same command over myself that I now do. Had I possessed a little more wisdom, and more forbearance, we might have been happy. I wished, when I was first married, to have remained in the country, particularly till my pecuniary embarrassments were over. I knew the society of London; I knew the characters of many of those who are called ladies, with whom Lady Byron would necessarily have to associate, and I dreaded her contact with them. But I have too much of my mother about me to be dictated to: I like freedom from constraint; I hate artificial regulations: my conduct has always been dictated by my own feelings, and Lady Byron was quite the creature of rules. She was not permitted either to ride, or run, or walk, but as the physician prescribed. She was not suffered to go out when I wished to go; and then the old house was a mere ghost-house; I dreamed of ghosts, and thought of them waking. It was an existence I could not support.» Here Lord Byron broke off abruptly, saying, « I hate to speak of my family affairs; though I have been compelled to talk nonsense concerning them to some of my

butterfly visitors, glad on any terms to get rid of their importunities. I long to be again on the mountains. I am fond of solitude, and should never talk nonsense if I always found plain men to talk to.»

In the spring of 1816, Lord Byron quitted England, to return to it no more. He crossed over to France, through which he passed rapidly to Brussels, taking in his way a survey of the field of Waterloo. He then proceeded to Coblentz, and up the Rhine to Basle. He passed the summer on the banks of the Geneva lake. With what enthusiasm he enjoyed, and with what contemplations he dwelt among its scenery, his own poetry soon exhibited to the world. His third canto of Childe Harold, his Manfred, and his Prisoner of Chillon were composed at the *Campagne Diodati*, at Coligny, a mile from Geneva.

These productions evidently proved that the unfortunate events which had induced Lord Byron to become a voluntary exile from his native land, however they might have exacerbated his feelings, had in no measure chilled his poetical fire.

The anecdotes that follow are given as his lordship related them to Captain Medwin:—

« Switzerland is a country I have been satisfied with seeing once; Turkey I could live in for ever. I never forget my predilections. I was in a wretched state of health, and worse spirits, when I was at Geneva; but quiet and the lake, physicians better than Polidori, soon set me up. I never led so moral a life as during my residence in that country; but I gained no credit by it. Where there is a mortification, there ought to be reward. On the contrary, there is no story so absurd that they did not invent at my cost. I was watched by glasses on the opposite side of the lake, and by glasses too that must have had very distorted optics. I was waylaid in my evening drives — I was accused of corrupting all the *grisettes* in the rue Basse. I believe that they looked upon me as a man-monster worse than the *piqueur*.»

« I knew very few of the Genevese. Hentsh was very civil to me; and I have a great respect for Sismondi. I was forced to return the civilities of one of their professors by asking him, and an old gentleman, a friend of Gray's, to dine with me. I had gone out to sail early in the morning, and the wind prevented me from returning in time for dinner. I understand that I offended them mortally. Polidori did the honours.

« Among our countrymen I made no new acquaintances; Shelley, Monk Lewis, and Hobhouse were almost the only English people I saw. No wonder; I showed a distaste for society at that time, and went little among the Genevese; besides, I could not speak French. What is become of my boatman and boat? I suppose she is rotten; she was never worth much. When I went the tour of the lake in her with Shelley and Hobhouse, she was nearly wrecked near the very spot where Saint-Preux and Julia were in danger of being drowned. It would have been classical to have been lost there, but not so agreeable. Shelley was on the lake much oftener than I, at all hours of the night and day: he almost lived on it; his great rage is a boat. We are both building now at Genoa, I a yacht, and he an open boat.»

« Somebody possessed Madame de Stael with an opinion of my immorality. I used occasionally to visit her at Coppet; and once she invited me to a family-dinner, and I found the room full of strangers, who had come to stare at me as at some outlandish beast in a raree-show. One of the ladies fainted, and the rest looked as if his satanic majesty had been among them. Madame de Stael took the liberty to read me a lecture before this crowd, to which I only made her a low bow.»

His lordship's travelling equipage was rather a singular one, and afforded a strange catalogue for the Dogana: seven servants, five carriages, nine horses, a monkey, a bull-dog and mastiff, two cats, three pea-fowls and some hens (I do not know whether I have classed them in order of rank), formed part of his live stock; these, and all his books, consisting of a very large library of modern works (for he bought all the best that came out), together with a vast quantity of furniture, might well be termed, with Cæsar, « impediments.»

From about the commencement of the year 1817 to that of 1820, Lord Byron's principal residence was Venice. Here he continued to employ himself in poetical composition with an energy still increasing. He wrote the Lament of Tasso, the fourth canto of Childe Harold, the dramas of Marino Faliero, and the Two Foscari; Beppo, Mazeppa, and the earlier cantos of Don Juan, etc.

Considering these only with regard to intellectual activity and force, there can be no difference of opinion; though there may be as to their degree of poetical excellence, the class in the scale of literary merit to which they belong, and their moral, religious, and political tendencies. The Lament of Tasso, which in every line abounds in the most perfect poetry, is liable to no countervailing objection on the part of the moralist.

In the third canto of the « Pilgrimage, » the discontented and repining spirit of Harold had already become much softened:

« Joy was not always absent from his face.
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with tranquil grace.»

He is a being of still gentler mould in the fourth canto; his despair has even sometimes assumed a smilingness, and the lovely and lively creations of the poet's brain are less painfully alloyed, and less suddenly checked by the gloomy visions of a morbid imagination. He represented himself, from the beginning, as a ruin; and when we first gazed upon him, we saw indeed in abundance the black traces of recent violence and convulsion. The edifice was not rebuilt; but its hues were softened by the passing wings of Time, and the calm slow ivy had found leisure to wreath the soft green of its melancholy among the fragments of the decay. In so far the pilgrim became wiser, as he seemed to think more of others, and with a greater spirit of humanity. There was something fiendish in the air with which he surveyed the first scene of his wanderings; and no proof of the strength of genius was ever exhibited so strong and unquestionable as the sudden and entire possession of the minds of men by such a being as he then appeared to be. He looked upon a bull-fight and a field of battle with no variety of emotion. Brutes and men were, in his eyes, the same blind, stupid victims of the savage lust of power. He seemed to shut his eyes to every thing of that citizenship and patriotism which ennobles the spirit of the soldier, and to delight in scattering the dust and ashes of his derision over all the most sacred resting-places of the soul of man. Even then, we must allow, the original spirit of the Englishman and the poet broke triumphantly, at times, through the chilling mist in which it had been spontaneously enveloped. In Greece, above all, the contemplation of Actium, Salamis, Marathon, Thermopylæ, and Platæa subdued the prejudices of him who had gazed unmoved, or with disdain, upon fields of more recent glory. The nobility of manhood appeared to delight this moody visitant; and he accorded, without reluctance, to the shades of long departed heroes that reverent homage which, in the strange mixture of envy and scorn wherewith the contemplative so often regard active men, he had refused to the living, or to the newly dead.

But there would be no end of descanting on the character of the Pilgrim, nor of the moral reflections which it awakens; we therefore take leave of Childe Harold in his own beautiful language:

> «Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
> A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
> Ye! who have traced the Pilgrim to the scene
> Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
> A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
> A single recollection, not in vain
> He wore his sandal-shoon and scallop-shell;
> Farewell! * * * * * *
> * * * * * * * *

Alas! we must now say farewell for *ever*.»

Manfred was the first of Lord Byron's dramatic poems, and, we think, the finest. The spirit of his genius seems there wrestling with the spirit of his nature, the struggle being for the palm of sublimity. Manfred has always appeared to us one of the most genuine creations of the noble bard's mind. The melancholy is more heartfelt: the poet does not here seem to scowl his brows, but they drop under the weight of his thoughts; his intellect, too, is strongly at work in it, and the stern haughtiness of the principal character is altogether of an intellectual cast: the conception of this character is Miltonic. The poet has made him worthy to abide amongst those « palaces of nature,» those « icy halls,» « where forms and falls the avalanche.» Manfred stands up against the stupendous scenery of the poem, and is as lofty, towering, and grand as the mountains: when we picture him in imagination he assumes a shape of height and independent dignity, shining in its own splendour amongst the snowy summits which he was accustomed to climb. The passion, too, in this composition, is fervid and impetuous, but at the same time deep and full, which is not always the case in Byron's productions; it is serious and sincere throughout. The music of the language is as solemn and as touching as that of the wind coming through the bending ranks of the inaccessible Alpine forests; and the mists and vapours rolling down the gullies and ravines that yawn horribly on the eye, are not more wild and striking in their appearance than are the supernatural creations of the poet's fancy, whose magical agency is of mighty import, but is nevertheless continually surmounted by the high intellectual power, invincible will, and intrepid philosophy of Manfred.

The first idea of the descriptive passages of this beautiful poem will be easily recognised in the following extract from Lord Byron's travelling memorandum-book.

« Sept. 22, 1816. Left Thun in a boat, which carried us the length of this lake in three hours. The lake small, but the banks fine—rocks down to the water's edge—landed at Newhouse. Passed Interlachen—entered upon a range of scenes beyond all description or previous conception. Passed a rock bearing an inscription—two brothers—one murdered the other—just the place for it. After a variety of windings came to an enormous rock—arrived at the foot of the mountain (the Jungfraw)—glaciers—torrents—one of these 900 feet visible descent—lodge at the curate's—set out to see the valley—heard an avalanche fall, like thunder!—glaciers enormous—storm comes on—thunder and lightning, and hail! all in perfection and beautiful. The tor-

rent is in shape, curving over the rock, like the tail of the white horse streaming in the wind—just as might be conceived would be that of the 'Pale Horse,' on which Death is mounted in the apocalypse. It is neither mist nor water, but a something between both; its immense height gives it a wave, a curve, a spreading here, a condension there—wonderful—indescribable.

« Sept. 23. Ascent of the Wingren, the *dent d'argent* shining like truth on one side, on the other the clouds rose from the opposite valley, curling up perpendicular precipices, *like the foam of the ocean of hell during a spring tide!* It was white and sulphury, and immeasurably deep in appearance. The side we ascended was of course not of so precipitous a nature, but on arriving at the summit we looked down on the other side upon a boiling sea of cloud, dashing against the crag on which we stood. Arrived at the Greenderwold; mounted and rode to the higher glacier—twilight, but distinct—very fine—glacier like a frozen hurricane—starlight beautiful—the whole of the day was fine, and in point of weather, as the day in which Paradise was made. Passed whole woods of withered pines—all withered—trunks stripped and lifeless—done by a single winter.»

Of Lord Byron's tragedies we shall merely remark, with reference to the particular nature of their tragic character, that the effect of them all is rather grand, terrible, and terrific, than mollifying, subduing, or pathetic. As dramatic poems they possess much beauty and originality.

The style and nature of the poem of Don Juan forms a singularly felicitous mixture of burlesque and pathos, of humorous observation and the higher elements of poetical composition. Never was the English language festooned into more luxurious stanzas than in Don Juan: like the dolphin sporting in its native waves, at every turn, however grotesque, displaying a new hue and a new beauty, so the noble author there shows an absolute control over his means, and at every cadence, rhyme, or construction, however whimsical, delights us with novel and magical associations. We wish, we heartily wish, that the fine poetry which is so richly scattered through the sixteen cantos of this most original and most astonishing production, had not been mixed up with very much that is equally frivolous as foolish; and sincerely do we regret that the alloying dross of sensuality should run so freely through the otherwise rich vein of the author's verse.

Whilst at Venice, Byron displayed a most noble instance of generosity. The house of a shoemaker, near his lordship's residence in St Samuel, was burnt to the ground, with every article it contained, and the proprietor reduced with a large family to the greatest indigence and want. When Lord Byron ascertained the afflicting circumstances of that calamity, he not only ordered a new and superior habitation to be immediately built for the sufferer, the whole expense of which was borne by his lordship, but also presented the unfortunate tradesman with a sum equal in value to the whole of his lost stock in trade and furniture.

Lord Byron avoided as much as possible any intercourse with his countrymen at Venice; this seems to have been in a great measure necessary, in order to prevent the intrusion of impertinent curiosity. In an appendix to one of his poems, written with reference to a book of travels, the author of which disclaimed any wish to be introduced to the noble lord, he loftily and sarcastically chastises the incivility of such a gratuitous declaration, expresses his « utter abhorrence of any contact with the travelling English;» and thus concludes: « Except Lords Lansdowne, Jersey, and Lauderdale, Messrs. Scott, Hammond, Sir Humphrey Davey, the late Mr Lewis, W. Bankes, M. Hoppner, Thomas Moore, Lord Kinnaird, his brother, Mr Joy, and Mr Hobhouse, I do not recollect to have exchanged a word with another Englishman since I left their country, and almost all these I had known before. The others, and God knows there were some hundreds who bored me with letters or visits, I refused to have any communication with; and shall be proud and happy when that wish becomes mutual.»

After a residence of three years at Venice, Lord Byron removed to Ravenna, towards the close of the year 1819. Here he wrote the Prophecy of Dante, which exhibited a new specimen of the astonishing variety of strength and expansion of faculties he possessed and exercised. About the same time he wrote Sardanapalus, a tragedy, Cain, a mystery, and Heaven and Earth, a mystery. Though there are some obvious reasons which render Sardanapalus unfit for the English stage, it is, on the whole, the most splendid specimen which our language affords of that species of tragedy which was the exclusive object of Lord Byron's admiration. Cain is one of the productions which has subjected its noble author to the severest denunciations, on account of the crime of impiety alleged against it; it seems to have a tendency to call in question the benevolence of Providence. In answer to the loud and general outcry which this production occasioned, Lord Byron observed, in a letter to his publisher, « If 'Cain' be blasphemous, 'Paradise Lost' is blasphemous, and the words of the Oxford gentleman, 'Evil, be thou my good,'

are from that very poem from the mouth of Satan; and is there any thing more in that of Lucifer in the mystery? 'Cain' is nothing more than a drama, not a piece of argument: if Lucifer and Cain speak as the first rebel and first murderer may be supposed to speak, nearly all the rest of the personages talk also according to their characters; and the stronger passions have ever been permitted to the drama. I have avoided introducing the Deity as in Scripture, though Milton does, and not very wisely either; but have adopted his angel as sent to Cain instead, on purpose to avoid shocking any feelings on the subject, by falling short of what all uninspired men must fall short in, viz. giving an adequate notion of the effect of the presence of Jehovah. The old mysteries introduced him liberally enough, and all this I avoided in the new one.»

An event occurred at Ravenna during his lordship's stay there, which made a deep impression on him, and to which he alludes in the fifth Canto of Don Juan. The military commandant of the place, who, though suspected of being secretly a Carbonaro, was too powerful a man to be arrested, was assassinated opposite to Lord Byron's palace. His lordship had his foot in the stirrup at the usual hour of exercise, when his horse started at the report of a gun: on looking up, Lord Byron perceived a man throw down a carbine and run away at full speed, and another man stretched upon the pavement a few yards from himself; it was the unhappy commandant. A crowd was soon collected, but no one ventured to offer the least assistance. Lord Byron directed his servant to lift up the bleeding body, and carry it into his palace; though it was represented to him that by doing so he would confirm the suspicion, which was already entertained, of his belonging to the same party. Such an apprehension could have no effect on Byron's mind when an act of humanity was to be performed; he assisted in bearing the victim of assassination into the house, and putting him on a bed. He was already dead from several wounds: «he appeared to have breathed his last without a struggle,» said his lordship, when afterwards recounting the affair. «I never saw a countenance so calm. His adjutant followed the corpse into the house; I remember his lamentation over him:—'Povero diavolo! non aveva fatta male, anchè ad un cane.'» The following were the noble writer's poetical reflections (in Don Juan) on viewing the dead body:

——«I gazed (as oft I gazed the same)
To try if I could wrench aught out of death,
Which should confirm, or shake, or make a faith;
But it was all a mystery:—here we are,
And there we go:—but where? Five bits of lead,
Or three, or two, or one, send very far.
And is this blood, then, form'd but to be shed?
Can every element our elements mar?
And air, earth, water, fire,—live, and we dead?
We whose minds comprehend all things?—No more:
But let us to the story as before.»

That a being of such glorious capabilities should abstractedly, and without an attempt to throw the responsibility on a fictitious personage, have avowed such startling doubts, was a daring which, whatever might *then* have been his private opinion, he ought not to have hazarded.

«It is difficult,» observes Captain Medwin, «to judge, from the contradictory nature of his writings, what the religious opinions of Lord Byron really were. From the conversations I held with him, on the whole, I am inclined to think that if he were occasionally sceptical, and thought it, as he says in Don Juan,

——«A pleasant voyage, perhaps, to float
Like Pyrrho, in a sea of speculation,»

yet his wavering never amounted to a disbelief in the divine Founder of Christianity.

«Calling on him one day,» continues the Captain, «we found him, as was sometimes the case, silent, dull, and sombre. At length he said: 'Here is a little book somebody has sent me about christianity, that has made me very uncomfortable; the reasoning seems to me very strong, the proofs are very staggering. I dont think you can answer it, Shelley, at least I am sure I can't, and what is more, I dont wish it.'

«Speaking of Gibbon, Lord Byron said: 'L—— B—— thought the question set at rest in the History of the Decline and Fall, but I am not so easily convinced. It is not a matter of volition to unbelieve. Who likes to own that he has been a fool all his life,—to unlearn all that he has been taught in his youth, or can think that some of the best men that ever lived have been fools? I don't know why I am considered an unbeliever. I disowned the other day that I was of Shelley's school in metaphysics, though I admired his poetry; not but what he has changed his mode of thinking very much since he wrote the notes to «Queen Mab,» which I was accused of having a hand in. I know, however, that I am considered an infidel. My wife and sister, when they joined parties, sent me prayer-books. There was a Mr Mulock, who went about the continent preaching orthodoxy in politics and religion, a writer of bad sonnets, and a lecturer in worse prose,—he tried to convert me to some new sect of christianity. He was a great anti-materialist, and abused Locke.'

«On another occasion he said: 'I have just

received a letter from a Mr Sheppard, inclosing a prayer made for my welfare by his wife a few days before her death. The letter states that he has had the misfortune to lose this amiable woman, who had seen me at Ramsgate, many years ago, rambling among the cliffs; that she had been impressed with a sense of my irreligion from the tenor of my works, and had often prayed fervently for my conversion, particularly in her last moments. The prayer is beautifully written. I like devotion in women. She must have been a divine creature. I pity the man who has lost her! I shall write to him by return of the courier, to condole with him, and tell him that Mrs S. need not have entertained any concern for my spiritual affairs, for that *no man is more of a christian than I am*, whatever my writings may have led her and others to suspect.'»

We have given the above extracts from a sense of justice to the memory of Lord Byron; they are redeeming and consolatory evidences that his heart was far from being sheathed in unassailable scepticism, and, as such, ought not to be omitted in a preface to his works.

In the autumn of 1821, the noble bard removed to Pisa, in Tuscany. He took up his residence there in the Lanfranchi palace, and engaged in an intrigue with the beautiful Guiccioli, wife of the count of that name, which connexion, with more than his usual constancy, he maintained for nearly three years, during which period the countess was separated from her husband, on an application from the latter to the Pope.

The following is a sketch of this « fair enchantress,» as taken at the time the *liaison* was formed between her and Byron. « The countess is twenty-three years of age, though she appears no more than seventeen or eighteen. Unlike most of the Italian women, her complexion is delicately fair. Her eyes, large, dark, and languishing, are shaded by the longest eye-lashes in the world, and her hair, which is ungathered on her head, plays over her falling shoulders in a profusion of natural ringlets of the darkest auburn. Her figure is, perhaps, too much embonpoint for her height; but her bust is perfect. Her features want little of possessing a Grecian regularity of outline; and she has the most beautiful mouth and teeth imaginable. It is impossible to see without admiring—to hear the Guiccioli speak without being fascinated. Her amability and gentleness show themselves in every intonation of her voice, which, and the music of her perfect Italian, give a peculiar charm to every thing she utters. Grace and elegance seem component parts of her nature. Notwithstanding that she adores Lord Byron, it is evident that the exile and poverty of her aged father sometimes affect her spirits, and throw a shade of melancholy on her countenance, which adds to the deep interest this lovely woman creates. Her conversation is lively without being learned; she has read all the best authors of her own and the French language. She often conceals what she knows, from the fear of being thought to know too much, possibly from being aware that Lord Byron was not fond of *blues*. He is certainly very much attached to her, without being actually in love. His description of the Georgioni in the Manfrini palace at Venice is meant for the countess. The beautiful sonnet prefixed to the 'Prophecy of Dante' was addressed to her.»

The annexed lines, written by Byron when he was about to quit Venice to join the countess at Ravenna, will show the state of his feelings at that time.

«River[1] that rollest by the ancient walls
Where dwells the lady of my love, when she
Walks by the brink, and there perchance recals
A faint and fleeting memory of me:

«What if thy deep and ample stream should be
A mirror of my heart, where she may read
The thousand thoughts I now betray to thee,
Wild as thy wave, and headlong as thy speed?

«What do I say—a mirror of my heart?
Are not thy waters sweeping, dark, and strong?
Such as my feelings were and are, thou art;
And such as thou art, were my passions long.

«Time may have somewhat tamed them, not for ever;
Thou overflow'st thy banks, and not for aye:
Thy bosom overboils, congenial river!
Thy floods subside, and mine have sunk away—

«But left long wrecks behind them, and again
Borne on our old unchanged career, we move;
Thou tendest wildly onward to the main,
And I to loving one I should not love.

«The current I behold will sweep beneath
Her native walls, and murmur at her feet;
Her eyes will look on thee, when she shall breathe
The twilight air, unharm'd by summer's heat.

«She will look on thee; I have look'd on thee
Full of that thought, and from that moment ne'er
Thy waters could I dream of, name, or see,
Without the inseparable sigh for her!

«Her bright eyes will be imaged in thy stream;
Yes, they will meet the wave I gaze on now:
Mine cannot witness, even in a dream,
That happy wave repass me in its flow.

«The wave that bears my tears returns no more:
Will she return by whom that wave shall sweep?
Both tread thy banks, both wander on thy shore;
I near thy source, she by the dark-blue deep.

[1] The Po.

«But that which keepeth us apart is not
Distance, nor depth of wave, nor space of earth,
But the distraction of a various lot,
As various as the climates of our birth.

«A stranger loves a lady of the land,
Born far beyond the mountains, but his blood
Is all meridian, as if never fann'd
By the bleak wind that chills the polar flood.

«My blood is all meridian; were it not,
I had not left my clime;—I shall not be,
In spite of tortures ne'er to be forgot,
A slave again of love, at least of thee.

«'T is vain to struggle—let me perish young—
Live as I lived, and love as I have loved:
To dust if I return, from dust I sprung,
And then at least my heart can ne'er be moved.»

It is impossible to conceive a more unvaried life than Lord Byron led at this period in the society of a few select friends. Billiards, conversation, or reading, filled up the intervals till it was time to take the evening drive, ride, and pistol-practice.

He dined at half an hour after sun-set, then drove to Count Gamba's, the Countess Guiccioli's father, passed several hours in her society, returned to his palace, and either read or wrote till two or three in the morning; occasionally drinking spirits diluted with water as a medicine, from a dread of a nephritic complaint, to which he was, or fancied himself, subject.

While Lord Byron resided at Pisa, a serious affray occurred, in which he was personally concerned. Taking his usual ride, with some friends, one of them was violently jostled by a serjeant-major of hussars, who dashed, at full speed, through the midst of the party. They pursued and overtook him near the Piaggia gate; but their remonstrances were answered only by abuse and menace, and an attempt, on the part of the guard at the gate, to arrest them. This occasioned a severe scuffle, in which several of Lord Byron's party were wounded, as was also the hussar. The consequence was, that all Lord Byron's servants (who were warmly attached to him, and had shown great ardour in his defence), were banished from Pisa; and with them the Counts Gamba, father and son. Lord Byron was himself advised to leave it; and as the countess accompanied her father, he soon after joined them at Leghorn, and passed six weeks at Monte Nero. His return to Pisa was occasioned by a new persecution of the Counts Gamba. An order was issued for them to leave the Tuscan states in four days; and after their embarkation for Genoa, the countess and Lord Byron openly lived together, at the Lanfranchi palace.

It was at Pisa that Byron wrote «Werner,» a tragedy; the «Deformed Transformed,» and continued his «Don Juan» to the end of the sixteenth canto. We venture to introduce here the following critical summary of this wonderful production of genius:—

The poem of Don Juan has all sorts of faults, many of which cannot be defended, and some of which are disgusting; but it has, also, almost every sort of poetical merit: there are in it some of the finest passages Lord Byron ever wrote; there is amazing knowledge of human nature in it; there is exquisite humour; there is freedom, and bound, and vigour of narrative imagery, sentiment, and style, which are admirable; there is a vast fertility of deep, extensive, and original thought; and, at the same time, there is the profusion of a prompt and most richly-stored memory. The invention is lively and poetical; the descriptions are brilliant and glowing, yet not over-wrought, but fresh from nature, and faithful to her colours; and the prevalent character of the whole (bating too many dark spots), not dispiriting, though gloomy; not misanthropic, though bitter; and not repulsive to the visions of poetical enthusiasm, though indignant and resentful.

Lord Byron's acquaintance with Leigh Hunt, the late editor of the Examiner, originated in his grateful feeling for the manner in which Mr Hunt stood forward in his justification, at a time when the current of public opinion ran strongly against him. This feeling induced him to invite Mr Hunt to the Lanfranchi palace, where a suite of apartments were fitted up for him. On his arrival in the spring of 1822, a periodical publication was projected, under the title of «The Liberal,» of which Hunt was to be the editor, and to which Lord Byron, and Percy Shelley (who had been residing for some time on terms of great intimacy with his lordship) were to contribute. Three numbers of the «Liberal» were published in London, when, in consequence of the unhappy fate of Mr Shelley (who perished in the Mediterranean by the upsetting of a boat), and of other discouraging circumstances, it was discontinued.

Byron attended the funeral of his poet-friend, the following description of which, by a person who was present, is not without interest:—

«18th August, 1822.—On the occasion of Shelley's melancholy fate, I revisited Pisa, and on the day of my arrival learnt that Lord Byron was gone to the sea-shore, to assist in performing the last offices to his friend. We came to a spot marked by an old and withered trunk of a fir-tree, and near it, on the beach, stood a solitary hut covered with reeds. The situation was well calculated for a poet's grave. A few weeks before I had ridden with him and Lord Byron to this very spot, which I afterwards visited more than once. In front was a magnificent extent of the blue and

windless Mediterranean, with the isles of Elba and Guyana, — Lord Byron's yacht at anchor in the offing: on the other side an almost boundless extent of sandy wilderness, uncultivated and uninhabited, here and there interspersed in tufts with underwood curved by the sea-breeze, and stunted by the barren and dry nature of the soil in which it grew. At equal distances along the coast stood high square towers, for the double purpose of guarding the coast from smuggling, and enforcing the quarantine laws. This view was bounded by an immense extent of the Italian Alps, which are here particularly picturesque from their volcanic and manifold appearances, and which being composed of white marble, give their summits the appearance of snow. As a foreground to this picture appeared as extraordinary a group. Lord Byron and Trelawney were seen standing over the burning pile, with some of the soldiers of the guard; and Leigh Hunt, whose feelings and nerves could not carry him through the scene of horror, lying back in the carriage,—the four post-horses ready to drop with the intensity of the noon-day sun. The stillness of all around was yet more felt by the shrill scream of a solitary curlew, which, perhaps attracted by the body, wheeled in such narrow circles round the pile, that it might have been struck with the hand, and was so fearless that it could not be driven away. Looking at the corpse, Lord Byron said: — « Why, that old black silk handkerchief retains its form better than that human body! » Scarcely was the ceremony concluded, when Lord Byron, agitated by the spectacle he had witnessed, tried to dissipate in some degree the impression of it by his favourite recreation. He took off his clothes, therefore, and swam to the yacht, which was riding a few miles distant. The heat of the sun and checked perspiration threw him into a fever which he felt coming on before he left the water, and which became more violent before he reached Pisa. On his return he immediately took a warm bath, and the next morning was perfectly recovered. »

The enmity between Byron and Southey, the poet-laureate, is as well known as that between Pope and Colley Cibber. Their politics were diametrically opposite, and the noble bard regarded the bard of royalty as a renegado from his early principles. It was not, however, so much on account of political principles that the enmity between Byron and Southey was kept up. The peer, in his satire, had handled the epics of the laureate « t[oo] roughly, » and this the latter deeply resented. Whilst travelling on the continent, Southey observed Shelley's name in the Album, at Mont Auvert, with «Αθεος» written after it, and an indignant comment in the same language written under it; also the names of some of Byron's other friends. The laureat, it is said, copied the names and the comment, and, on his return to England, reported the whole circumstances, and hesitated not to conclude Byron of the same principles as his friends. In a poem he subsequently wrote called the « Vision of Judgment, » he stigmatized Lord Byron as the father of the « Satanic School of Poetry. » His lordship, in a note appended to the « Two Foscari, » retorted in a very severe manner, and even permitted himself to ridicule Southey's wife, the sister of Coleridge's wife, they having been at one time « two milliners of Bath. » The laureate wrote an answer to this note in the Courier newspaper, which, when Byron saw it, enraged him so much that he consulted with his friends whether or not he ought to go to England to answer it personally. In cooler moments, however, he resolved merely to write *his* « Vision of Judgment, » which was a parody on Southey's, and appeared in one of the numbers of the « Liberal, » for which Hunt, the publisher, was prosecuted by the « Constitutional Association, » and found guilty.

As some of our readers may be curious to know the rate at which Lord Byron was paid for his productions, we annex the following statement, by Mr Murray, the bookseller, of the sums given by him for the copy-rights of most of his lordship's works:

Childe Harold I. II.	600*l.*
——— III.	1,575
——— IV.	2,100
Giaour	525
Bride of Abydos	525
Corsair	525
Lara	700
Siege of Corinth	525
Parisina	525
Lament of Tasso	315
Manfred	315
Beppo	525
Don Juan I. II	1,525
——— III. IV. V.	1,525
Doge of Venice.	1,050
Sardanapalus, Cain, and Foscari	1,100
Mazeppa	525
Prisoner of Chillon	525
Sundries	450
Total	15,455*l.*

As is the case with many men in affluent circumstances, Byron was at times more than generous; and again, at other times, what might be called mean. He once borrowed 500*l.* in

order to give it to the widow of one who had been his friend; he frequently dined on five Pauls, and once gave his bills to a lady to be examined, because he thought he was cheated. He gave 1000*l.* for a yacht, which he sold again for 300*l.*, and refused to give the sailors their jackets. It ought, however, to be observed that generosity was natural to him, and that his avarice, if it can be so termed, was a mere whim or caprice of the moment—a *rôle* he could not long sustain. He once borrowed 100*l.* to give to the brother-in-law of Southey, Coleridge, the poet, when the latter was in distress. In his quarrel with the laureate he was provoked to allude to this circumstance, which certainly he ought not to have done.

Byron was a great admirer of the Waverley novels, and never travelled without them. «They are,» said he to Captain Medwin one day, « a library in themselves,—a perfect literary treasure. I could read them once a year with new pleasure.» During that morning he had been reading one of Sir Walter's novels, and delivered, according to Medwin, the following criticism. « How difficult it is to say any thing new! Who was that voluptuary of antiquity, who offered a reward for a new pleasure? Perhaps all nature and art could not supply a new idea.»

The anxious and paternal tenderness Lord Byron felt for his daughter, is expressed with unequalled beauty and pathos in the first stanza of the third canto of Childe Harold. « What do you think of Ada?» said he to Medwin, looking earnestly at his daughter's miniature, that hung by the side of his writing-table. «They tell me she is like me—but she has her mother's eyes. It is very odd that my mother was an only child; —I am an only child; my wife is an only child; and Ada is an only child. It is a singular coincidence; that is the least that can be said of it. I can't help thinking it was destined to be so; and perhaps it is best. I was once anxious for a son; but, after our separation, was glad to have had a daughter; for it would have distressed me too much to have taken him away from Lady Byron, and I could not have trusted her with a son's education. I have no idea of boys being brought up by mothers. I suffered too much from that myself: and then, wandering about the world as I do, I could not take proper care of a child; otherwise I should not have left Allegra, poor little thing! at Ravenna. She has been a great resource to me, though I am not so fond of her as of Ada: and yet I mean to make their fortunes equal—there will be enough for them both. I have desired in my will that Allegra shall not marry an Englishman. The Irish and Scotch make better husbands than we do. You will think it was an odd fancy; but I was not in the best of humours with my countrymen at that moment—you know the reason. I am told that Ada is a little termagant; I hope not. I shall write to my sister to know if this is the case: perhaps I am wrong in letting Lady Byron have entirely her own way in her education. I hear that my name is not mentioned in her presence; that a green curtain is always kept over my portrait, as over something forbidden; and that she is not to know that she has a father till she comes of age. Of course she will be taught to hate me; she will be brought up to it. Lady Byron is conscious of all this, and is afraid that I shall some day carry off her daughter by stealth or force. I might claim her of the Chancellor, without having recourse to either one or the other; but I had rather be unhappy myself than make her mother so; probably I shall never see her again.» Here he opened his writing-desk, and showed me some hair, which he told me was his child's.

Several years ago, Lord Byron presented his friend, Mr Thomas Moore, with his « Memoirs,» written by himself, with an understanding that they were not to be published until after his death. Mr Moore, with the consent and at the desire of Lord Byron, sold the manuscript to Mr Murray, the bookseller, for the sum of two thousand guineas. The following statement by Mr Moore, will however show its fate. « Without entering into the respective claims of Mr Murray and myself to the property in these memoirs (a question which now that they are destroyed can be but of little moment to any one), it is sufficient to say that, believing the manuscript still to be mine, I placed it at the disposal of Lord Byron's sister, Mrs Leigh, with the sole reservation of a protest against its total destruction; at least, without previous perusal and consultation among the parties. The majority of the persons present disagreed with this opinion, and it was the *only point* upon which there did exist any difference between us. The manuscript was accordingly torn and burnt before our eyes, and I immediately paid to Mr Murray, in the presence of the gentlemen assembled, two thousand guineas, with interest, etc., being the amount of what I owed him upon the security of my bond, and for which I now stand indebted to my publishers, Messrs Longman and Co.

« Since then, the family of Lord Byron have, in a manner highly honourable to themselves, proposed an arrangement, by which the sum thus p[illegible] to Mr Murray might be reimbursed me; but f[illegible]celings and considerations, which it is unnecessary here to explain, I have respectfully, but peremptorily, declined their offer.»

One evening, after a dinner party at the Lan-

franchi palace, his lordship wrote the following drinking-song:

«Fill the goblet again, for I never before
Felt the glow that now gladdens my heart to its core:
Let us drink—who would not? since, through life's varied round,
In the goblet alone no deception is found.

«I have tried, in its turn, all that life can supply;
I have bask'd in the beams of a dark rolling eye;
I have loved—who has not? but what tongue will declare
That pleasure existed while passion was there?

«In the days of our youth, when the heart 's in its spring,
And dreams that affection can never take wing,
I had friends—who has not? but what tongue will avow
That friends, rosy wine, are so faithful as thou?

«The breast of a mistress some boy may estrange,
Friendship shifts with the sun-beam, thou never canst change.
Thou grow'st old—who does not? but on earth what appears,
Whose virtues, like thine, but increase with our years.

«Yet if blest to the utmost that love can bestow,
Should a rival bow down to our idol below,
We are jealous—who 's not? thou hast no such alloy,
For the more that enjoy thee, the more they enjoy.

«When the season of youth and its jollities past,
For refuge we fly to the goblet at last,
Then we find—who does not? in the flow of the soul,
That truth, as of yore, is confined to the bowl.

«When the box of Pandora was opened on earth,
And Memory's triumph commenced over Mirth,
Hope was left—was she not? but the goblet we kiss,
And care not for Hope, who are certain of bliss.

«Long life to the grape! and when summer is flown,
The age of our nectar shall gladden my own.
We must die—who does not? may our sins be forgiven!
And Hebe shall never be idle in heaven.»

Before we close the details of what may be termed Lord Byron's poetical life—before we enter on the painfully interesting particulars connected with the last and noblest part he performed in his brilliant but brief career—we beg leave to introduce the following summary of his character:—

There seems to have been something of a magical antidote in Lord Byron's genius to the strange propensities to evil arising both from his natural passions and temper, and the accidental unpropitious circumstances of his life. In no man were good and evil mingled in such strange intimacy, and in such strange proportions. His passions were extraordinarily violent and fierce; and his temper, uneasy, bitter and capricious. His pride was deep and gloomy, and his ambition ardent and uncontrollable. All these were exactly such as the fortuitous position of his infancy, boyhood, and first manhood, tended to aggravate by discouragements, crosses, and mortifications. He was directly and immediately sprung from a stock of old nobility, of an historic name, of venerable antiquity. All his alliances, including his father, had moved in high society. But this gay father died, improvident or reckless of the future, and left him to waste his childhood in poverty and dereliction, in the remote town of Aberdeen, among the few maternal relations who yet would not utterly abandon his mother's shipwrecked fortunes. At the age of six years he became presumptive heir to the family peerage, and at the age of ten the peerage devolved on him. He then was sent to the public school of Harrow; but neither his person, his acquired habits, his scholarship, nor his temper, fitted him for this strange arena. A peer, not immediately issuing from the fashionable circles, and not as rich as foolish boys suppose a peer ought to be, must have a wonderful tact of society, and a managing, bending, intriguing temper, to play his part with éclat, or with comfort, or even without degradation. All the treatment which Lord Byron now received confirmed the bitterness of a disposition and feelings naturally sour, and already augmented by chilling solitude, or an uncongenial sphere of society.

To a mind endowed with intense sensibility and unextinguishable ambition, these circumstances operated in cherishing melancholy, and even misanthropy. They bred an intractability to the light humours, the heartless cheerfulness, and all the artillery of unthinking emptiness by which the energies of the bosom are damped and broken. There were implanted within him the seeds of profound reflection and emotion, which grew in him to such strength, that the tameness, the petty passions, and frivolous desires of mankind in their ordinary intercourses of pleasure and dissipation, could never long retain him in their chains without weariness and disgust, even when they courted, dandled, flattered, and admired him. He was unskilled in their pitiful accomplishments, and disdained the trifling aims of their vanity, and the tests of excellence by which they were actuated, and by which they judged. He never, therefore, enjoyed their blandishments, and, ere long, broke like a giant from their bonds.

There can be no doubt, that disappointments, working on a sombre temper, and the consequent melancholy and sensitiveness aiding, and aided by, the spells of the muse, were Lord Byron's preservatives; at least, that they produced redeeming splendours, and moments of pure and untainted intellect, and exalting ebullitions of grand or tender sentiment, or noble passion, which, by fits at least, if not always, adorned his compositions, and will for ever electrify and elevate his readers.

Had Lord Byron succeeded in the ordinary way to his peerage, accompanied by the usual

circumstances of prosperity and ease, — had nothing occurred capable of stimulating to strong personal exertions, the mighty seeds within him had probably been worse than neutral — they had worked to unqualified mischief! In many cases this is not the effect of prosperity; but Lord Byron's qualities were of a very peculiar cast, as well as intense and unrivalled in degree.

When, in the spring of 1816, Lord Byron quitted England, to return to it no more, he had a dark, perilous, and appalling prospect before him. The chances against the due future use of his miraculous and fearful gifts of genius, poisoned and frenzied as they were by blighted hopes and all the evil incidents which had befallen him, were too numerous to be calculated without overwhelming dismay! Few persons, of a sensibility a little above the common, would have escaped the pit of black and unmitigated despondence! but Lord Byron's elasticity of mind recovered itself, and soon rose to far higher conceptions and performances than before. He passed the summer upon the banks of the lake of Geneva! With what enthusiasm he enjoyed, and with what contemplations he dwelt among its scenery, his own poetry soon exhibited to the world! He has been censured for his peculiarities, his unsocial life, and his disregard of the habits, the decorums, and the civilities of the world, and of the rank to which he belonged. He might have pleaded, that the world rejected him, and he the world; but the charge is idle in itself, admitting it to have originated with his own will. A man has a right to live in solitude if he chooses it; and, above all, he who gives such fruits of his solitude!

In the autumn of 1822, Lord Byron quitted Pisa, and went to Genoa, where he remained throughout the winter. A letter written by his lordship, while at Genoa, is singularly honourable to him, and is the more entitled to notice, as it tends to diminish the credibility of an assertion made since his death, that he could bear no rival in fame, but instantly became animated with a bitter jealousy and hatred of any person who attracted the public attention from himself. If there be a living being towards whom, according to that statement, Lord Byron would have experienced such a sentiment, it must be the presumed author of « Waverley. » And yet, in a letter to Monsieur Beyle, dated May 29, 1823, the following are the just and liberal expressions used by Lord Byron, in adverting to a pamphlet which had been recently published by Monsieur Beyle.

« There is one part of your observations in the pamphlet which I shall venture to remark upon: — it regards Walter Scott. You say that 'his character is little worthy of enthusiasm,' at the same time that you mention his productions in the manner they deserve. I have known Walter Scott long and well, and in occasional situations which call forth the real character, and I can assure you that his character is worthy of admiration; — that, of all men, he is the most open, the most honourable, the most amiable. With his politics I have nothing to do: they differ from mine, which renders it difficult for me to speak of them. But he is perfectly sincere in them, and sincerity may be humble, but she can not be servile. I pray you, therefore, to correct or soften that passage. You may, perhaps, attribute this officiousness of mine to a false affectation of candour, as I happen to be a writer also. Attribute it to what motive you please, but believe the truth. I say that Walter Scott is as nearly a thorough good man as man can be, because I know it by experience to be the case. »

The motives which ultimately induced Lord Byron to leave Italy, and join the Greeks, struggling for emancipation, are sufficiently obvious. It was in Greece that his high poetical faculties had been first fully developed. Greece, a land of the most venerable and illustrious history, of peculiarly grand and beautiful scenery, inhabited by various races of the most wild and picturesque manners, was to him the land of excitement, — never-cloying, never-wearying, never-changing excitement. It was necessarily the chosen and favourite spot of a man of powerful and original intellect, of quick and sensible feelings, of a restless and untameable spirit, of various information, and who, above all, was satiated with common enjoyments, and disgusted with what appeared to him to be the formality, hypocrisy and sameness of daily life. Dwelling upon that country, as it is clear from all Lord Byron's writings he did, with the fondest solicitude, and being, as he was well known to be, an ardent, though, perhaps, not a very systematic lover of freedom, he could be no unconcerned spectator of its recent revolution: and as soon as it seemed to him that his presence might be useful, he prepared to visit once more the shores of Greece. It is not improbable, also, that he had become ambitious of a name as distinguished for deeds as it was already by his writings. A glorious and novel career apparently presented itself, and he determined to try the event.

Lord Byron embarked at Leghorn, and arrived in Cephalonia in the early part of August, 1823, attended by a suite of six or seven friends, in an English vessel (the Hercules, Captain Scott), which he had chartered for the express purpose of taking him to Greece. His lordship had never seen any of the volcanic mountains, and for this

purpose the vessel deviated from its regular course, in order to pass the island of Stromboli, and lay off that place a whole night, in the hopes of witnessing the usual phenomena, but, for the first time within the memory of man, the volcano emitted no fire. The disappointed poet was obliged to proceed, in no good humour with the fabled forge of Vulcan.

Greece, though with a fair prospect of ultimate triumph, was at that time in an unsettled state. The third campaign had commenced, with several instances of distinguished success—her arms were every where victorious, but her councils were distracted. Western Greece was in a critical situation, and although the heroic Marco Botzaris had not fallen in vain, yet the glorious enterprize in which he perished only checked, and did not prevent, the advance of the Turks towards Anatolica and Missolonghi. This gallant chief, worthy of the best days of Greece, hailed with transport, Lord Byron's arrival in that country and his last act before proceeding to the attack, in which he fell, was to write a warm invitation for his lordship to come to Missolonghi. In his letter, which he addressed to a friend at Missolonghi, Botzaris alludes to almost the first proceeding of Lord Byron in Greece, which was the arming and provisioning of forty Suliotes, whom he sent to join in the defence of Missolonghi. After the battle, Lord Byron transmitted bandages and medicines, of which he had brought a large store from Italy, and pecuniary succour to those who had been wounded. He had already made a very generous offer to the government. He says, in a letter, « I offered to advance a thousand dollars a month, for the succour of Missolonghi, and the Suliotes under Botzaris (since killed); but the government have answered me through——of this island, that they wish to confer with me previously, which is, in fact, saying they wish me to spend my money in some other direction. I will take care that it is for the public cause, otherwise I will not advance a para. The opposition say they want to cajole me, and the party in power say the others wish to seduce me; so, between the two, I have a difficult part to play: however I will have nothing to do with the factions, unless to reconcile them, if possible.»

Lord Byron established himself for some time at the small village of Metaxata, in Cephalonia, and dispatched two friends, Mr Trelawney and Mr Hamilton Browne, with a letter to the Greek government, in order to collect intelligence as to the real state of things. His lordship's generosity was almost daily exercised in his new neighbourhood. He provided for many Italian families in distress, and even indulged the people of the country in paying for the religious ceremonies which they deemed essential to their success.

In the mean while, Lord Byron's friends proceeded to Tripolitza, and found Colocotroni (the enemy of Mavrocordato, who had been compelled to flee from the presidency), in great power:- his palace was filled with armed men, like the castle of some ancient feudal chief, and a good idea of his character may be formed from the language he held. He declared that he had told Mavrocordato that, unless he desisted from his intrigues, he would put him on an ass and whip him out of the Morea, and that he had only been withheld from doing so by the representation of his friends, who had said that it would injure the cause.

They next proceeded to Salamis, where the congress was sitting, and Mr Trelawney agreed to accompany Odysseus, a brave mountain chief, into Negropont. At this time the Greeks were preparing for many active enterprises. Marco Botzaris' brother, with his Suliotes and Mavrocordato, were to take charge of Missolonghi, which, at that time (October, 1823), was in a very critical state, being blockaded both by land and sea. « There have been,» says Mr Trelawney, « thirty battles fought and won by the late Marco Botzaris, and his gallant tribe of Suliotes, who are shut up in Missolonghi. If it fall, Athens will be in danger, and thousands of throats cut. A few thousand dollars would provide ships to relieve it; a portion of this sum is raised — and I would coin my heart to save this key of Greece!» A report like this was sufficient to show the point where succour was most needed, and Lord Byron's determination to relieve Missolonghi was still more decidedly confirmed by a letter which he received from Mavrocordato.

Mavrocordato was at this time endeavouring to collect a fleet for the relief of Missolonghi, and Lord Byron generously offered to advance four hundred thousand piastres (about 12,000*l.*) to pay for fitting it out. In a letter in which he announced this his noble intention, he alluded to the dissensions in Greece, and stated, that if these continued, all hope of a loan in England, or of assistance, or even good wishes from abroad, would be at an end.

« I must frankly confess,» he says in his letter, « that unless union and order are confirmed, all hopes of a loan will be in vain, and all the assistance which the Greeks could expect from abroad, an assistance which might be neither trifling nor worthless, will be suspended or destroyed, and, what is worse, the great powers of Europe, of whom no one was an enemy to Greece, but seemed inclined to favour her in

consenting to the establishment of an independent power, will be persuaded that the Greeks are unable to govern themselves, and will, perhaps, themselves undertake to arrange your disorders in such a way as to blast the brightest hopes you indulge, and are indulged by your friends.

« And allow me to add, once for all, I desire the well-being of Greece, and nothing else; I will do all I can to secure it; but I cannot consent—I never will consent to the English public, or English individuals being deceived as to the real state of Greek affairs. The rest, gentlemen, depends on you; you have fought gloriously; act honourably towards your fellow-citizens and towards the world, and then it will no more be said, as has been repeated for two thousand years with the Roman historian, that Philopœmen was the last of the Grecians. Let not calumny itself (and it is difficult to guard against it in so difficult a struggle) compare the Turkish Pacha with the patriot Greek in peace, after you have exterminated him in war.»

The dissensions among the Greek chiefs evidently gave great pain to Lord Byron, whose sensibility was keenly affected by the slightest circumstance which he considered likely to retard the deliverance of Greece. « For my part,» he observes in another of his letters, « I will stick by the cause while a plank remains which can be honourably clung to; if I quit it, it will be by the Greeks' conduct, and not the Holy Allies, or the holier Mussulmans.» In a letter to his banker at Cephalonia, he says: « I hope things here will go well, some time or other; I will stick by the cause as long as a cause exists.»

His playful humour sometimes broke out amidst the deep anxiety he felt for the success of the Greeks. He ridiculed with great pleasantry some of the supplies which had been sent out from England by the Greek committee. In one of his letters, also, after alluding to his having advanced 4,000*l*., and expecting to be called on for 4,000*l*., more, he says: « How can I refuse if they (the Greeks) will fight, and especially if I should happen to be in their company? I therefore request and require that you should apprise my trusty and trust-worthy trustee and banker, and crown, and sheet-anchor, Douglas Kinnaird the honourable, that he prepare all monies of mine, including the purchase-money of Rochdale manor, and mine income for the year A. D. 1824, to answer and anticipate any orders or drafts of mine, for the good cause, in good and lawful money of Great Britain, etc. etc. etc. May you live a thousand years! which is nine hundred and ninety-nine longer than the Spanish Cortes constitution.»

All being ready, two Ionian vessels were ordered, and, embarking his horses and effects, Lord Byron sailed from Argostoli on the 29th of December. At Zante, his lordship took a considerable quantity of specie on board, and proceeded towards Missolonghi. Two accidents occurred in this short passage. Count Gamba, who had accompanied his lordship from Leghorn, had been charged with the vessel in which the horses and part of the money were embarked. When off Chiarenza, a point which lies between Zante and the place of their destination, they were surprised at daylight on finding themselves under the bows of a Turkish frigate. Owing, however, to the activity displayed on board Lord Byron's vessel, and her superior sailing, she escaped, while the second was fired at, brought to, and carried into Patras. Count Gamba and his companions being taken before Yusuff Pacha, fully expected to share the fate of some unfortunate men whom that sanguinary chief had sacrificed the preceding year at Previsa, and their fears would most probably have been realized, had it not been for the presence of mind displayed by the count, who, assuming an air of hauteur and indifference, accused the captain of the frigate of a scandalous breach of neutrality, in firing at and detaining a vessel under English colours, and concluded by informing Yusuff, that he might expect the vengeance of the British government in thus interrupting a nobleman who was merely on his travels, and bound to Calamos. The Turkish chief, on recognizing in the master of the vessel a person who had saved his life in the Black Sea fifteen years before, not only consented to the vessel's release, but treated the whole of the passengers with the utmost attention, and even urged them to take a day's shooting in the neighbourhood.

Owing to contrary winds, Lord Byron's vessel was obliged to take shelter at the Scropes, a cluster of rocks within a few miles of Missolonghi. While detained here, he was in considerable danger of being captured by the Turks.

Lord Byron was received at Missolonghi with enthusiastic demonstrations of joy. No mark of honour or welcome which the Greeks could devise was omitted. The ships anchored off the fortress fired a salute as he passed. Prince Mavrocordato, and all the authorities, with the troops and the population, met him on his landing, and accompanied him to the house which had been prepared for him, amidst the shouts of the multitude and the discharge of cannon.

One of the first objects to which he turned his attention was to mitigate the ferocity with which the war had been carried on. The very day of his lordship's arrival was signalised by his rescuing a Turk, who had fallen into the hands of

some Greek sailors. The individual thus saved, having been clothed by his orders, was kept in the house until an opportunity occurred of sending him to Patras. Nor had his lordship been long at Missolonghi, before an opportunity presented itself for showing his sense of Yusuff Pacha's moderation in releasing Count Gamba. Hearing that there were four Turkish prisoners in the town, he requested that they might be placed in his hands. This being immediately granted, he sent them to Patras, with a letter addressed to the Turkish chief, expressing his hope that the prisoners thenceforward taken on both sides would be treated with humanity. This act was followed by another equally praise-worthy, which proved how anxious Lord Byron felt to give a new turn to the system of warfare hitherto pursued. A Greek cruizer having captured a Turkish boat, in which there was a number of passengers, chiefly women and children, they were also placed in the hands of Lord Byron, at his particular request; upon which a vessel was immediately hired, and the whole of them, to the number of twenty-four, were sent to Previsa, provided with every requisite for their comfort during the passage. The Turkish governor of Previsa thanked his lordship, and assured him, that he would take care equal attention should be in future shown to the Greeks who might become prisoners.

Another grand object with Lord Byron, and one which he never ceased to forward with the most anxious solicitude, was to reconcile the quarrels of the native chiefs, to make them friendly and confiding towards one another, and submissive to the orders of the government. He had neither time nor opportunity to carry this point to any great extent: much good was, however, done.

Lord Byron landed at Missolonghi animated with military ardour. After paying the fleet, which, indeed, had only come out under the expectation of receiving its arrears from the loan which he promised to make to the provisional government, he set about forming a brigade of Suliotes. Five hundred of these, the bravest and most resolute of the soldiers of Greece, were taken into his pay on the 1st of January, 1824. An expedition against Lepanto was proposed, of which the command was given to Lord Byron. This expedition, however, had to experience delay and disappointment. The Suliotes, conceiving that they had found a patron whose wealth was inexhaustible, and whose generosity was boundless, determined to make the most of the occasion, and proceeded to the most extravagant demands on their leader for arrears, and under other pretences. These mountaineers, untameable in the field, and unmanageable in a town, were, at this moment, peculiarly disposed to be obstinate, riotous, and mercenary. They had been chiefly instrumental in preserving Missolonghi when besieged the previous autumn by the Turks; had been driven from their abodes; and the whole of their families were, at this time, in the town, destitute of either home or sufficient supplies. Of turbulent and reckless character, they kept the place in awe; and Mavrocordato having, unlike the other captains, no soldiers of his own, was glad to find a body of valiant mercenaries, especially if paid for out of the funds of another; and, consequently, was not disposed to treat them with harshness. Within a fortnight after Lord Byron's arrival, a burgher refusing to quarter some Suliotes, who rudely demanded entrance into his house, was killed, and a riot ensued, in which some lives were lost. Lord Byron's impatient spirit could ill brook the delay of a favourite scheme, but he saw, with the utmost chagrin, that the state of his troops was such as to render any attempt to lead them out at that time impracticable.

The project of proceeding against Lepanto being thus suspended, at a moment when Lord Byron's enthusiasm was at its height, and when he had fully calculated on striking a blow which could not fail to be of the utmost service to the Greek cause, the unlooked-for disappointment preyed on his spirits, and produced a degree of irritability which, if it was not the sole cause, contributed greatly to a severe fit of epilepsy, with which he was attacked on the 15th of February. His lordship was sitting in the apartment of Colonel Stanhope, talking in a jocular manner with Mr Parry, the engineer, when it was observed, from occasional and rapid changes in his countenance, that he was suffering under some strong emotion. On a sudden he complained of a weakness in one of his legs, and rose, but finding himself unable to walk, he cried out for assistance. He then fell into a state of nervous and convulsive agitation, and was placed on a bed. For some minutes his countenance was much distorted. He however quickly recovered his senses, his speech returned, and he soon appeared perfectly well, although enfeebled and exhausted by the violence of the struggle. During the fit, he behaved with his usual extraordinary firmness, and his efforts in contending with, and attempting to master, the disease, are described as gigantic. In the course of the month, the attack was repeated four times; the violence of the disorder, at length, yielded to the remedies which his physicians advised, such as bleeding, cold bathing, perfect relaxation of mind, etc., and he gradually recovered. An accident, however, hap-

pened a few days after his first illness, which was ill calculated to aid the efforts of his medical advisers. A Suliote accompanied by another man, and the late Marco Botzaris' little boy, walked into the Seraglio, a place which, before Lord Byron's arrival, had been used as a sort of fortress and barrack for the Suliotes, and out of which they were ejected with great difficulty for the reception of the committee-stores, and for the occupation of the engineers, who required it for a laboratory. The sentinel on guard ordered the Suliote to retire, which being a species of motion to which Suliotes are not accustomed, the man carelessly advanced; upon which the serjeant of the guard (a German) demanded his business, and receiving no satisfactory answer, pushed him back. These wild warriors, who will dream for years of a blow if revenge is out of their power, are not slow to resent even a push. The Suliote struck again, the serjeant and he closed and struggled, when the Suliote drew a pistol from his belt; the serjeant wrenched it out of his hand, and blew the powder out of the pan. At this moment Captain Sass, a Swede, seeing the fray, came up, and ordered the man to be taken to the guard-room. The Suliote was then disposed to depart, and would have done so if the serjeant would have permitted him. Unfortunately, Captain Sass did not confine himself to merely giving the order for his arrest; for when the Suliote struggled to get away, Captain Sass drew his sword and struck him with the flat part of it; whereupon the enraged Greek flew upon him, with a pistol in one hand and the sabre in the other, and at the same moment nearly cut off the Captain's right arm, and shot him through the head. Captain Sass, who was remarkable for his mild and courageous character, expired in a few minutes. The Suliote also was a man of distinguished bravery. This was a serious affair, and great apprehensions were entertained that it would not end here. The Suliotes refused to surrender the man to justice, alleging that he had been struck, which, in Suliote law, justifies all the consequences which may follow.

In a letter written a few days after Lord Byron's first attack, to a friend in Zante, he speaks of himself as rapidly recovering. «I am a good deal better,» he observes, «though of course weakly. The leeches took too much blood from my temples the day after, and there was some difficulty in stopping it; but I have been up daily, and out in boats or on horseback. To-day I have taken a warm bath, and live as temperately as well can be, without any liquid but water, and without any animal food.» After adverting to some other subjects, the letter thus concludes: «Matters are here a little embroiled with the Suliotes, foreigners, etc.; but I still hope better things, and will stand by the cause as long as my health and circumstances will permit me to be supposed useful.»

Notwithstanding Lord Byron's improvement in health, his friends felt, from the first, that he ought to try a change of air. Missolonghi is a flat, marshy, and pestilential place, and, except for purposes of utility, never would have been selected for his residence. A gentleman of Zante wrote to him early in March, to induce him to return to that island for a time. To his letter the following answer was received:—

«I am extremely obliged by your offer of your country-house, as for all other kindness, in case my health should require my removal; but I cannot quit Greece while there is a chance of my being of (even supposed) utility. There is a stake worth millions such as I am, and while I can stand at all, I must stand by the cause. While I say this, I am aware of the difficulties, and dissensions, and defects of the Greeks themselves: but allowance must be made for them by all reasonable people.»

It may be well imagined, after so severe a fit of illness, and that in a great measure brought on by the conduct of the troops he had taken into his pay, and treated with the utmost generosity, that Lord Byron was in no humour to pursue his scheme against Lepanto, even supposing that his state of health had been such as to bear the fatigue of a campaign in Greece. The Suliotes, however, showed some signs of repentance, and offered to place themselves at his lordship's disposal. But still they had an objection to the nature of the service: «they would not fight against stone walls!» It is not surprising that the expedition to Lepanto was no longer thought of.

In conformity with our plan, we here add a selection of anecdotes, etc. connected with Lord Byron's residence at Missolonghi. They are principally taken from Capt. Parry's «Last Days of Lord Byron;» a work which seems to us, from its plain and unvarnished style, to bear the stamp and impress of truth.

In speaking of the Greek Committee one day, his lordship said—«I conceive that I have been already grossly ill-treated by the committee. In Italy, Mr Blaquiere, their agent, informed me that every requisite supply would be forwarded with all dispatch. I was disposed to come to Greece, but I hastened my departure in consequence of earnest solicitations. No time was to be lost, I was told, and Mr Blaquiere, instead of waiting on me at his return from Greece, left a paltry note, which gave me no information whatever. If I ever meet with him, I shall not fail to mention my surprise at his conduct; but it has been all of a piece. I wish the acting committee

had had some of the trouble which has fallen on me since my arrival here; they would have been more prompt in their proceedings, and would have known better what the country stood in need of. They would not have delayed the supplies a day, nor have sent out German officers, poor fellows, to starve at Missolonghi, but for my assistance. I am a plain man, and cannot comprehend the use of printing-presses to a people who do not read. Here the committee have sent supplies of maps, I suppose, that I may teach the young mountaineers geography. Here are bugle-horns, without bugle-men, and it is a chance if we can find any body in Greece to blow them. Books are sent to a people who want guns: they ask for a sword, and the committee give them the lever of a printing-press. Heavens! one would think the committee meant to inculcate patience and submission, and to condemn resistance. Some materials for constructing fortifications they have sent, but they have chosen their people so ill, that the work is deserted, and not one para have they sent to procure other labourers. Their secretary, Mr Bowring, was disposed, I believe, to claim the privilege of an acquaintance with me. He wrote me a long letter about the classic land of freedom, the birth-place of the arts, the cradle of genius, the habitation of the gods, the heaven of poets, and a great many such fine things. I was obliged to answer him, and I scrawled some nonsense in reply to his nonsense; but I fancy I shall get no more such epistles. When I came to the conclusion of the poetry part of my letter, I wrote, 'so much for blarney, now for business.' I have not since heard in the same strain from Mr Bowring.»

« My future intentions,» continued he, « as to Greece, may be explained in a few words: I will remain here till she is secure against the Turks, or till she has fallen under their power. All my income shall be spent in her service; but, unless driven by some great necessity, I will not touch a farthing of the sum intended for my sister's children. Whatever I can accomplish with my income, and my personal exertions, shall be cheerfully done. When Greece is secure against external enemies, I will leave the Greeks to settle their government as they like. One service more, and an eminent service it will be, I think I may perform for them. You, Parry, shall have a schooner built for me, or I will buy a vessel; the Greeks shall invest me with the character of their ambassador or agent; I will go to the United States, and procure that free and enlightened government to set the example of recognising the federation of Greece as an independent state. This done, England must follow the example, and then the fate of Greece will be permanently fixed, and she will enter into all her rights, as a member of the great commonwealth of Christian Europe.»

« This,» observes Captain Parry, in his plain and manly manner, « was Lord Byron's hope, and this was to be his last project in favour of Greece. Into it no motive of personal ambition entered, more than that just and proper one, the basis of all virtue, and the distinguished characteristic of an honourable mind—the hope of gaining the approbation of good men. As an author, he had already attained the pinnacle of popularity and of fame; but this did not satisfy his noble ambition. He hastened to Greece, with a devotion to liberty, and a zeal in favour of the oppressed, as pure as ever shone in the bosom of a knight in the purest days of chivalry, to gain the reputation of an unsullied warrior, and of a disinterested statesman. He was her unpaid, but the blessings of all Greece, and the high honours his own countrymen bestow on his memory, bearing him in their hearts, prove that he was not her unrewarded champion.»

Lord Byron's address was the most affable and courteous perhaps ever seen; his manners, when in a good humour, and desirous of being well with his guest, were winning, fascinating in the extreme, and though bland, still spirited, and with an air of frankness and generosity—qualities in which he was certainly not deficient. He was open to a fault—a characteristic probably the result of his fearlessness and independence of the world; but so open was he, that his friends were obliged to be upon their guard with him. He was the worst person in the world to confide a secret to; and if any charge against any body was mentioned to him, it was probably the first communication he made to the person in question. He hated scandal and tittle-tattle—loved the manly straightforward course: he would harbour no doubts, and never live with another with suspicions in his bosom—out came the accusation, and he called upon the individual to clear, or be ashamed of, himself. He detested a lie—nothing enraged him so much: he was by temperament and education excessively irritable, and a lie completely unchained him—his indignation knew no bounds. He had considerable tact in detecting untruth; he would smell it out almost instinctively; he avoided the timid driveller, and generally chose his companions among the lovers and practisers of sincerity and candour. A man tells a falsehood, and conceals the truth, because he is afraid that the declaration of the thing as it is will hurt him. Lord Byron was above all fear of this sort: he flinched from telling no one what he thought to his face; from his infancy he had been afraid of

no one. Falsehood is not the vice of the powerful: the Greek slave lies, the Turkish tyrant is remarkable for his adherence to truth. The anecdote that follows, told by Parry, is highly characteristic:—

« When the Turkish fleet was lying off Cape Papa, blockading Missolonghi, I was one day ordered by Lord Byron to accompany him to the mouth of the harbour to inspect the fortifications, in order to make a report on the state they were in. He and I were in his own punt, a little boat which he had, rowed by a boy; and in a large boat, accompanying us, were Prince Mavrocordato and his attendants. As I was viewing, on one hand, the Turkish fleet attentively, and reflecting on its powers, and our means of defence; and looking, on the other, at Prince Mavrocordato and his attendants, perfectly unconcerned, smoking their pipes and gossiping as if Greece were liberated and at peace, and Missolonghi in a state of complete security, I could not help giving vent to a feeling of contempt and indignation. 'What is the matter,' said his lordship, appearing to be very serious, 'what makes you so angry, Parry?' 'I am not angry,' I replied, 'my lord, but somewhat indignant. The Turks, if they were not the most stupid wretches breathing, might take the fort of Vasaladi, by means of two pinnaces, any night they pleased; they have only to approach it with muffled oars; they will not be heard, I will answer for their not being seen; and they may storm it in a few minutes. With eight gun-boats, properly armed with 24-pounders, they might batter both Missolonghi and Anatolica to the ground. And there sits the old gentlewoman, Prince Mavrocordato and his troop, to whom I applied an epithet I will not here repeat, as if they were all perfectly safe. They know their powers of defence are inadequate, and they have no means of improving them. If I were in their place, I should be in a fever at the thought of my own incapacity and ignorance, and I should burn with impatience to attempt the destruction of those stupid Turkish rascals. The Greeks and Turks are opponents worthy, by their imbecility, of each other.' I had scarcely explained myself fully, when his lordship ordered our boat to be placed alongside the other, and actually related our whole conversation to the prince. In doing it, however, he took on himself the task of pacifying both the prince and me, and though I was at first very angry, and the prince, I believe, very much annoyed, he succeeded. Mavrocordato afterwards showed no dissatisfaction with me, and I prized Lord Byron's regard too much, to remain long displeased with a proceeding which was only an unpleasant manner of reproving us both.»

« On one occasion (which we before slightly alluded to) he had saved twenty-four Turkish women and children from slavery and all its accompanying horrors. I was summoned to attend him and receive his orders, that every thing should be done which might contribute to their comfort. He was seated on a cushion at the upper end of the room, the women and children were standing before him, with their eyes fixed steadily on him, and on his right hand was his interpreter, who was extracting from the women a narrative of their sufferings. One of them, apparently about thirty years of age, possessing great vivacity, and whose manners and dress, though she was then dirty and disfigured, indicated that she was superior in rank and condition to her companions, was spokeswoman for the whole. I admired the good order the others preserved, never interfering with the explanation or interrupting the single speaker. I also admired the rapid manner in which the interpreter explained every thing they said, so as to make it almost appear that there was but one speaker.—After a short time, it was evident that what Lord Byron was hearing affected his feelings—his countenance changed, his colour went and came, and I thought he was ready to weep. But he had on all occasions a ready and peculiar knack in turning conversation from any disagreeable or unpleasant subject; and he had recourse to this expedient. He rose up suddenly, and turning round on his heel, as was his wont, he said something quickly to his interpreter, who immediately repeated it to the women. All eyes were instantly fixed on me, and one of the party, a young and beautiful woman, spoke very warmly. Lord Byron seemed satisfied, and said they might retire. The women all slipped off their shoes in an instant, and going up to his lordship, each in succession, accompanied by their children, kissed his hand fervently, invoked, in the Turkish manner, a blessing both on his head and heart, and then quitted the room. This was too much for Lord Byron, and he turned his face away to conceal his emotion.»

« One of Lord Byron's household had several times involved himself and his master in perplexity and trouble, by his unrestrained attachment to women. In Greece this had been very annoying, and induced Lord Byron to think of a means of curing it. A young Suliote of the guard was accordingly dressed up like a woman, and instructed to place himself in the way of the amorous swain. The bait took, and after some communication, had rather by signs than by

words,] for [the pair did not understand each other's language, the sham lady was carefully conducted by the gallant to one of Lord Byron's apartments. Here the couple were surprised by an enraged Suliote, a husband provided for the occasion, accompanied by half a dozen of his comrades, whose presence and threats terrified the poor lacquey almost out of his senses. The noise of course brought Lord Byron to the spot, to laugh at the tricked serving-man, and rescue him from the effects of his terror.»

« A few days after the earthquake, which took place on the 21st of February, as we were all sitting at table in the evening, we were suddenly alarmed by a noise and a shaking of the house, somewhat similar to that which we had experienced when the earthquake occurred. Of course all started from their places, and there was the same kind of confusion as on the former evening, at which Byron, who was present, laughed immoderately; we were re-assured by this, and soon learnt that the whole was a method he had adopted to sport with our fears.»

« The regiment, or rather the brigade, we formed, can be described only as Byron himself describes it. There was a Greek tailor, who had been in the British service in the Ionian Islands, where he had married an Italian woman. This lady, knowing something of the military service, petitioned Lord Byron to appoint her husband master-tailor of the brigade. The suggestion was useful, and this part of her petition was immediately granted. At the same time, however, she solicited that she might be permitted to raise a corps of women, to be placed under her orders, to accompany the regiment. She stipulated for free quarters and rations for them, but rejected all claim for pay. They were to be free of all incumbrances, and were to wash, sew, cook, and otherwise provide for the men. The proposition pleased Lord Byron, and, stating the matter to me, he said he hoped I should have no objection. I had been accustomed to see women accompany the English army, and I knew that, though sometimes an incumbrance, they were on the whole more beneficial than otherwise. In Greece there were many circumstances which would make their services extremely valuable, and I gave my consent to the measure. The tailor's wife did accordingly recruit a considerable number of unincumbered women, of almost all nations, but principally Greeks, Italians, Maltese, and Negresses. 'I was afraid,' said Lord Byron, 'when I mentioned this matter to you, you would be crusty, and oppose it,—it is the very thing. Let me see, my corps outdoes Falstaff's: there are English, Germans, French, Maltese, Ragusians, Italians, Neapolitans, Transylvanians, Russians, Suliotes, Moreotes, and Western Greeks in front, and, to bring up the rear, the tailor's wife and her troop. Glorious Apollo! no general had ever before such an army.' »

« Lord Byron had a black groom with him in Greece, an American by birth, to whom he was very partial. He always insisted on this man's calling him Massa, whenever he spoke to him. On one occasion, the groom met with two women of his own complexion, who had been slaves to the Turks and liberated, but had been left almost to starve when the Greeks had risen on their tyrants. Being of the same colour was a bond of sympathy between them and the groom, and he applied to me to give both these women quarters in the Seraglio. I granted the application, and mentioned it to Lord Byron, who laughed at the gallantry of his groom, and ordered that he should be brought before him at ten o'clock the next day, to answer for his presumption in making such an application. At ten o'clock, accordingly, he attended his master with great trembling and fear, but stuttered so when he attempted to speak, that he could not make himself understood; Lord Byron endeavouring, almost in vain, to preserve his gravity, reproved him severely for his presumption. Blacky stuttered a thousand excuses, and was ready to do any thing to appease his massa's anger. His great yellow eyes wide open, he trembling from head to foot, his wandering and stuttering excuses, his visible dread—all tended to provoke laughter; and Lord Byron, fearing his own dignity would be hove overboard, told him to hold his tongue, and listen to his sentence. I was commanded to enter it in his memorandum-book, and then he pronounced in a solemn tone of voice, while Blacky stood aghast, expecting some severe punishment, the following doom: 'My determination is, that the children born of these black women, of which you may be the father, shall be my property, and I will maintain them. What say you?' 'Go—Go—God bless you, massa, may you live great while,' stuttered out the groom, and sallied forth to tell the good news to the two distressed women.»

The *luxury* of Lord Byron's living at this time may be seen from the following order, which he gave his superintendant of the household, for the daily expenses of his own table. It amounts to no more than one piastre.

	Paras.
Bread, a pound and a half . . .	15
Wine	7
Fish	15
Olives	3
	40

This was his dinner; his breakfast consisted of a single dish of tea, without milk or sugar.

The circumstances that attended the death of this illustrious and noble-minded man, are described in the following plain and simple manner by his faithful valet and constant follower, Mr Fletcher:—

« My master,» says Mr Fletcher, « continued his usual custom of riding daily when the weather would permit, until the 9th of April. But on that ill-fated day he got very wet, and on his return home his lordship changed the whole of his dress; but he had been too long in his wet clothes, and the cold, of which he had complained more or less ever since we left Cephalonia, made this attack be more severely felt. Though rather feverish during the night, his lordship slept pretty well, but complained in the morning of a pain in his bones, and a head-ache: this did not, however, prevent him from taking a ride in the afternoon, which, I grieve to say, was his last. On his return, my master said that the saddle was not perfectly dry, from being so wet the day before, and observed that he thought it had made him worse. His lordship was again visited by the same slow fever, and I was sorry to perceive, on the next morning, that his illness appeared to be increasing. He was very low, complained of not having had any sleep during the night. His lordship's appetite was also quite gone. I prepared a little arrow-root, of which he took three or four spoonfuls, saying it was very good, but he could take no more. It was not till the third day, the 12th, that I began to be alarmed for my master. In all his former colds he always slept well, and was never affected by this slow fever. I therefore went to Dr Bruno and Mr Millingen, the two medical attendants, and enquired minutely into every circumstance connected with my master's present illness: both replied that there was no danger, and I might make myself perfectly easy on the subject, for all would be well in a few days. This was on the 13th. On the following day, I found my master in such a state, that I could not feel happy without supplicating that he would send to Zante for Dr Thomas. After expressing my fears lest his lordship should get worse, he desired me to consult the doctors, which I did, and was told there was no occasion for calling in any person, as they hoped all would be well in a few days. Here I should remark, that his lordship repeatedly said, in the course of the day, he was sure the doctors did not understand his disease; to which I answered, ' Then, my lord, have other advice by all means.' ' They tell me,' said his lordship, ' that it is only a common cold, which, you know, I have had a thousand times.' ' I am sure, my lord,' said I, ' that you never had one of so serious a nature.' ' I think I never had,' was his lordship's answer. I repeated my supplications that Dr Thomas should be sent for, on the 15th, and was again assured that my master would be better in two or three days. After these confident assurances, I did not renew my entreaties until it was too late. With respect to the medicines that were given to my master, I could not persuade myself that those of a strong purgative nature were the best adapted for his complaint, concluding that, as he had nothing on his stomach, the only effect would be to create pain; indeed, this must have been the case with a person in perfect health. The whole nourishment taken by my master, for the last eight days, consisted of a small quantity of broth, at two or three different times, and two spoonfuls of arrow-root on the 18th, the day before his death. The first time I heard of there being any intention of bleeding his lordship was on the 15th, when it was proposed by Dr Bruno, but objected to at first by my master, who asked Mr Millingen if there was any great reason for taking blood? The latter replied that it might be of service, but added it might be deferred till the next day; and, accordingly, my master was bled in the right arm on the evening of the 16th, and a pound of blood was taken. I observed, at the time, that it had a most inflamed appearance. Dr Bruno now began to say, that he had frequently urged my master to be bled, but that he always refused. A long dispute now arose about the time that had been lost, and the necessity of sending for medical aid to Zante; upon which I was informed, for the first time, that it would be of no use, as my master would be better or no more before the arrival of Dr Thomas. His lordship continued to get worse, but Dr Bruno said, he thought letting blood again would save his life; and lost no time in telling my master how necessary it was to comply with the doctor's wishes. To this he replied by saying, he feared they knew nothing about his disorder; and then, stretching out his arm, said, 'Here, take my arm and do whatever you like.' His lordship continued to get weaker, and on the 17th he was bled twice in the morning, and at two o'clock in the afternoon; the bleeding at both times was followed by fainting fits, and he would have fallen down more than once had I not caught him in my arms. In order to prevent such an accident, I took care not to permit his lordship to stir without supporting him. On this day my master said to me twice, ' I cannot sleep, and you well know I have not been able to sleep for more than a week; I know,' added his lordship, ' that a man can only be a certain time without

sleep, and then he must go mad without any one being able to save him; and I would ten times sooner shoot myself than be mad, for I am not afraid of dying—I am more fit to die than people think!'

« I do not, however, believe that his lordship had any apprehension of his fate till the day after the 18th, when he said, 'I fear you and Tita will be ill by sitting continually night and day.' I answered, 'We shall never leave your lordship till you are better.' As my master had a slight fit of delirium on the 16th, I took care to remove the pistol and stiletto, which had hitherto been kept at his bedside in the night. On the 18th his lordship addressed me frequently, and seemed to be very much dissatisfied with his medical treatment. I then said, 'Do allow me to send for Dr Thomas?' to which he answered, 'Do so, but be quick; I am sorry I did not let you do so before, as I am sure they have mistaken my disease. Write yourself, for I know they would not like to see other doctors here.' I did not lose a moment in obeying my master's orders; and on informing Dr Bruno and Mr Millingen of it, they said it was very right, as they now began to be afraid themselves. On returning to my master's room, his first words were 'have you sent?'—'I have, my lord,' was my answer; upon which he said, 'you have done right, for I should like to know what is the matter with me.' Although his lordship did not appear to think his dissolution was so near, I could perceive he was getting weaker every hour, and he even began to have occasional fits of delirium. He afterwards said, 'I now begin to think I am seriously ill, and in case I should be taken off suddenly, I wish to give you several directions, which I hope you will be particular in seeing executed.' I answered I would in case such an event came to pass, but expressed a hope that he would live many years to execute them much better himself than I could. To this my master replied, 'No, it is now nearly over;' and then added, 'I must tell you all without losing a moment!' I then said, 'Shall I go, my lord, and fetch pen, ink and paper?'—'Oh, my God! no; you will lose too much time, and I have it not to spare, for my time is now short,' said his lordship, and immediately after, 'Now pay attention!' His lordship commenced by saying, 'You will be provided for.' I begged him, however, to proceed with things of more consequence. He then continued, 'oh, my poor dear child! my dear Ada! my God! could I but have seen her! Give her my blessing—and my dear sister Augusta and her children; and you will go to Lady Byron, and say—tell her every thing,—you are friends with her.' His lordship seemed to be greatly affected at this moment. Here my master's voice failed him, so that I could only catch a word at intervals; but he kept muttering something very seriously for some time, and would often raise his voice, and said, 'Fletcher, now if you do not execute every order which I have given you, I will torment you hereafter if possible.' Here I told his lordship, in a state of the greatest perplexity, that I had not understood a word of what he said; to which he replied, 'Oh, my God! then all is lost, for it is now too late! Can it be possible you have not understood me?'—'No, my lord,' said I, 'but I pray you to try and inform me once more.' 'How can I?' rejoined my master, 'it is now too late, and all is over!' I said, 'Not our will, but God's be done!'—and he answered, 'Yes, not mine be done!—but I will try.' His lordship did indeed make several efforts to speak, but could only speak two or three words at a time,—such as 'My wife! my child! my sister!—you know all—you must say all—you know my wishes'—the rest was quite unintelligible. A consultation was now held (about noon) when it was determined to administer some Peruvian bark and wine. My master had now been nine days without any sustenance whatever, except what I have already mentioned. With the exception of a few words, which can only interest those to whom they were addressed, and which if required I shall communicate to themselves, it was impossible to understand any thing his lordship said after taking the bark. He expressed a wish to sleep. I at one time asked whether I should call Mr Parry, to which he replied, 'Yes, you may call him.' Mr Parry desired him to compose himself. He shed tears, and apparently sunk into a slumber. Mr Parry went away expecting to find him refreshed on his return,—but it was the commencement of the lethargy preceding his death. The last words I heard my master utter were at six o'clock on the evening of the 18th, when he said, 'I must sleep now;' upon which he laid down never to rise again!—for he did not move hand or foot during the following twenty-four hours. His lordship appeared, however, to be in a state of suffocation at intervals, and had a frequent rattling in the throat; on these occasions I called Tita to assist me in raising his head, and I thought he seemed to get quite stiff. The rattling and choaking in the throat took place every half-hour, and we continued to raise his head whenever the fit came on, till six o'clock in the evening of the 19th, when I saw my master open his eyes and then shut them, but without showing any symptom of pain, or moving hand or foot. 'Oh!

my God!' I exclaimed, 'I fear his lordship is gone!' the doctors then felt his pulse, and said, 'You are right—he is gone!'»

It would be vain to attempt a description of the universal sorrow that ensued at Missolonghi. Not only Mavrocordato and his immediate circle, but the whole city and all its inhabitants were, as it seemed, stunned by this blow,—it had been so sudden, so unexpected. His illness, indeed, had been known, and for the last three days none of his friends could walk in the streets without anxious inquiries from every one of «How is my lord.»

On the day of this melancholy event, Prince Mavrocordato issued a proclamation expressive of the deep and unfeigned grief felt by all classes, and ordering every public demonstration of respect and sorrow to be paid to the memory of the illustrious deceased, by firing minute guns, closing all the public offices and shops, suspending the usual Easter festivities, and by a general mourning and funeral prayers in all the churches. It was resolved that the body should be embalmed, and after the suitable funeral honours had been performed, should be embarked for Zante,—thence to be conveyed to England. Accordingly the medical men opened the body and embalmed it, and having enclosed the heart, and brain, and intestines in separate vessels, they placed it in a chest lined with tin, as there were no means of procuring a leaden coffin capable of holding the spirits necessary for its preservation on the voyage. Dr Bruno drew up an account of the examination of the body, by which it appeared his lordship's death had been caused by an inflammatory fever. Dr Meyer, a Swiss physician, who was present, and had accidentally seen Madame de Stael after her death, stated that the formation of the brain in both these illustrious persons was extremely similar, but that Lord Byron had a much greater quantity.

On the 22d of April, 1824, in the midst of his own brigade, of the troops of the government, and of the whole population, on the shoulders of the officers of his corps, relieved occasionally by other Greeks, the most precious portion of his honoured remains were carried to the church, where lie the bodies of Marco Botzaris and of general Normann. There they were laid down: the coffin was a rude, ill-constructed chest of wood; a black mantle served for a pall, and over it were placed a helmet and a sword, and a crown of laurel. But no funeral pomp could have left the impression, nor spoken the feelings, of this simple ceremony. The wretchedness and desolation of the place itself; the wild and half-civilized warriors present; their deep-felt, unaffected grief; the fond recollections; the disappointed hopes; the anxieties and sad presentiments which might be read on every countenance—all contributed to form a scene more moving, more truly affecting than perhaps was ever before witnessed round the grave of a great man.

When the funeral service was over, the bier was left in the middle of the church, where it remained until the evening of the next day, and was guarded by a detachment of his own brigade. The church was incessantly crowded by those who came to honour and to regret the benefactor of Greece. In the evening of the 23d, the bier was privately carried back by his officers to his own house. The coffin was not closed till the 29th of the month.

Immediately after his death, his countenance had an air of calmness, mingled with a severity, that seemed gradually to soften, and the whole expression was truly sublime.

On May 2d, the remains of Lord Byron were embarked, under a salute from the guns of the fortress. «How different,» exclaims Count Gamba, «from that which had welcomed the arrival of Byron only four months ago!» After a passage of three days, the vessel reached Zante, and the precious deposit was placed in the quarantine house. Here some additional precautions were taken to ensure its safe arrival in England, by providing another case for the body. On May the 10th, Colonel Stanhope arrived at Zante, from the Morea, and as he was on his way back to England, he took charge of Lord Byron's remains, and embarked with them on board the Florida. On the 25th of May she sailed for Zante, on the 29th of June entered the Downs, and from thence proceeded to Stangate creek, to perform quarantine, where she arrived on Thursday, July 1st.

John Cam Hobhouse, esq., and John Hanson, esq., Lord Byron's executors, after having proved his will, claimed the body from the Florida, and under their directions it was removed to the house of Sir Edward Knatchbull, No. 20, Great George street, Westminster.

It was announced from time to time that the body of Lord Byron was to be exhibited in state, and the progress of the embellishments of the poet's bier was recorded in the pages of a hundred publications. They were at length completed, and to separate the curiosity of the poor from the admiration of the rich, the latter were indulged with tickets of admission, and a day was set apart for them to go and wonder over the decked room and the emblazoned bier. Peers and peeresses, priests, poets, and politicians, came in gilded chariots and in hired hacks to gaze upon the splendour of the funeral preparations, and to see in how rich and how vain a shroud the

body of the immortal bard had been hid. Those idle trappings in which rank seeks to mark its altitude above the vulgar belonged to the state of the peer rather than to the state of the poet; genius required no such attractions, and all this magnificence served only to distract our regard from the man whose inspired tongue was now silenced for ever. Who cared for Lord Byron the peer and the privy councillor, with his coronet and his long descent from princes on one side, and from heroes on both? and who did not care for George Gordon Byron the poet, who has charmed us, and will charm our descendants with his deep and impassioned verse? The homage was rendered to genius, not surely to rank—for lord can be stamped on any clay, but inspiration can only be impressed on the finest metal.

A few select friends and admirers followed Lord Byron to the grave — his coronet was borne before him, and there were many indications of his rank; but, save the assembled multitude, no indications of his genius. In conformity with a singular practice of the great, a long train of their empty carriages followed the mourning coaches — mocking the dead with idle state, and impeding with barren pageantry the honester sympathy of the crowd. Where were the owners of those machines of sloth and luxury — where were the men of rank among whose dark pedigrees Lord Byron threw the light of his genius, and lent the brows of nobility a halo to which they were strangers? Where were the great whigs? where were the illustrious tories? could a mere difference in matters of human belief keep those fastidious persons away? But, above all, where were the friends with whom wedlock had united him? On his desolate corpse no wife looked, no child shed a tear. We have no wish to set ourselves up as judges in domestic infelicities, and we are willing to believe they were separated in such a way as rendered conciliation hopeless; but who could stand and look on his pale manly face, and his dark locks which early sorrows were making thin and grey, without feeling that, gifted as he was, with a soul above the mark of other men, his domestic misfortunes called for our pity as surely as his genius called for our admiration?

As the cavalcade proceeded through the streets of London, a fine-looking honest tar was observed to walk near the hearse uncovered throughout the morning, and on being asked by a stranger whether he formed part of the funeral *cortege*, he replied he came there to pay his respects to the deceased, with whom he had served in the Levant, when he made the tour of the Grecian islands. This poor fellow was kindly offered a place by some of the servants who were behind the carriage; but he said he was strong, and had rather walk near the hearse.

It was not till Friday, July 16th, that the interment took place. Lord Byron was buried in the family vault, at the village of Hucknel, eight miles beyond Nottingham, and within two miles of the venerable Abbey of Newstead. He was accompanied to the grave by crowds of persons eager to show this last testimony of respect to his memory. In one of his earlier poems he had expressed a wish, that his dust might mingle with his mother's, and in compliance with this wish, his coffin was placed in the vault next to hers. It was twenty minutes past four o'clock on Friday, July 16th, 1824, when the ceremony was concluded, when the tomb closed for ever on Byron, and when his friends were relieved from every care concerning him, save that of doing justice to his memory, and of cherishing his fame.

The following inscription was placed on the coffin:—

« George Gordon Noel Byron,
Lord Byron,
of Rochdale.
Born in London,[1]
Jan. 22, 1788,
died at Missolonghi,
in Western Greece,
April 19th, 1824.»

An urn accompanied the coffin, and on it was inscribed:

« Within this urn are deposited the heart,
brain, etc.,
of the deceased Lord Byron.»

An elegant Grecian tablet of white marble, has been placed in the chancel of the Hucknall church. We subjoin a copy of the inscription The words are in Roman capitals, and divided into lines as under:

IN THE VAULT BENEATH,
WHERE MANY OF HIS ANCESTORS AND HIS MOTHER ARE BURIED,
LIE THE REMAINS OF
GEORGE GORDON NOEL BYRON,
LORD BYRON, OF ROCHDALE,
IN THE COUNTY OF LANCASTER;
THE AUTHOR OF « CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE. »
HE WAS BORN IN LONDON, ON THE
22D OF JANUARY, 1788.
HE DIED AT MISSOLONGHI, IN WESTERN GREECE, ON THE
19TH OF APRIL, 1824,
ENGAGED IN THE GLORIOUS ATTEMPT TO RESTORE THAT
COUNTRY TO HER ANCIENT FREEDOM AND RENOWN.

HIS SISTER, THE HONOURABLE
AUGUSTA MARIA LEIGH,
PLACED THIS TABLET TO HIS MEMORY.

[1] Mr Dallas says Dover, which is undoubtedly correct.

THE

COMPLETE WORKS

OF

LORD BYRON.

Hours of Idleness.

Μήτ' ἄρ με μάλ' αἶνεε, μήτε τι νείκει.

HOMER. *Iliad*, 10.

He whistled as he went for want of thought.

DRYDEN.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE FREDERICK, EARL OF CARLISLE,

KNIGHT OF THE GARTER, etc.

These Poems are Inscribed,

BY HIS OBLIGED WARD, AND AFFECTIONATE KINSMAN,

THE AUTHOR.

ON LEAVING NEWSTEAD ABBEY.

Why dost thou build the hall? Son of the winged days! Thou lookest from thy tower to-day; yet a few years, and the blast of the desert comes; it howls in thy empty court.

OSSIAN.

THROUGH thy battlements, Newstead, the hollow winds whistle;
Thou, the hall of my fathers, art gone to decay;
In thy once smiling garden, the hemlock and thistle
Have choked up the rose which late bloom'd in the way.

Of the mail-cover'd barons, who proudly, to battle
Led their vassals from Europe to Palestine's plain,
The escutcheon and shield, which with every blast rattle,
Are the only sad vestiges now that remain.

No more doth old Robert, with harp-stringing numbers,
Raise a flame in the breast, for the war-laurel'd wreath;
Near Askalon's Towers John of Horistan[1] slumbers,
Unnerved is the hand of his minstrel by death.

Paul and Hubert too sleep, in the valley of Cressy;
For the safety of Edward and England they fell;
My fathers! the tears of your country redress ye;
How you fought! how you died! still her annals can tell.

On Marston,[2] with Rupert[3] 'gainst traitors contending,
Four brothers enrich'd with their blood the bleak field;
For the rights of a monarch, their country defending,
Till death their attachment to royalty seal'd.

Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant departing
From the seat of his ancestors bids you adieu!
Abroad or at home, your remembrance imparting
New courage, he 'll think upon glory and you.

Though a tear dim his eye at this sad separation,
'T is nature, not fear, that excites his regret;
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation,
The fame of his fathers he ne'er can forget.

That fame, and that memory, still will he cherish,
He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your renown;
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish;
When decay'd, may he mingle his dust with your own.

1803.

[1] Horistan Castle, in Derbyshire, an ancient seat of the Byron Family.

[2] The battle of Marston Moor, where the adherents of Charles I. were defeated.

[3] Son of the Elector Palatine, and related to Charles I. He afterwards commanded the fleet, in the reign of Charles II.

EPITAPH ON A FRIEND.

Αστηρ πριν μεν ελαμπες ενι ζωοισιν εως.

LAERTIUS.

Oh, Friend! for ever loved, for ever dear!
What fruitless tears have bathed thy honour'd bier!
What sighs re-echo'd to thy parting breath,
While thou wast struggling in the pangs of death!
Could tears retard the tyrant in his course;
Could sighs avert his dart's relentless force;
Could youth and virtue claim a short delay,
Or beauty charm the spectre from his prey;
Thou still had'st lived, to bless my aching sight,
Thy comrade's honour, and thy friend's delight.

If, yet, thy gentle spirit hover nigh
The spot, where now thy mouldering ashes lie,
Here wilt thou read, recorded on my heart,
A grief too deep to trust the sculptor's art.
No marble marks thy couch of lowly sleep,
But living statues there, are seen to weep;
Affliction's semblance bends not o'er thy tomb,
Affliction's self deplores thy youthful doom.
What though thy sire lament his failing line,
A father's sorrows cannot equal mine!
Though none, like thee, his dying hour will cheer,
Yet, other offspring soothe his anguish here:
But who with me shall hold thy former place?
Thine image, what new friendship can efface?
Ah, none! a father's tears will cease to flow,
Time will assuage an infant brother's woe;
To all, save one, is consolation known,
While solitary Friendship sighs alone.

1803.

A FRAGMENT.

When, to their airy hall, my Fathers' voice
Shall call my spirit, joyful in their choice;
When, poised upon the gale, my form shall ride,
Or, dark in mist, descend the mountain's side;
Oh! may my shade behold no sculptured urns,
To mark the spot where earth to earth returns:
No lengthen'd scroll, no praise encumber'd stone;
My epitaph shall be my name alone:
If *that* with honour fail to crown my clay,
Oh! may no other fame my deeds repay;
That, only *that*, shall single out the spot,
By that remember'd, or with that forgot.

1803.

THE TEAR.

O lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo; quater
Felix! in imio qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit.

GRAY.

When Friendship or Love
Our sympathies move;
When Truth in a glance should appear;
The lips may beguile,
With a dimple or smile,
But the test of affection 's a Tear.

Too oft is a smile
But the hypocrite's wile,
To mask detestation or fear;
Give me the soft sigh,
Whilst the soul-telling eye
Is dimm'd, for a time, with a Tear.

Mild Charity's glow,
To us mortals below,
Shows the soul from barbarity clear;
Compassion will melt,
Where this virtue is felt,
And its dew is diffused in a Tear.

The man doom'd to sail,
With the blast of the gale,
Through billows Atlantic to steer;
As he bends o'er the wave,
Which may soon be his grave,
The green sparkles bright with a Tear.

The soldier braves death,
For a fanciful wreath,
In Glory's romantic career;
But he raises the foe,
When in battle laid low,
And bathes every wound with a Tear.

If, with high-bounding pride,
He return to his bride,
Renouncing the gore-crimson'd spear;
All his toils are repaid,
When, embracing the maid,
From her eyelid he kisses the Tear.

Sweet scene of my youth,
Seat of Friendship and Truth,
Where love chased each fast-fleeting year;
Loth to leave thee, I mourn'd,
For a last look I turn'd,
But thy spire was scarce seen through a Tear.

Though my vows I can pour,
To my Mary no more,
My Mary, to Love once so dear;
In the shade of her bower,
I remember the hour,
She rewarded those vows with a Tear.

By another possest,
May she live ever blest,
Her name still my heart must revere;
With a sigh I resign,
What I once thought was mine,
And forgive her deceit with a Tear.

Ye friends of my heart,
Ere from you I depart,
This hope to my breast is most near;
If again we shall meet,
In this rural retreat,
May we meet, as we part, with a Tear.

When my soul wings her flight,
To the regions of night,
And my corse shall recline on its bier;
As ye pass by the tomb,
Where my ashes consume,
Oh! moisten their dust with a Tear.

May no marble bestow
The splendour of woe,
Which the children of vanity rear;
No fiction of fame
Shall blazon my name,
All I ask, all I wish, is a Tear.

1806.

AN OCCASIONAL PROLOGUE.

Delivered previous to the performance of « The Wheel of Fortune,» at a private theatre.

Since the refinement of this polish'd age
Has swept immoral raillery from the stage;
Since taste has now expunged licentious wit,
Which stamp'd disgrace on all an author writ;

Since, now, to please with purer scenes we seek,
Nor dare to call the blush from Beauty's cheek;
Oh! let the modest Muse some pity claim,
And meet indulgence though she find not fame
Still, not for her alone we wish respect,
Others appear more conscious of defect;
To-night, no Veteran Roscii you behold,
In all the arts of scenic action old;
No Cooke, no Kemble, can salute you here,
No Siddons draw the sympathetic tear;
To-night, you throng to witness the debut,
Of embryo Actors, to the drama new.
Here, then, our almost unfledged wings we try;
Clip not our pinions, ere the birds can fly;
Failing in this our first attempt to soar,
Drooping, alas! we fall to rise no more.
Not one poor trembler, only, fear betrays,
Who hopes, yet almost dreads, to meet your praise,
But all our Dramatis Personæ wait,
In fond suspense, this crisis of their fate.
No venal views our progress can retard,
Your generous plaudits are our sole reward;
For these, each Hero all his power displays,
Each timid Heroine shrinks before your gaze:
Surely, the last will some protection find,
None, to the softer sex, can prove unkind;
Whilst Youth and Beauty form the female shield,
The sternest Censor to the fair must yield.
Yet should our feeble efforts nought avail,
Should, after all, our best endeavours fail;
Still, let some mercy in your bosoms live,
And, if you can't applaud, at least forgive.

ON THE DEATH OF MR FOX.

The following illiberal Impromptu appeared in a Morning Paper.

Our Nation's foes lament, on Fox's death,
But bless the hour when Pitt resign'd his breath;
These feelings wide, let Sense and Truth unclue,
We give the palm where Justice points it due.

To which the Author of these Pieces sent the following Reply.

Oh! factious viper! whose envenom'd tooth
Would mangle still the dead, perverting truth;
What, though our «nation's foes» lament the fate,
With generous feeling, of the good and great;
Shall dastard tongues essay to blast the name
Of him, whose meed exists in endless fame?
When Pitt expired, in plenitude of power,
Though ill success obscured his dying hour,
Pity her dewy wings before him spread,
For noble spirits «war not with the dead.»
His friends, in tears, a last sad requiem gave,
As all his errors slumber'd in the grave;
He sunk, an Atlas, bending 'neath the weight
Of cares o'erwhelming our conflicting state;
When, lo! a Hercules, in Fox, appear'd;
Who, for a time, the ruin'd fabric rear'd;
He, too, is fall'n, who Britain's loss supplied;
With him, our fast reviving hopes have died:
Not one great people only raise his urn,
All Europe's far extended regions mourn.
«These feelings wide, let Sense and Truth unclue,
To give the palm where Justice points it due;»
Yet let not canker'd calumny assail,
Or round our statesman wind her gloomy veil.
Fox! o'er whose corse a mourning world must weep,
Whose dear remains in honour'd marble sleep,
For whom, at last, e'en hostile nations groan,
While friends and foes alike his talents own.
Fox shall, in Britain's future annals, shine,
Nor e'en to Pitt the patriot's palm resign,
Which Envy, wearing Candour's sacred mask,
For Pitt, and Pitt alone, has dared to ask.

STANZAS TO A LADY.

With the Poems of Camoens.

This votive pledge of fond esteem,
Perhaps, dear girl! for me thou'lt prize;
It sings of Love's enchanting dream,
A theme we never can despise.

Who blames it but the envious fool,
The old and disappointed maid?
Or pupil of the prudish school,
In single sorrow doom'd to fade.

Then read, dear girl, with feeling read,
For thou wilt ne'er be one of those;
To thee in vain I shall not plead,
In pity for the Poet's woes.

He was, in sooth, a genuine bard;
His was no faint fictitious flame;
Like his, may love be thy reward,
But not thy hapless fate the same.

TO M * * *

Oh! did those eyes, instead of fire,
With bright, but mild affection shine;
Though they might kindle less desire,
Love, more than mortal would be thine.

For thou art form'd so heavenly fair,
Howe'er those orbs may wildly beam,
We must admire, but still despair:
That fatal glance forbids esteem.

When nature stamp'd thy beauteous birth,
So much perfection in thee shone,
She fear'd that, too divine for earth,
The skies might claim thee for their own.

Therefore, to guard her dearest work,
Lest angels might dispute the prize,
She bade a secret lightning lurk
Within those once celestial eyes.

These might the boldest sylph appal,
When gleaming with meridian blaze;
Thy beauty must enrapture all,
But who can dare thine ardent gaze!

'T is said, that Berenice's hair
In stars adorn the vault of heaven:
But, they would ne'er permit thee there,
Thou would'st so far outshine the seven.

For, did those eyes as planets roll,
Thy sister lights would scarce appear:
E'en suns, which systems now controul,
Would twinkle dimly through their sphere.

1806.

TO WOMAN.

Woman! experience might have told me,
That all must love thee who behold thee,
Surely, experience might have taught,
Thy firmest promises are nought;
But, placed in all thy charms before me,
All I forget, but to adore thee.
Oh! Memory! thou choicest blessing;
When join'd with hope, when still possessing;
But how much cursed by every lover,
When hope is fled, and passion 's over.
Woman, that fair and fond deceiver,
How prompt are striplings to believe her!
How throbs the pulse, when first we view
The eye that rolls in glossy blue,
Or sparkles black, or mildly throws
A beam from under hazel brows!
How quick we credit every oath,
And hear her plight the willing troth!
Fondly we hope 't will last for aye,
When, lo! she changes in a day.
This record will for ever stand,
«Woman! thy vows are traced in sand.» [1]

TO M. S. G.

When I dream that you love me, you'll surely forgive,
Extend not your anger to sleep;
For in visions alone, your affection can live;
I rise, and it leaves me to weep.

Then, Morpheus! envelope my faculties fast,
Shed o'er me your languor benign;
Should the dream of to-night but resemble the last;
What rapture celestial is mine!

They tell us, that slumber, the sister of death,
Mortality's emblem is given;
To fate how I long to resign my frail breath,
If this be a foretaste of heaven!

Ah! frown not, sweet Lady, unbend your soft brow,
Nor deem me too happy in this;
If I sin in my dream, I atone for it now,
Thus doom'd but to gaze upon bliss.

Though in visions, sweet Lady, perhaps, you may smile,
Oh! think not my penance deficient;
When dreams of your presence my slumbers beguile,
To awake will be torture sufficient.

SONG.

When I roved, a young Highlander, o'er the dark heath,
And climb'd thy steep summit, oh! Morven of Snow,[2]
To gaze on the torrent that thunder'd beneath,
Or the mist of the tempest that gather'd below,[3]

Untutor'd by science, a stranger to fear,
And rude as the rocks where my infancy grew,
No feeling, save one, to my bosom was dear,
Need I say, my sweet Mary, 't was centred in you?

Yet, it could not be Love, for I knew not the name;
What passion can dwell in the heart of a child;
But, still, I perceive an emotion the same
As I felt, when a boy, on the crag-cover'd wild:
One image, alone, on my bosom imprest,
I loved my bleak regions, nor panted for new;
And few were my wants, for my wishes were blest,
And pure were my thoughts, for my soul was with you.

I arose with the dawn; with my dog as my guide,
From mountain to mountain I bounded along,
I breasted [1] the billows of *Dee's* [2] rushing tide,
And heard at a distance the Highlander's song:
At eve, on my heath-cover'd couch of repose,
No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view,
And warm to the skies my devotions arose,
For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

I left my bleak home, and my visions are gone,
The mountains are vanish'd, my youth is no more;
As the last of my race, I must wither alone,
And delight but in days I have witness'd before.
Ah! splendour has raised, but embitter'd my lot,
More dear were the scenes which my infancy knew;
Though my hopes may have fail'd, yet they are not forgot,
Though cold is my heart, still it lingers with you.

When I see some dark hill points its crest to the sky,
I think of the rocks that o'ershadow Colbleen;[3]
When I see the soft blue of a love-speaking eye,
I think of those eyes that endear'd the rude scene;
When, haply, some light waving locks I behold,
That faintly resemble my Mary's in hue,
I think on the long flowing ringlets of gold,
The locks that were sacred to beauty, and you.

Yet the day may arrive, when the mountains, once more,
Shall rise to my sight, in their mantles of snow:
But while these soar above me, unchanged as before,
Will Mary be there to receive me? ah, no!
Adieu! then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred,
Thou sweet flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu!
No home in the forest shall shelter my head;
Ah! Mary, what home could be mine, but with you?

TO * * *.

Oh! yes, I will own we were dear to each other,
The friendships of childhood, though fleeting, are true;
The love which you felt was the love of a brother,
Nor less the affection I cherish'd for you.

But Friendship can vary her gentle dominion,
The attachment of years in a moment expires;
Like Love too, she moves on a swift-waving pinion,
But glows not, like Love, with unquenchable fires.

[1] The last line is almost a literal translation from a Spanish proverb.

[2] Morven, a lofty mountain in Aberdeenshire: «Gormal of Snow,» is an expression frequently to be found in Ossian.

[3] This will not appear extraordinary to those who have been accustomed to the mountains: it is by no means uncommon on attaining the top of Ben e vis, Ben y bourd, etc. to perceive, between the summit and the valley, clouds pouring down rain, and, occasionally, accompanied by lightning, while the spectator literally looks down on the storm, perfectly secure from its effects.

[1] «Breasting the lofty surge.»—Shakspeare.

[2] The Dee is a beautiful river, which rises near Mar Lodge, and falls into the sea at New Aberdeen.

[3] Colbleen is a mountain near the verge of the Highlands, not far from the ruins of Dee Castle.

Full oft have we wander'd through Ida together,
And blest were the scenes of our youth, I allow;
In the spring of our life, how serene is the weather!
But winter's rude tempests are gathering now.

No more with Affection shall Memory blending
The wonted delights of our childhood retrace;
When Pride steels the bosom, the heart is unbending,
And what would be Justice appears a disgrace.

However, dear S——, for I still must esteem you,
The few whom I love I can never upbraid,
The chance, which has lost, may in future redeem you,
Repentance will cancel the vow you have made.

I will not complain, and though chill'd is affection,
With me no corroding resentment shall live;
My bosom is calm'd by the simple reflection,
That both may be wrong, and that both should forgive.

You knew that my soul, that my heart, my existence,
If danger demanded, were wholly your own;
You knew me unalter'd, by years or by distance,
Devoted to love and to friendship alone.

You knew,—but away with the vain retrospection,
The bond of affection no longer endures;
Too late you may droop o'er the fond recollection,
And sigh for the friend who was formerly yours.

For the present, we part,—I will hope not for ever,
For time and regret will restore you at last;
To forget our dissention we both should endeavour;
I ask no atonement, but days like the past.

TO MARY.

On receiving her picture.

This faint resemblance of thy charms,
Though strong as mortal art could give,
My constant heart of fear disarms,
Revives my hopes, and bids me live.

Here, I can trace the locks of gold,
Which round thy snowy forehead wave;
The cheeks, which sprung from Beauty's mould,
The lips, which made me Beauty's slave.

Here, I can trace———ah no! that eye,
Whose azure floats in liquid fire,
Must all the painter's art defy,
And bid him from the task retire.

Here I behold its beauteous hue,
But where 's the beam so sweetly straying?
Which gave a lustre to its blue,
Like Luna o'er the ocean playing.

Sweet copy! far more dear to me,
Lifeless, unfeeling as thou art,
Than all the living forms could be,
Save her who placed thee next my heart.

She placed it, sad, with needless fear,
Lest time might shake my wavering soul,
Unconscious, that her image, there,
Held every sense in fast controul.

Thro' hours, thro' years, thro' time, 't will cheer;
My hope, in gloomy moments, raise;
In life's last conflict 't will appear,
And meet my fond expiring gaze.

DAMÆTAS.

In law an infant,[1] and in years a boy,
In mind a slave to every vicious joy,
From every sense of shame and virtue wean'd,
In lies an adept, in deceit a fiend;
Versed in hypocrisy, while yet a child,
Fickle as wind, of inclinations wild;
Woman his dupe, his heedless friend a tool,
Old in the world, tho' scarcely broke from school;
Damætas ran through all the maze of sin,
And found the goal, when others just begin;
Even still conflicting passions shake his soul,
And bid him drain the dregs of pleasure's bowl;
But, pall'd with vice, he breaks his former chain,
And, what was once his bliss, appears his bane.

TO MARION.

Marion! why that pensive brow?
What disgust to life hast thou?
Change that discontented air;
Frowns become not one so fair.
'T is not love disturbs thy rest,
Love 's a stranger to thy breast;
He in dimpling smiles appears;
Or mourns in sweetly timid tears;
Or bends the languid eyelid down,
But shuns the cold forbidding frown.
Then resume thy former fire,
Some will love, and all admire;
While that icy aspect chills us,
Nought but cool indifference thrills us.
Wouldst thou wandering hearts beguile,
Smile, at least, or seem to smile;
Eyes like thine were never meant
To hide their orbs, in dark restraint;
Spite of all, thou fain wouldst say,
Still in truant beams they play.
Thy lips,—but here my modest Muse
Her impulse chaste must needs refuse.
She blushes, curtsies, frowns,—in short she
Dreads, lest the subject should transport me;
And flying off, in search of reason,
Brings prudence back in proper season.
All I shall therefore say (whate'er
I think is neither here nor there),
Is that such lips, of looks endearing,
Were form'd for better things than sneering;
Of soothing compliments divested,
Advice at least 's disinterested;
Such is my artless song to thee,
From all the flow of flattery free;
Counsel, like mine, is as a brother's,
My heart is given to some others;
That is to say, unskill'd to cozen,
It shares itself amongst a dozen.
Marion! adieu! oh! prithee slight not
This warning, though it may delight not;
And, lest my precepts be displeasing
To those who think remonstrance teazing,
At once I 'll tell thee our opinion,
Concerning woman's soft dominion:

[1] In law, every person is an infant who has not attained the age of twenty-one.

Howe'er we gaze with admiration,
On eyes of blue, or lips carnation;
Howe'er the flowing locks attract us,
Howe'er those beauties may distract us;
Still fickle, we are prone to rove,
These cannot fix our souls to love;
It is not too severe a stricture,
To say they form a pretty picture.
But would'st thou see the secret chain,
Which binds us in your humble train,
To hail you queens of all creation,
Know, in a word, 't is ANIMATION.

OSCAR OF ALVA.[1]

A TALE.

How sweetly shines, through azure skies,
The lamp of heaven on Lora's shore,
Where Alva's hoary turrets rise,
And hear the din of arms no more.

But often has yon rolling moon
On Alva's casques of silver play'd,
And view'd, at midnight's silent noon,
Her chiefs in gleaming mail array'd.

And on the crimson'd rocks beneath,
Which scowl o'er ocean's sullen flow,
Pale in the scatter'd ranks of death,
She saw the gasping warrior low.

While many an eye, which ne'er again
Could mark the rising orb of day,
Turn'd feebly from the gory plain,
Beheld in death her fading ray.

Once, to those eyes the lamp of Love,
They blest her dear propitious light:
But now, she glimmer'd from above,
A sad funereal torch of night.

Faded is Alva's noble race,
And grey her towers are seen afar;
No more her heroes urge the chase,
Or roll the crimson tide of war.

But who was last of Alva's clan?
Why grows the moss on Alva's stone?
Her towers resound no steps of man,
They echo to the gale alone.

And, when that gale is fierce and high,
A sound is heard in yonder hall,
It rises hoarsely through the sky,
And vibrates o'er the mouldering wall.

Yes, when the eddying tempest sighs,
It shakes the shield of Oscar brave;
But there no more his banners rise,
No more his plumes of sable wave.

Fair shone the sun on Oscar's birth,
When Angus hail'd his eldest born;
The vassals round their chieftain's hearth,
Crowd to applaud the happy morn.

They feast upon the mountain deer,
The Pibroch raised its piercing note,
To gladden more their Highland cheer,
The strains in martial numbers float.

And they who heard the war notes wild,
Hoped that, one day, the Pibrock's strain
Should play before the Hero's child,
While he should lead the Tartan train.

Another year is quickly past,
And Angus hails another son,
His natal day is like the last,
Nor soon the jocund feast was done.

Taught by their sire to bend the bow,
On Alva's dusky hills of wind,
The boys in childhood chased the roe,
And left their hounds in speed behind.

But, e'er their years of youth are o'er,
They mingle in the ranks of war;
They lightly wield the bright claymore,
And send the whistling arrow far.

Dark was the flow of Oscar's hair,
Wildly it stream'd along the gale;
But Allan's locks were bright and fair,
And pensive seem'd his cheek, and pale.

But Oscar own'd a hero's soul,
His dark eye shone through beams of truth;
Allan had early learn'd controul,
And smooth his words had been from youth.

Both, both were brave; the Saxon spear
Was shiver'd oft beneath their steel;
And Oscar's bosom scorn'd to fear,
But Oscar's bosom knew to feel.

While Allan's soul belied his form,
Unworthy with such charms to dwell;
Keen as the lightning of the storm,
On foes his deadly vengeance fell.

From high Southannon's distant tower
Arrived a young and noble dame;
With Kenneth's lands to form her dower,
Glenalvon's blue-eyed daughter came:

And Oscar claim'd the beauteous bride,
And Angus on his Oscar smiled;
It soothed the father's feudal pride,
Thus to obtain Glenalvon's child.

Hark! to the Pibroch's pleasing note,
Hark! to the swelling nuptial song;
In joyous strains the voices float,
And still the choral peal prolong.

See how the heroes' blood-red plumes,
Assembled wave in Alva's hall;
Each youth his varied plaid assumes,
Attending on their chieftain's call.

It is not war their aid demands,
The Pibroch plays the song of peace;
To Oscar's nuptials throng the bands,
Nor yet the sounds of pleasure cease.

But where is Oscar? sure 't is late:
Is this a bridegroom's ardent flame?
While thronging guests and ladies wait,
Nor Oscar nor his brother came.

[1] The catastrophe of this tale was suggested by the story of «Jeronymo and Lorenzo,» in the first volume of «The Armenian, or Ghost-Seer:» it also bears some resemblance to a scene in the third act of «Macbeth.»

At length young Allan join'd the bride,
« Why comes not Oscar?» Angus said;
« Is he not here?» the youth replied,
« With me he roved not o'er the glade.

« Perchance, forgetful of the day,
'T is his to chase the bounding roe;
Or Ocean's waves prolong his stay,
Yet Oscar's bark is seldom slow.»

« Oh! no!» the anguish'd sire rejoin'd,
« Nor chase nor wave my boy delay;
Would he to Mora seem unkind?
Would aught to her impede his way?

« Oh! search, ye chiefs! oh, search around!
Allan, with these through Alva fly,
Till Oscar, till my son is found,
Haste, haste, nor dare attempt reply.»

All is confusion—through the vale
The name of Oscar hoarsely rings,
It rises on the murmuring gale,
Till night expands her dusky wings.

It breaks the stillness of the night,
But echoes through her shades in vain;
It sounds through morning's misty light,
But Oscar comes not o'er the plain.

Three days, three sleepless nights, the chief
For Oscar search'd each mountain cave;
Then hope is lost in boundless grief,
His locks in grey torn ringlets wave.

« Oscar! my Son!—Thou God of heaven!
Restore the prop of sinking age;
Or, if that hope no more is given,
Yield his assassin to my rage.

« Yes, on some desert rocky shore,
My Oscar's whiten'd bones must lie;
Then, grant, thou God! I ask no more,
With him his frantic sire may die.

« Yet, he may live—away despair;
Be calm, my soul! he yet may live;
T' arraign my fate, my voice forbear;
O God my impious prayer forgive.

« What, if he live for me no more,
I sink forgotten in the dust,
The hope of Alva's age is o'er;
Alas! can pangs like these be just?»

Thus did the hapless parent mourn,
Till Time, who soothes severest woe,
Had bade serenity return,
And made the tear-drop cease to flow.

For still some latent hope survived,
That Oscar might once more appear;
His hope now droop'd, and now revived,
Till Time had old a tedious year.

Days roll'd along, the orb of light
Again had run his destined race;
No Oscar bless'd his father's sight,
And sorrow left a fainter trace.

For youthful Allan still remain'd,
And, now, his father's only joy:
And Mora's heart was quickly gain'd,
For beauty crown'd the fair-hair'd boy.

She thought that Oscar low was laid,
And Allan's face was wondrous fair,
If Oscar lived, some other maid
Had claim'd his faithless bosom's care.

And Angus said, if one year more
In fruitless hope was pass'd away,
His fondest scruple should be o'er,
And he would name their nuptial day.

Slow roll'd the moons, but blest at last,
Arrived the dearly destined morn;
The year of anxious trembling past,
What smiles the lover's cheeks adorn!

Hark to the Pibroch's pleasing note!
Hark to the swelling nuptial song!
In joyous strains the voices float,
And still the choral peal prolong.

Again the clan, in festive crowd,
Throng through the gate of Alva's hall;
The sounds of mirth re-echo loud,
And all their former joy recal.

But who is he, whose darken'd brow
Glooms in the midst of general mirth!
Before his eye's far fiercer glow
The blue flames curdle o'er the hearth.

Dark is the robe which wraps his form,
And tall his plume of gory red;
His voice is like the rising storm,
But light and trackless is his tread.

'T is noon of night, the pledge goes round,
The bridegroom's health is deeply quaft;
With shouts the vaulted roofs resound,
And all combine to hail the draught.

Sudden the stranger chief arose,
And all the clamorous crowd are hush'd;
And Angus' cheek with wonder glows,
And Mora's tender bosom blush'd.

« Old man!» he cried, « this pledge is done,
Thou saw'st 't was duly drunk by me,
It hail'd the nuptials of thy son;
Now will I claim a pledge from thee.

« While all around is mirth and joy,
To bless thy Allan's happy lot;
Say, had'st thou ne'er another boy?
Say, why should Oscar be forgot?»

« Alas!» the hapless sire replied,
The big tear starting as he spoke;
« When Oscar left my hall, or died,
This aged heart was almost broke.

« Thrice has the earth revolved her course,
Since Oscar's form has blest my sight;
And Allan is my last resource,
Since martial Oscar's death or flight.»

« 'T is well,» replied the stranger stern,
And fiercely flash'd his rolling eye;
« Thy Oscar's fate I fain would learn;
Perhaps the hero did not die.

« Perchance if those whom most he loved,
Would call, thy Oscar might return;

Perchance the chief has only roved,
For him thy Beltane[1] yet may burn.

« Fill high the bowl, the table round,
We will not claim the pledge by stealth;
With wine let every cup be crown'd,
Pledge me departed Oscar's health.»

« With all my soul,» old Angus said,
And fill'd his goblet to the brim;
« Here 's to my boy! alive or dead,
I ne'er shall find a son like him.»

« Bravely, old man, this health has sped,
But why does Allan trembling stand?
Come, drink remembrance of the dead,
And raise thy cup with firmer hand.»

The crimson glow of Allan's face
Was turn'd at once to ghastly hue;
The drops of death each other chase,
Adown in agonizing dew.

Thrice did he raise the goblet high,
And thrice his lips refused to taste;
For thrice he caught the stranger's eye,
On his with deadly fury placed.

« And is it thus a brother hails
A brother's fond remembrance here?
If thus affection's strength prevails,
What might we not expect from fear?»

Roused by the sneer, he raised the bowl;
« Would Oscar now could share our mirth!»
Internal fear appall'd his soul,
He said, and dash'd the cup to earth.

« 'T is he! I hear my murderer's voice,»
Loud shrieks a darkly gleaming Form;
« A murderer's voice!» the roof replies,
And deeply swells the bursting storm.

The tapers wink, the chieftains shrink,
The stranger 's gone, amidst the crew
A Form was seen, in tartan green,
And tall the shade terrific grew.

His waist was bound with a broad belt round,
His plume of sable stream'd on high;
But his breast was bare, with the red wounds there,
And fix'd was the glare of his glassy eye.

And thrice he smiled, with his eye so wild,
On Angus, bending low the knee;
And thrice he frown'd on a Chief on the ground,
Whom shivering crowds with horror see.

The bolts loud roll, from pole to pole,
The thunders through the welkin ring;
And the gleaming Form, through the mist of the storm,
Was borne on high by the whirlwind's wing.

Cold was the feast, the revel ceased;
Who lies upon the stony floor?
Oblivion prest old Angus' breast,
At length his life-pulse throbs once more.

« Away, away, let the leech essay,
To pour the light on Allan's eyes;»
His sand is done,—his race is run,
Oh! never more shall Allan rise!

[1] Beltane-Tree.—A Highland festival, on the 1st of May, held near fires lighted for the occasion.

But Oscar's breast is cold as clay,
His locks are lifted by the gale,
And Allan's barbed arrow lay,
With him in dark Glentanar's vale.

And whence the dreadful stranger came,
Or who, no mortal wight can tell;
But no one doubts the Form of Flame,
For Alva's sons knew Oscar well.

Ambition nerved young Allan's hand,
Exulting demons wing'd his dart,
While Envy waved her burning brand,
And pour'd her venom round his heart.

Swift is the shaft from Allan's bow:
Whose streaming life-blood stains his side?
Dark Oscar's sable crest is low,
The dart has drunk his vital tide.

And Mora's eye could Allan move,
She bade his wounded pride rebel:
Alas! that eyes, which beam'd with love,
Should urge the soul to deeds of Hell.

Lo! see'st thou not a lonely tomb,
Which rises o'er a warrior dead!
It glimmers through the twilight gloom;
Oh! that is Allan's nuptial bed.

Far, distant far, the noble grave,
Which held his clan's great ashes, stood;
And o'er his corse no banners wave,
For they were stain'd with kindred blood.

What minstrel grey, what hoary bard,
Shall Allan's deeds on harp-strings raise?
The song is glory's chief reward,
But who can strike a murderer's praise?

Unstrung, untouch'd, the harp must stand,
No minstrel dare the theme awake;
Guilt would benumb his palsied hand,
His harp in shuddering chords would break.

No lyre of fame, no hallow'd verse,
Shall sound his glories high in air,
A dying father's bitter curse,
A brother's death-groan echoes there.

TO THE DUKE OF D.

In looking over my papers, to select a few additional Poems for this second edition, I found the following lines, which I had totally forgotten, composed in the Summer of 1805, a short time previous to my departure from H——. They were addressed to a young school-fellow of high rank, who had been my frequent companion in some rambles through the neighbouring country; however he never saw the lines, and most probably never will. As, on a re-perusal, I found them not worse than some other pieces in the collection, I have now published them, for the first time, after a slight revision.

D—R—T! whose early steps with mine have stray'd,
Exploring every path of Ida's glade,
Whom, still, affection taught me to defend,
And made me less a tyrant than a friend;
Though the harsh custom of our youthful band
Bade *thee* obey, and gave *me* to command[1]

[1] At every public school, the junior boys are completely subservient to the upper forms, till they attain a seat in the higher classes. From this state of probation, very properly, no rank is exempt; but after a certain period, they command, in turn, those who succeed.

Thee, on whose head a few short years will shower
The gift of riches, and the pride of power;
Even now a name illustrious is thine own,
Renown'd in rank, not far beneath the throne.
Yet, D—r—t, let not this seduce thy soul,
To shun fair science, or evade control;
Though passive tutors,[1] fearful to dispraise
The titled child, whose future breath may raise,
View ducal errors with indulgent eyes,
And wink at faults they tremble to chastise.

When youthful parasites, who bend the knee
To wealth, their golden idol,—not to thee!
And, even in simple boyhood's opening dawn,
Some slaves are found to flatter and to fawn:
When these declare, « that pomp alone should wait
On one by birth predestined to be great;
That books were only meant for drudging fools;
That gallant spirits scorn the common rules;»
Believe them not,—they point the path to shame,
And seek to blast the honours of thy name:
Turn to the few, in Ida's early throng,
Whose souls disdain not to condemn the wrong;
Or if, amidst the comrades of thy youth,
None dare to raise the sterner voice of truth,
Ask thine own heart! 't will bid thee, boy, forbear,
For *well* I know that virtue lingers there.

Yes! I have mark'd thee many a passing day,
But now new scenes invite me far away;
Yes! I have mark'd, within that generous mind,
A soul, if well matured, to bless mankind:
Ah! though myself by nature haughty, wild,
Whom Indiscretion hail'd her favourite child,
Though every error stamps me for her own,
And dooms my fall, I fain would fall alone;
Though my proud heart no precept now can tame,
I love the virtues which I cannot claim.
'Tis not enough, with other Sons of power,
To gleam the lambent meteor of an hour,
To swell some peerage page in feeble pride,
With long-drawn names, that grace no page beside;
Then share with titled crowds the common lot,
In life just gazed at, in the grave forgot;
While nought divides thee from the vulgar dead,
Except the dull cold stone that hides thy head,
The mouldering 'scutcheon, or the herald's roll,
That well-emblazon'd, but neglected scroll,
Where Lords, unhonour'd, in the tomb may find
One spot to leave a worthless name behind;—
There sleep, unnoticed as the gloomy vaults
That veil their dust, their follies and their faults;
A race, with old armorial lists o'erspread,
In records destined never to be read.
Fain would I view thee, with prophetic eyes,
Exalted more among the good and wise;
A glorious and a long career pursue,
As first in Rank, the first in Talent too;
Spurn every vice, each little meanness shun,
Not Fortune's minion, but her noblest son.

[1] Allow me to disclaim any personal allusions, even the most distant; I merely mention, generally, what is too often the weakness of preceptors.

Turn to the annals of a former day,—
Bright are the deeds thine earlier Sires display;
One, though a Courtier, lived a man of worth,
And call'd, proud boast! the British Drama forth.[1]
Another view! not less renown'd for Wit,
Alike for courts, and camps, or senates fit;
Bold in the field, and favour'd by the Nine,
In every splendid part ordain'd to shine;
Far, far distinguish'd from the glittering throng,
The pride of Princes, and the boast of Song.[2]
Such were thy Fathers, thus preserve their name,
Not heir to titles only, but to Fame.
The hour draws nigh, a few brief days will close,
To me, this little scene of joys and woes;
Each knell of Time now warns me to resign
Shades, where Hope, Peace, and Friendship, all were mine;
Hope, that could vary like the rainbow's hue,
And gild their pinions, as the moments flew;
Peace, that reflection never frown'd away,
By dreams of ill, to cloud some future day;
Friendship, whose truth let childhood only tell—
Alas! they love not long, who love so well.
To these adieu! nor let me linger o'er
Scenes hail'd, as exiles hail their native shore,
Receding slowly through the dark blue deep,
Beheld by eyes that mourn, yet cannot weep.

D—r—t! farewell! I will not ask one part
Of sad remembrance in so young a heart;
The coming morrow from thy youthful mind
Will sweep my name, nor leave a trace behind.
And yet, perhaps, in some maturer year,
Since chance has thrown us in the self-same sphere,
Since the same senate, nay, the same debate,
May one day claim our suffrage for the state,
We hence may meet, and pass each other by
With faint regard, or cold and distant eye.
For me, in future, neither friend nor foe,
A stranger to thyself, thy weal or woe;
With thee no more again I hope to trace
The recollection of our early race;
No more, as once, in social hours, rejoice,
Or hear, unless in crowds, thy well-known voice.
Still, if the wishes of a heart untaught
To veil those feelings, which, perchance, it ought;
If these,—but let me cease the lengthen'd strain,
Oh! if these wishes are not breathed in vain,
The Guardian Seraph, who directs thy fate,
Will leave thee glorious, as he found thee great.

[1] « Thomas S—k—lle, Lord B—k—st, created Earl of D—— by James the First, was one of the earliest and brightest ornaments to the poetry of his country, and the first who produced a regular drama.»—Anderson's *British Poets*.

[2] Charles S—k—lle, Earl of D——, esteemed the most accomplished man of his day, was alike distinguished in the voluptuous court of Charles II. and the gloomy one of William III. He behaved with great gallantry in the sea-fight with the Dutch, in 1665, on the day previous to which he composed his celebrated song. His character has been drawn in the highest colours by Dryden, Pope, Prior, and Congreve. *Vide* Anderson's *British Poets*.

TRANSLATIONS
AND
IMITATIONS.

ADRIAN'S ADDRESS TO HIS SOUL, WHEN DYING.

Animula! vagula, blandula,
Hospes, comesque, corporis,
Quæ nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos.

TRANSLATION.

Ah! gentle, fleeting, wavering Sprite,
Friend and associate of this clay!
To what unknown region borne,
Wilt thou now wing thy distant flight?
No more, with wonted humour gay,
But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn.

TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS.

"AD LESBIAM."

Equal to Jove that youth must be,
Greater than Jove he seems to me,
Who, free from Jealousy's alarms,
Securely views thy matchless charms;
That cheek, which ever dimpling glows,
That mouth from whence such music flows,
To him, alike, are always known,
Reserved for him, and him alone.
Ah! Lesbia! though 'tis death to me,
I cannot choose but look on thee;
But, at the sight, my senses fly;
I needs must gaze, but gazing die;
Whilst trembling with a thousand fears,
Parch'd to the throat, my tongue adheres,
My pulse beats quick, my breath heaves short,
My limbs deny their slight support;
Cold dews my pallid face o'erspread,
With deadly languor droops my head,
My ears with tingling echoes ring,
And life itself is on the wing;
My eyes refuse the cheering light,
Their orbs are veil'd in starless night:
Such pangs my nature sinks beneath,
And feels a temporary death.

TRANSLATION
OF THE EPITAPH ON VIRGIL AND TIBULLUS.

BY DOMITIUS MARSUS.

He who, sublime, in Epic numbers roll'd,
And he who struck the softer lyre of love,
By Death's unequal hand[1] alike control'd,
Fit comrades in Elysian regions move.

[1] The hand of Death is said to be unjust, or unequal, as Virgil was considerably older than Tibullus, at his decease.

TRANSLATION FROM CATULLUS.

"LUCTUS DE MORTE PASSERIS."

Ye Cupids, droop each little head,
Nor let your wings with joy be spread;
My Lesbia's favourite bird is dead,
Whom dearer than her eyes she loved;
For he was gentle, and so true,
Obedient to her call he flew,
No fear, no wild alarm he knew,
But lightly o'er her bosom moved:
And softly fluttering here and there,
He never sought to cleave the air;
But chirrup'd oft, and free from care,
Tuned to her ear his grateful strain.
Now having pass'd the gloomy bourn,
From whence he never can return,
His death, and Lesbia's grief, I mourn,
Who sighs, alas! but sighs in vain.
Oh! curst be thou, devouring grave!
Whose jaws eternal victims crave,
From whom no earthly power can save,
For thou hast ta'en the bird away:
From thee, my Lesbia's eyes o'erflow,
Her swollen cheeks with weeping glow,
Thou art the cause of all her woe,
Receptacle of life's decay.

IMITATED FROM CATULLUS.

TO ELLEN.

Oh! might I kiss those eyes of fire,
A million scarce would quench desire;
Still would I steep my lips in bliss,
And dwell an age on every kiss;
Nor then my soul should sated be,
Still would I kiss and cling to thee:
Nought should my kiss from thine dissever,
Still would we kiss, and kiss for ever;
E'en though the number did exceed
The yellow harvest's countless seed;
To part would be a vain endeavour,
Could I desist?—ah! never—never.

TRANSLATION FROM ANACREON.

TO HIS LYRE.

I wish to tune my quivering lyre,
To deeds of fame, and notes of fire;
To echo from its rising swell,
How heroes fought, and nations fell;
When Atreus' sons advanced to war,
Or Tyrian Cadmus roved afar;
But, still, to martial strains unknown,
My lyre recurs to love alone.
Fired with the hope of future fame,
I seek some nobler hero's name;
The dying chords are strung anew,
To war, to war my harp is due;

With glowing strings, the epic strain
To Jove's great son I raise again;
Alcides and his glorious deeds,
Beneath whose arm the Hydra bleeds;
All, all in vain, my wayward lyre
Wakes silver notes of soft desire.
Adieu! ye chiefs renown'd in arms!
Adieu! the clang of war's alarms.
To other deeds my soul is strung,
And sweeter notes shall now be sung;
My harp shall all its powers reveal,
To tell the tale my heart must feel;
Love, love alone, my lyre shall claim,
In songs of bliss, and sighs of flame.

ODE III.

'T was now the hour, when Night had driven
Her car half round yon sable heaven;
Bootes, only, seem'd to roll
His Arctic charge around the Pole;
While mortals, lost in gentle sleep,
Forgot to smile, or ceased to weep;
At this lone hour, the Paphian boy,
Descending from the realms of joy,
Quick to my gate directs his course,
And knocks with all his little force:
My visions fled, alarm'd I rose;
«What stranger breaks my blest repose?»
«Alas!» replies the wily child,
In faultering accents, sweetly mild,
«A hapless infant here I roam,
Far from my dear maternal home;
Oh! shield me from the wintry blast,
The mighty storm is pouring fast;
No prowling robber lingers here.
A wandering baby who can fear?»
I heard his seeming artless tale,
I heard his sighs upon the gale;
My breast was never pity's foe,
But felt for all the baby's woe;
I drew the bar, and by the light,
Young Love, the infant, met my sight;
His bow across his shoulders flung,
And thence his fatal quiver hung,
(Ah! little did I think the dart
Would rankle soon within my heart;)
With care I tend my weary guest,
His little fingers chill my breast;
His glossy curls, his azure wing,
Which droop with nightly showers, I wring:
His shivering limbs the embers warm,
And now, reviving from the storm,
Scarce had he felt his wonted glow,
Than swift he seized his slender bow:
«I fain would know, my gentle host,»
He cried, «if this its strength has lost;
I fear, relax'd with midnight dews,
The strings their former aid refuse:»
With poison tipt, his arrow flies,
Deep in my tortured heart it lies:
Then loud the joyous urchin laugh'd,
«My bow can still impel the shaft;
'Tis firmly fix'd, thy sighs reveal it;
Say, courteous host, canst thou not feel it!»

FRAGMENTS OF SCHOOL EXERCISES,

FROM THE PROMETHEUS VINCTUS OF ÆSCHYLUS.

Great Jove! to whose Almighty throne
Both gods and mortals homage pay,
Ne'er may my soul thy power disown,
Thy dread behests ne'er disobey.
Oft shall the sacred victim fall
In sea-girt Ocean's mossy hall;
My voice shall raise no impious strain
'Gainst him who rules the sky and azure main.

* * * * * * *

How different now thy joyless fate,
Since first Hesione thy bride,
When placed aloft in godlike state,
The blushing beauty by thy side,
Thou sat'st, while reverend Ocean smiled,
And mirthful strains the hours beguiled;
The Nymphs and Tritons danced around,
Nor yet thy doom was fix'd, nor Jove relentless frown'd.

Harrow, Dec. 1, 1804.

THE EPISODE OF NISUS AND EURYALUS.

A PARAPHRASE FROM THE ÆNEID, LIB. 9.

Nisus, the guardian of the portal, stood,
Eager to gild his arms with hostile blood;
Well skill'd in fight, the quivering lance to wield,
Or pour his arrows through th' embattled field;
From Ida torn, he left his sylvan cave,
And sought a foreign home, a distant grave;
To watch the movements of the Daunian host,
With him, Euryalus sustains the post:
No lovelier mien adorn'd the ranks of Troy,
And beardless bloom yet graced the gallant boy;
Though few the seasons of his youthful life,
As yet a novice in the martial strife,
'T was his, with beauty, valour's gift to share,
A soul heroic, as his form was fair;
These burn with one pure flame of generous love,
In peace, in war, united still they move;
Friendship and glory form their joint reward,
And now combined, they hold the nightly guard.

«What god,» exclaim'd the first, «instils this fire?
Or, in itself a god, what great desire?
My labouring soul, with anxious thought opprest,
Abhors this station of inglorious rest;
The love of fame with this can ill accord,—
Be 't mine to seek for glory with my sword.
See'st thou yon camp, with torches twinkling dim,
Where drunken slumbers wrap each lazy limb?
Where confidence and ease the watch disdain,
And drowsy Silence holds her sable reign?
Then hear my thought:—In deep and sullen grief,
Our troops and leaders mourn their absent chief;
Now could the gifts and promised prize be thine
(The deed, the danger, and the fame be mine);
Were this decreed—beneath yon rising mound,
Methinks, an easy path perchance were found,
Which past, I speed my way to Pallas' walls,
And lead Æneas from Evander's halls.»
With equal ardour fired, and warlike joy,
His glowing friend address'd the Dardan boy:
«These deeds, my Nisus, shalt thou dare alone?
Must all the fame, the peril be thine own?

Am I by thee despised, and left afar,
As one unfit to share the toils of war?
Not thus his son the great Opheltes taught,
Not thus my sire in Argive combats fought;
Not thus, when Ilion fell by heavenly hate,
I track'd Æneas through the walks of fate;
Thou know'st my deeds, my breast devoid of fear,
And hostile life-drops dim my gory spear;
Here is a soul with hope immortal burns,
And *life*, ignoble *life*, for *Glory* spurns;
Fame, fame is cheaply earn'd by fleeting breath,
The price of honour is the sleep of death.»
Then Nisus—«Calm thy bosom's fond alarms,
Thy heart beats fiercely to the din of arms;
More dear thy worth and valour than my own,
I swear by him who fills Olympus' throne!
So may I triumph, as I speak the truth,
And clasp again the comrade of my youth.
But should I fall, and he who dares advance
Through hostile legions must abide by chance;
If some Rutulian arm, with adverse blow,
Should lay the friend who ever loved thee low;
Live thou, such beauties I would fain preserve,
Thy budding years a lengthen'd term deserve;
When humbled in the dust, let some one be,
Whose gentle eyes will shed one tear for me;
Whose manly arm may snatch me back by force,
Or wealth redeem from foes my captive corse:
Or, if my destiny these last deny,
If in the spoiler's power my ashes lie,
Thy pious care may raise a simple tomb,
To mark thy love, and signalize my doom.
Why should thy doating wretched mother weep
Her only boy, reclined in endless sleep?
Who, for thy sake, the tempest's fury dared,
Who, for thy sake, war's deadly peril shared;
Who braved what woman never braved before,
And left her native for the Latian shore.»
«In vain you damp the ardour of my soul,»
Replied Euryalus, «it scorns control;
Hence, let us haste.»—Their brother guards arose,
Roused by their call, nor court again repose;
The pair, buoy'd up on Hope's exulting wing,
Their stations leave, and speed to seek the king.
Now, o'er the earth a solemn stillness ran,
And lull'd alike the cares of brute and man;
Save where the Dardan leaders nightly hold
Alternate converse, and their plans unfold;
On one great point the council are agreed,
An instant message to their prince decreed;
Each lean'd upon the lance he well could wield,
And poised, with easy arm, his ancient shield;
When Nisus and his friend their leave request
To offer something to their high behest.
With anxious tremors, yet unawed by fear,
The faithful pair before the throne appear;
Iulus greets them; at his kind command,
The elder first address'd the hoary band.

«With patience,» thus Hyrtacides began,
«Attend, nor judge from youth, our humble plan;
Where yonder beacons, half-expiring, beam,
Our slumbering foes of future conquest dream,
Nor heed that we a secret path have traced,
Between the ocean and the portal placed:
Beneath the covert of the blackening smoke,
Whose shade securely our design will cloak.
If you, ye Chiefs, and Fortune will allow,
We 'll bend our course to yonder mountain's brow;
Where Pallas' walls, at distance, meet the sight,
Seen o'er the glade, when not obscured by night;
Then shall Æneas in his pride return,
While hostile matrons raise their offspring's urn,
And Latian spoils, and purpled heaps of dead,
Shall mark the havoc of our hero's tread;
Such is our purpose, not unknown the way,
Where yonder torrent's devious waters stray:
Oft have we seen, when hunting by the stream,
The distant spires above the valleys gleam.»

Mature in years, for sober wisdom famed,
Moved by the speech, Alethes here exclaim'd:
« Ye parent Gods! who rule the fate of Troy,
Still dwells the Dardan spirit in the boy;
When minds like these in striplings thus ye raise,
Yours is the god-like act, be yours the praise;
In gallant youth my fainting hopes revive,
And Ilion's wonted glories still survive.»
Then, in his warm embrace, the boys he press'd,
And, quivering, strain'd them to his aged breast;
With tears the burning cheek of each bedew'd,
And, sobbing, thus his first discourse renew'd:—
« What gift, my countrymen, what martial prize
Can we bestow, which you may not despise?
Our deities the first, best boon have given,
Internal virtues are the gift of Heaven.
What poor rewards can bless your deeds on earth,
Doubtless, await such young exalted worth;
Æneas and Ascanius shall combine
To yield applause far, far surpassing mine.»
Iulus then: « By all the powers above!
By those Penates[1] who my country love;
By hoary Vesta's sacred fane, I swear,
My hopes are all in you, ye generous pair!
Restore my father to my grateful sight,
And all my sorrows yield to one delight.
Nisus! two silver goblets are thine own,
Saved from Arisba's stately domes o'erthrown;
My sire secured them on that fatal day,
Nor left such bowls an Argive robber's prey.
Two massy tripods also shall be thine,
Two talents polish'd from the glittering mine;
An ancient cup which Tyrian Dido gave,
While yet our vessels press'd the Punic wave:
But, when the hostile chiefs at length bow down,
When great Æneas wears Hesperia's crown,
The casque, the buckler, and the fiery steed,
Which Turnus guides with more than mortal speed,
Are thine; no envious lot shall then be cast,
I pledge my word, irrevocably pass'd;
Nay more, twelve slaves and twice six captive dames,
To soothe thy softer hours with amorous flames,
And all the realms which now the Latians sway,
The labours of to-night shall well repay.
But thou, my generous youth, whose tender years
Are near my own, whose worth my heart reveres,
Henceforth affection, sweetly thus begun,
Shall join our bosoms and our souls in one;
Without thy aid no glory shall be mine,
Without thy dear advice, no great design;
Alike, through life esteem'd, thou god-like boy,
In war my bulwark, and in peace my joy.»

[1] Household Gods.

To him Euryalus: « No day shall shame
The rising glories, which from this I claim.
Fortune may favour or the skies may frown,
But valour, spite of fate, obtains renown.
Yet, ere from hence our eager steps depart,
One boon I beg, the nearest to my heart:
My mother sprung from Priam's royal line,
Like thine ennobled, hardly less divine;
Nor Troy nor King Acestes' realms restrain
Her feeble age from dangers of the main;
Alone she came, all selfish fears above,
A bright example of maternal love.
Unknown, the secret enterprize I brave,
Lest grief should bend my parent to the grave:
From this alone no fond adieus I seek,
No fainting mother's lips have press'd my cheek;
By gloomy Night, and thy right hand, I vow
Her parting tears would shake my purpose now:
Do thou, my prince, her failing age sustain,
In thee her much-loved child may live again;
Her dying hours with pious conduct bless,
Assist her wants, relieve her fond distress:
So dear a hope must all my soul inflame,
To rise in glory, or to fall in fame.»
Struck with a filial care, so deeply felt,
In tears, at once the Trojan warriors melt;
Faster than all, Iulus' eyes o'erflow;
Such love was his, and such had been his woe.
« All thou hast ask'd, receive,» the prince replied,
« Nor this alone, but many a gift beside;
To cheer thy mother's years shall be my aim,
Creusa's[1] style but wanting to the dame;
Fortune an adverse wayward course may run,
But bless'd thy mother in so dear a son.
Now, by my life, my Sire's most sacred oath,
To thee I pledge my full, my firmest troth,
All the rewards which once to thee were vow'd,
If thou shouldst fall, on her shall be bestow'd.»
Thus spoke the weeping prince, then forth to view
A gleaming falchion from the sheath he drew;
Lycaon's utmost skill had graced the steel,
For friends to envy and for foes to feel.
A tawny hide, the Moorish lion's spoil,
Slain midst the forest, in the hunter's toil,
Mnestheus, to guard the elder youth bestows,
And old Alethes' casque defends his brows;
Arm'd, thence they go, while all the assembled train,
To aid their cause, implore the gods in vain;
More than a boy, in wisdom and in grace,
Iulus holds amidst the chiefs his place;
His prayers he sends, but what can prayers avail,
Lost in the murmurs of the sighing gale?

The trench is past, and, favour'd by the night,
Through sleeping foes they wheel their wary flight.
When shall the sleep of many a foe be o'er?
Alas! some slumber who shall wake no more!
Chariots, and bridles, mix'd with arms, are seen,
And flowing flasks, and scatter'd troops between;
Bacchus and Mars to rule the camp combine,
A mingled chaos this of war and wine.
« Now,» cries the first, « for deeds of blood prepare,
With me the conquest and the labour share;
Here lies our path; lest any hand arise,
Watch thou, while many a dreaming chieftain dies;
I 'll carve our passage through the heedless foe,
And clear thy road, with many a deadly blow.»
His whispering accents then the youth represt,
And pierced proud Rhamnes through his panting breast;
Stretch'd at his ease, th' incautious king reposed,
Debauch, and not fatigue, his eyes had closed;
To Turnus dear, a prophet and a prince,
His omens more than augur's skill evince;
But he, who thus foretold the fate of all,
Could not avert his own untimely fall.
Next Remus' armour-bearer, hapless, fell,
And three unhappy slaves the carnage swell:
The charioteer along his courser's sides
Expires, the steel his severed neck divides;
And, last, his lord is number'd with the dead,
Bounding convulsive, flies the gasping head;
From the swollen veins the blackening torrents pour,
Stain'd is the couch and earth with clotting gore.
Young Lamyrus and Lamus next expire,
And gay Serranus, fill'd with youthful fire;
Half the long night in childish games was past,
Lull'd by the potent grape, he slept at last;
Ah! happier far, had he the morn survey'd,
And, 'till Aurora's dawn, his skill display'd.

In slaughter'd folds, the keepers lost in sleep,
His hungry fangs a lion thus may steep;
Mid the sad flock, at dead of night, he prowls,
With murder glutted, and in carnage rolls;
Insatiate still, through teeming herds he roams
In seas of gore, the lordly tyrant foams.

Nor less the other's deadly vengeance came,
But falls on feeble crowds without a name;
His wound unconscious Fadus scarce can feel,
Yet wakeful Rhæsus sees the threatening steel;
His coward breast behind a jar he hides,
And, vainly, in the weak defence confides;
Full in his heart, the falchion search'd his veins,
The reeking weapon bears alternate stains;
Thro' wine and blood, commingling as they flow,
The feeble spirit seeks the shades below.
Now, where Messapus dwelt they bend their way,
Whose fires emit a faint and trembling ray;
There, unconfined behold each grazing steed,
Unwatch'd, unheeded, on the herbage feed;
Brave Nisus here arrests his comrade's arm,
Too flush'd with carnage, and with conquest warm:
« Hence let us haste, the dangerous path is past,
Full foes enough, to-night, have breathed their last;
Soon will the day those eastern clouds adorn,
Now let us speed, nor tempt the rising morn.»

What silver arms, with various arts emboss'd,
What bowls and mantles, in confusion toss'd,
They leave regardless! yet, one glittering prize
Attracts the younger hero's wandering eyes;
The gilded harness Rhamnes' coursers felt,
The gems which stud the monarch's golden belt;
This from the pallid corse was quickly torn,
Once by a line of former chieftains worn.
Th' exulting boy the studded girdle wears,
Messapus' helm his head, in triumph, bears;
Then from the tents their cautious steps they bend,
To seek the vale, where safer paths extend.

Just at this hour, a band of Latian horse
To Turnus' camp pursue their destined course;

[1] The mother of Iulus, lost on the night when Troy was taken.

While the slow foot their tardy march delay,
The knights, impatient, spur along the way:
Three hundred mail-clad men, by Volscens led,
To Turnus, with their master's promise sped:
Now, they approach the trench, and view the walls,
When, on the left, a light reflection falls;
The plunder'd helmet, through the waning night,
Sheds forth a silver radiance, glancing bright;
Volscens, with question loud, the pair alarms—
« Stand, stragglers! stand! why early thus in arms?
From whence? to whom?» He meets with no reply,
Trusting the covert of the night, they fly;
The thicket's depth, with hurried pace, they tread,
While round the wood the hostile squadron spread.

With brakes entangled, scarce a path between,
Dreary and dark appears the sylvan scene;
Euryalus his heavy spoils impede,
The boughs and winding turns his steps mislead;
But Nisus scours along the forest's maze,
To where Latinus' steeds, in safety graze,
Then backward o'er the plain his eyes extend,
On every side they seek his absent friend.
« O God! my boy,» he cries, « of me bereft,
In what impending perils art thou left!»
Listening he runs—above the waving trees,
Tumultuous voices swell the passing breeze;
The war-cry rises, thundering hoofs around
Wake the dark echoes of the trembling ground;
Again he turns—of footsteps hears the noise,
The sound elates—the sight his hope destroys;
The hapless boy a ruffian train surround,
While lengthening shades his weary way confound;
Him, with loud shouts, the furious knights pursue,
Struggling in vain, a captive to the crew.
What can his friend 'gainst thronging numbers dare?
Ah! must he rush, his comrade's fate to share!
What force, what aid, what stratagem essay,
Back to redeem the Latian spoiler's prey!
His life a votive ransom nobly give,
Or die with him for whom he wish'd to live!
Poising with strength his lifted lance on high,
On Luna's orb he cast his phrenzied eye:
« Goddess serene, transcending every star!
Queen of the sky! whose beams are seen afar,
By night, Heaven owns thy sway, by day, the grove,
When, as chaste Dian, here thou deign'st to rove;
If e'er myself or sire have sought to grace
Thine altars with the produce of the chace;
Speed, speed, my dart to pierce you vaunting crowd,
To free my friend, and scatter far the proud.»
Thus having said, the hissing dart he flung;
Through parted shades, the hurtling weapon sung;
The thirsty point in Sulmo's entrails lay,
Transfix'd his heart, and stretch'd him on the clay:
He sobs, he dies,—the troop, in wild amaze,
Unconscious whence the death, with horror gaze;
While pale they stare, through Tagus' temples riven,
A second shaft with equal force is driven;
Fierce Volscens rolls around his lowering eyes,
Veil'd by the night, secure the Trojan lies.
Burning with wrath, he view'd his soldiers fall;
« Thou youth accurst! thy life shall pay for all.»
Quick from the sheath his flaming glave he drew,
And, raging, on the boy defenceless flew.

Nisus no more the blackening shade conceals,
Forth, forth he starts, and all his love reveals;
Aghast, confused, his fears to madness rise,
And pour these accents, shrieking as he flies:
« Me, me, your vengeance hurl on me alone,
Here sheathe the steel, my blood is all your own;
Ye starry Spheres! thou conscious Heaven attest!
He could not—durst not—lo! the guile confest!
All, all was mine—his early fate suspend,
He only loved too well his hapless friend;
Spare, spare, ye chiefs! from him your rage remove,
His fault was friendship, all his crime was love.»
He pray'd in vain, the dark assassin's sword
Pierced the fair side, the snowy bosom gored;
Lowly to earth inclines his plume-clad crest,
And sanguine torrents mantle o'er his breast:
As some young rose, whose blossom scents the air,
Languid in death, expires beneath the share;
Or crimson poppy, sinking with the shower,
Declining gently, falls a fading flower;
Thus, sweetly drooping, bends his lovely head,
And lingering Beauty hovers round the dead.

But fiery Nisus stems the battle's tide,
Revenge his leader, and Despair his guide;
Volscens he seeks, amidst the gathering host,
Volscens must soon appease his comrade's ghost;
Steel, flashing, pours on steel, foe crowds on foe,
Rage nerves his arm, Fate gleams in every blow;
In vain, beneath unnumber'd wounds he bleeds,
Nor wounds, nor death, distracted Nisus heeds;
In viewless circles wheel'd his falchion flies,
Nor quits the Hero's grasp till Volscens dies;
Deep in his throat its end the weapon found,
The tyrant's soul fled groaning through the wound.
Thus Nisus all his fond affection proved,
Dying, revenged the fate of him he loved;
Then on his bosom, sought his wonted place,
And death was heavenly in his friend's embrace!

Celestial pair? if aught my verse can claim,
Wafted on Time's broad pinion, yours is fame!
Ages on ages shall your fate admire;
No future day shall see your names expire;
While stands the Capitol, immortal dome!
And vanquish'd millions hail their Empress, Rome!

TRANSLATION FROM THE MEDEA OF EURIPIDES.

When fierce conflicting passions urge
The breast, where love is wont to glow,
What mind can stem the stormy surge,
Which rolls the tide of human woe?
The hope of praise, the dread of shame,
Can rouse the tortured breast no more;
The wild desire, the guilty flame,
Absorbs each wish it felt before.

But, if affection gently thrills
The soul, by purer dreams possest,
The pleasing balm of mortal ills,
In love can soothe the aching breast;
If thus, thou comest in gentle guise,
Fair Venus! from thy native heaven,
What heart, unfeeling, would despise
The sweetest boon the gods have given?

But, never from thy golden bow
May I beneath the shaft expire,
Whose creeping venom, sure and slow,
Awakes an all-consuming fire;
Ye racking doubts! ye jealous fears!
With others wage eternal war;
Repentance! source of future tears,
From me be ever distant far.

May no distracting thoughts destroy
The holy calm of sacred love!
May all the hours be wing'd with joy,
Which hover faithful hearts above!
Fair Venus! on thy myrtle shrine,
May I with some fond lover sigh!
Whose heart may mingle pure with mine,
With me to live, with me to die.

My native soil! beloved before,
Now dearer, as my peaceful home,
Ne'er may I quit thy rocky shore,
A hapless, banish'd wretch to roam;
This very day, this very hour,
May I resign this fleeting breath,
Nor quit my silent, humble bower—
A doom, to me, far worse than death.

Have I not heard the exile's sigh?
And seen the exile's silent tear?
Through distant climes condemn'd to fly,
A pensive, weary wanderer here:
Ah! hapless dame![1] no sire bewails,
No friend thy wretched fate deplores,
No kindred voice with rapture hails
Thy steps, within a stranger's doors.

Perish the fiend! whose iron heart,
To fair affection's truth unknown,
Bids her he fondly loved depart,
Unpitied, helpless, and alone;
Who ne'er unlocks, with silver key,[2]
The milder treasures of his soul;
May such a friend be far from me,
And Ocean's storms between us roll!

FUGITIVE PIECES.

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY A COLLEGE EXAMINATION.[3]

High in the midst, surrounded by his peers,
Magnus his ample front sublime uprears;
Placed on his chair of state, he seems a god,
While Sophs and Freshmen tremble at his nod;
As all around sit wrapt in speechless gloom,
His voice, in thunder, shakes the sounding dome,
Denouncing dire reproach to luckless fools,
Unskill'd to plod in mathematic rules.

Happy the youth! in Euclid's axioms tried,
Though little versed in any art beside;
Who, scarcely skill'd an English line to pen,
Scans attic metres with a critic's ken.
What! though he knows not how his fathers bled,
When civil discord piled the fields with dead;
When Edward bade his conquering bands advance,
Or Henry trampled on the crest of France;
Though, marv'ling at the name of Magna Charta,
Yet, well he recollects the laws of Sparta;
Can tell what edicts sage Lycurgus made,
While Blackstone's on the shelf neglected laid;
Of Grecian dramas vaunts the deathless fame,
Of Avon's bard remembering scarce the name.

Such is the youth, whose scientific pate,
Class-honours, medals, fellowships, await;
Or even, perhaps, the declamation prize,
If to such glorious height he lifts his eyes.
But, lo! no common orator can hope
The envied silver cup within his scope:
Not that our Heads much eloquence require,
Th' Athenian's glowing style, or Tully's fire.
A manner clear or warm is useless, since
We do not try, by speaking, to convince:
Be other orators of pleasing proud,
We speak to please ourselves, not move the crowd;
Our gravity prefers the muttering tone,
A proper mixture of the squeak and groan;
No borrow'd grace of action must be seen,
The slightest motion would displease the Dean;
Whilst every staring Graduate would prate
Against what he could never imitate.

The man, who hopes t' obtain the promised cup,
Must in one posture stand, and ne'er look up;
Nor stop, but rattle over every word,
No matter what, so it can *not* be heard—
Thus let him hurry on, nor think to rest!
Who speaks the fastest 's sure to speak the best:
Who utters most within the shortest space,
May safely hope to win the wordy race.

The sons of science these, who, thus repaid,
Linger in ease in Granta's sluggish shade;
Where, on Cam's sedgy banks, supine they lie,
Unknown, unhonour'd live,—unwept for, die;
Dull as the pictures which adorn their halls,
They think all learning fix'd within their walls;
In manners rude, in foolish forms precise,
All modern arts affecting to despise;
Yet prizing Bentley's, Baunck's,[1] or Porson's[2] note,
More than the verse on which the critic wrote;
Vain as their honours, heavy as their ale,
Sad as their wit, and tedious as their tale,
To friendship dead, though not untaught to feel,
When Self and Church demand a bigot zeal.
With eager haste they court the lord of power,
Whether 'tis Pitt or P—tty rules the hour:[3]

[1] *Medea*, who accompanied Jason to Corinth, was deserted by him for the daughter of Creon, king of that city. The Chorus from which this is taken, here address Medea; though a considerable liberty is taken with the original, by expanding the idea, as also in some other parts of the translation.

[2] The original is «Καθαραν ἀνοίξαντι κλῃδα φρενῶν:» literally «Disclosing the bright key of the mind.»

[3] No reflection is here intended against the person mentioned under the name of Magnus. He is merely represented as performing an unavoidable function of his office. Indeed such an attempt could only recoil upon myself, as that gentleman is now as much distinguished by his eloquence, and the dignified propriety with which he fills his situation, as he was, in his younger days, for wit and conviviality.

[1] Celebrated Critics.

[2] The present Greek Professor at Trinity College, Cambridge; a man whose powers of mind and writings may perhaps justify their preference.

[3] Since this was written, Lord H. P——y has lost his place, and

To him, with suppliant smiles, they bend the head,
While distant mitres to their eyes are spread;
But should a storm o'erwhelm him with disgrace,
They 'd fly to seek the next who fill'd his place.
Such are the men who learning's treasures guard,
Such is their practice, such is their reward;
This much, at least, we may presume to say—
The premium can't exceed the price they pay.

1806.

TO THE EARL OF ***

"Tu semper amoris
Sis memor, et cari comitis ne abscedat imago."
VALERIUS FLACCUS.

Friend of my youth! when young we roved,
Like striplings mutually beloved,
With Friendship's purest glow;
The bliss which wing'd those rosy hours,
Was such as pleasure seldom showers
On mortals here below.

The recollection seems, alone
Dearer than all the joys I 've known,
When distant far from you;
Though pain, 't is still a pleasing pain,
To trace those days and hours again,
And sigh again, adieu!

My pensive memory lingers o'er
Those scenes to be enjoy'd no more,
Those scenes regretted ever;
The measure of our youth is full,
Life's evening dream is dark and dull,
And we may meet—ah! never!

As when one parent spring supplies
Two streams, which from one fountain rise,
Together join'd in vain;
How soon, diverging from their source,
Each murmuring seeks another course,
Till mingled in the main.

Our vital streams of weal or woe,
Though near, alas! distinctly flow,
Nor mingle as before;
Now swift or slow, now black or clear,
Till death's unfathom'd gulph appear,
And both shall quit the shore.

Our souls, my Friend! which once supplied
One wish, nor breathed a thought beside,
Now flow in different channels;
Disdaining humbler rural sports,
'T is yours to mix in polish'd courts,
And shine in Fashion's annals.

'T is mine to waste on love my time,
Or vent my reveries in rhyme,
Without the aid of Reason;
For Sense and Reason (Critics know it)
Have quitted every amorous Poet,
Nor left a thought to seize on.

subsequently (I had almost said consequently) the honour of representing the University; a fact so glaring requires no comment.

Poor Little! sweet, melodious bard!
Of late esteem'd it monstrous hard,
That he, who sang before all;
He, who the love of love expanded,
By dire reviewers should be branded,
As void of wit and moral.[1]

And yet, while Beauty's praise is thine,
Harmonious favourite of the Nine!
Repine not at thy lot;
Thy soothing lays may still be read,
When Persecution's arm is dead,
And Critics are forgot.

Still, I must yield those worthies merit,
Who chasten, with unsparing spirit,
Bad rhymes, and those who write them;
And though myself may be the next
By critic sarcasm to be vext,
I really will not fight them;[2]

Perhaps they would do quite as well,
To break the rudely sounding shell
Of such a young beginner;
He who offends at pert nineteen,
Ere thirty, may become, I ween,
A very harden'd sinner.

Now ——— I must return to you,
And sure apologies are due;
Accept then my concession;
In truth, dear ———, in fancy's flight,
I soar along from left to right,
My muse admires digression.

I think I said 't would be your fate
To add one star to royal state;
May regal smiles attend you;
And should a noble Monarch reign,
You will not seek his smiles in vain,
If worth can recommend you.

Yet, since in danger courts abound,
Where specious rivals glitter round,
From snares may Saints preserve you;
And grant your love or friendship ne'er
From any claim a kindred care,
But those who best deserve you.

Not for a moment may you stray
From Truth's secure unerring way,
May no delights decoy;
O'er roses may your footsteps move,
Your smiles be ever smiles of love,
Your tears be tears of joy.

Oh! if you wish that happiness
Your coming days and years may bless,
And virtues crown your brow:
Be, still, as you were wont to be,
Spotless as you 've been known to me,
Be, still, as you are now.

[1] These Stanzas were written soon after the appearance of a severe critique in a Northern review, on a new publication of the British Anacreon.

[2] A Bard (horresco referens) defied his reviewer to mortal combat. If this example becomes prevalent, our periodical censors must be dipt in the river Styx, for what else can secure them from the numerous host of their enraged assailants?

And, though some trifling share of praise,
To cheer my last declining days,
To me were doubly dear;
Whilst blessing your beloved name,
I'd *wave* at once a *Poet's* fame,
To *prove* a *Prophet here*.

GRANTA, A MEDLEY.

Αργυρεαις λογχαισι μαχου και παντα Κρατησεις.

Oh! could Le Sage's[1] demon's gift
Be realized at my desire,
This night my trembling form he 'd lift,
To place it on St Mary's spire.

Then would, unroof'd, old Granta's halls
Pedantic inmates full display;
Fellows who dream on lawn, or stalls,
The price of venal votes to pay.

Then would I view each rival wight,
P—tty and P—lm—st—n survey;
Who canvass there with all their might,
Against the next elective day.

Lo! candidates and voters lie,
All lull'd in sleep, a goodly number!
A race renown'd for piety,
Whose conscience won't disturb their slumber.

Lord H——, indeed, may not demur,
Fellows are sage, reflecting men!
They know preferment can occur
But very seldom,—now and then.

They know the Chancellor has got
Some pretty livings in disposal;
Each hopes that one may be his lot,
And, therefore, smiles on his proposal.

Now, from the soporific scene
I 'll turn mine eye, as night grows later,
To view, unheeded and unseen,
The studious sons of Alma Mater.

There, in apartments small and damp,
The candidate for college prizes
Sits poring by the midnight lamp,
Goes late to bed, yet early rises.

He, surely, well deserves to gain them,
With all the honours of his college,
Who, striving hardly to obtain them,
Thus seeks unprofitable knowledge;

Who sacrifices hours of rest,
To scan, precisely, metres Attic,
Or agitates his anxious breast
In solving problems mathematic;

Who reads false quantities in Sele,[2]
Or puzzles o'er the deep triangle,
Deprived of many a wholesome meal,
In barbarous Latin[3] doom'd to wrangle;

Renouncing every pleasing page
From authors of historic use;
Preferring to the letter'd sage
The square of the hypothenuse.[1]

Still, harmless are these occupations,
That hurt none but the hapless student,
Compared with other recreations,
Which bring together the imprudent.

Whose daring revels shock the sight,
When vice and infamy combine,
When drunkenness and dice unite,
And every sense is steep'd in wine.

Not so the methodistic crew,
Who plans of reformation lay:
In humble attitude they sue,
And for the sins of others pray.

Forgetting, that their pride of spirit,
Their exultation in their trial,
Detracts most largely from the merit
Of all their boasted self-denial.

'T is morn,—from these I turn my sight:
What scene is this which meets the eye?
A numerous crowd array'd in white,[2]
Across the green in numbers fly.

Loud rings, in air, the chapel bell;
'T is hush'd: What sounds are these I hear?
The organ's soft celestial swell
Rolls deeply on the listening ear.

To this is join'd the sacred song,
The royal minstrel's hallow'd strain;
Though he who hears the music long
Will never wish to hear again.

Our choir would scarcely be excused,
Even as a band of raw beginners;
All mercy, now, must be refused,
To such a set of croaking sinners.

If David, when his toils were ended,
Had heard these blockheads sing before him,
To us his psalms had ne'er descended,
In furious mood he would have tore 'em.

The luckless Israelites, when taken,
By some inhuman tyrant's order,
Were ask'd to sing, by joy forsaken,
On Babylonian river's border.

Oh! had they sung in notes like these,
Inspired by stratagem or fear,
They might have set their hearts at ease—
The devil a soul had stay'd to hear.

But, if I scribble longer now,
The deuce a soul will stay to read;
My pen is blunt, my ink is low,
'T is almost time to stop indeed.

Therefore, farewell, old Granta's spires,
No more, like Cleofas, I fly;
No more thy theme my Muse inspires,
The reader 's tired, and so am I.

1806.

[1] The Diable Boiteux of Le Sage, where Asmodeus, the demon, places Don Cleophas on an elevated situation, and unroofs the houses for his inspection.

[2] Sele's publication on Greek metres displays considerable talent and ingenuity, but, as might be expected in so difficult a work, is not remarkable for accuracy.

[3] The Latin of the schools is of the CAMDEN species, and not very intelligible.

[1] The discovery of Pythagoras, that the square of the hypothenuse is equal to the squares of the other two sides of a right angled triangle.

[2] On a Saint day, the students wear surplices in chapel.

LACHIN Y GAIR.

LACHIN Y GAIR, or, as it is pronounced in the Erse, LOCH NA GARR, towers proudly pre-eminent in the Northern Highlands, near Invercauld. One of our modern tourists mentions it as the highest mountain, perhaps, in Great Britain; be this as it may, it is certainly one of the most sublime and picturesque amongst our «Caledonian Alps.» Its appearance is of a dusky hue, but the summit is the seat of eternal snows: near Lachin y Gair I spent some of the early part of my life, the recollection of which has given birth to the following Stanzas.

Away, ye gay landscapes, ye gardens of roses!
In you let the minions of luxury rove;
Restore me the rocks where the snow-flake reposes,
Though still they are sacred to freedom and love:
Yet, Caledonia, beloved are thy mountains,
Round their white summits though elements war,
Though cataracts foam, 'stead of smooth-flowing fountains,
I sigh for the valley of dark Loch na Garr.

Ah! there my young footsteps in infancy wander'd,
My cap was the bonnet, my cloak was the plaid;[1]
On chieftains long perish'd my memory ponder'd,
As daily I strode through the pine-cover'd glade;
I sought not my home till the day's dying glory
Gave place to the rays of the bright polar star;
For Fancy was cheer'd by traditional story
Disclosed by the natives of dark Loch na Garr.

«Shades of the dead! have I not heard your voices
Rise on the night-rolling breath of the gale?»
Surely the soul of the hero rejoices,
And rides on the wind o'er his own Highland vale:
Round Loch na Garr, while the stormy mist gathers,
Winter presides in his cold icy car;
Clouds there encircle the forms of my fathers—
They dwell in the tempests of dark Loch na Garr:

«Ill-starr'd,[2] though brave, did no visions foreboding
Tell you that Fate had forsaken your cause?»
Ah! were you destined to die at Culloden,[3]
Victory crown'd not your fall with applause;
Still were you happy, in death's early slumber,
You rest with your clan, in the caves of Braemar,[4]
The Pibroch[5] resounds to the piper's loud number
Your deeds on the echoes of dark Loch na Garr.

Years have roll'd on, Loch na Garr, since I left you;
Years must elapse ere I tread you again;
Nature of verdure and flowers has bereft you,
Yet, still, are you dearer than Albion's plain:
England! thy beauties are tame and domestic
To one who has roved on the mountains afar;
Oh! for the crags that are wild and majestic,
The steep frowning glories of dark Loch na Garr!

[1] This word is erroneously pronounced PLAD, the proper pronunciation (according to the Scotch) is shown by the orthography.

[2] I allude here to my maternal ancestors, «the GORDONS,» many of whom fought for the unfortunate Prince Charles, better known by the name of the Pretender. This branch was nearly allied by blood, as well as attachment, to the STEWARTS. George, the second Earl of Huntley, married the Princess Annabella Stewart, daughter of James the First of Scotland; by her he left four sons: the third, Sir William Gordon, I have the honour to claim as one of my progenitors.

[3] Whether any perished in the battle of Culloden I am not certain; but as many fell in the insurrection, I have used the name of the principal action, «pars pro toto.»

[4] A tract of the Highlands so called; there is also a Castle of Braemar.

[5] The Bagpipe.

TO ROMANCE.

Parent of golden dreams, Romance!
Auspicious Queen of childish joys!
Who lead'st along, in airy dance,
Thy votive train of girls and boys;
At length, in spells no longer bound,
I break the fetters of my youth;
No more I tread thy mystic round,
But leave thy realms for those of Truth.

And, yet, 't is hard to quit the dreams
Which haunt the unsuspicious soul,
Where every nymph a goddess seems,
Whose eyes through rays immortal roll;
While Fancy holds her boundless reign,
And all assume a varied hue,
When Virgins seem no longer vain,
And even Woman's smiles are true.

And must we own thee but a name,
And from thy hall of clouds descend;
Nor find a Sylph in every dame,
A Pylades[1] in every friend?
But leave, at once, thy realms of air,
To mingling bands of fairy elves:
Confess that woman 's false as fair,
And Friends have feelings for—themselves.

With shame, I own, I 've felt thy sway,
Repentant, now thy reign is o'er;
No more thy precepts I obey,
No more on fancied pinions soar:
Fond fool! to love a sparkling eye,
And think that eye to Truth was dear,
To trust a passing wanton's sigh,
And melt beneath a wanton's tear.

Romance! disgusted with deceit,
Far from thy motley court I fly,
Where Affectation holds her seat,
And sickly Sensibility;
Whose silly tears can never flow
For any pangs excepting thine;
Who turns aside from real woe,
To steep in dew thy gaudy shrine:

Now join with sable Sympathy,
With cypress crown'd, array'd in weeds,
Who heaves with thee her simple sigh,
Whose breast for every bosom bleeds;
And call thy sylvan female quire,
To mourn a swain for ever gone,
Who once could glow with equal fire,
But bends not now before thy throne.

Ye genial nymphs, whose ready tears,
On all occasions, swiftly flow;
Whose bosoms heave with fancied fears,
With fancied flames and phrenzy glow;
Say, will you mourn my absent name,
Apostate from your gentle train?
An infant Bard, at least, may claim
From you a sympathetic strain.

[1] It is hardly necessary to add, that Pylades was the companion of Orestes, and a partner in one of those friendships which, with those of Achilles and Patroclus, Nisus and Euryalus, Damon and Pythias, have been handed down to posterity as remarkable instances of attachments which, in all probability, never existed, beyond the imagination of the poet, the page of an historian, or modern novelist.

Adieu! fond race, a long adieu!
The hour of fate is hovering nigh;
Even now the gulf appears in view,
Where unlamented you must lie:
Oblivion's blackening lake is seen
Convulsed by gales you cannot weather,
Where you, and eke your gentle queen,
Alas! must perish altogether.

ELEGY ON NEWSTEAD ABBEY.[1]

It is the voice of years that are gone! they roll before me with all their deeds. OSSIAN.

Newstead! fast falling, once resplendent dome!
Religion's shrine! repentant Henry's[2] pride!
Of Warriors, Monks, and Dames the cloister'd tomb,
Whose pensive shades around thy ruins glide:

Hail to thy pile! more honour'd in thy fall,
Than modern mansions in their pillar'd state;
Proudly majestic frowns thy vaulted hall,
Scowling defiance on the blasts of fate.

No mail-clad Serfs,[3] obedient to their Lord,
In grim array, the crimson cross[4] demand;
Or gay assemble round the festive board,
Their chiefs retainers, an immortal band.

Else might inspiring Fancy's magic eye
Retrace their progress, through the lapse of time;
Marking each ardent youth, ordain'd to die
A votive pilgrim, in Judea's clime.

But not from thee, dark pile! departs the Chief,
His feudal realm in other regions lay;
In thee, the wounded conscience courts relief,
Retiring from the garish blaze of day.

Yes, in thy gloomy cells and shades profound,
The Monk abjured a world he ne'er could view;
Or blood-stain'd Guilt repenting solace found,
Or Innocence from stern Oppression flew.

A Monarch bade thee from that wild arise,
Where Sherwood's outlaws once were wont to prowl;
And Superstition's crimes, of various dyes,
Sought shelter in the Priest's protecting cowl.

Where now the grass exhales a murky dew,
The humid pall of life-extinguish'd clay,
In sainted fame the sacred Fathers grew,
Nor raised their pious voices, but to pray.

Where now the bats their wavering wings extend,
Soon as the gloaming[5] spreads her waning shade,
The choir did oft their mingling vespers blend,
Or matin orisons to Mary[6] paid.

Years roll on years—to ages, ages yield—
Abbots to abbots in a line succeed;
Religion's charter their protecting shield;
Till royal sacrilege their doom decreed.

One holy Henry rear'd the Gothic walls,
And bade the pious inmates rest in peace;
Another Henry[1] the kind gift recals,
And bids devotion's hallow'd echoes cease.

Vain is each threat, or supplicating prayer,
He drives them exiles from their blest abode,
To roam a dreary world, in deep despair,
No friend, no home, no refuge but their God.

Hark! how the hall, resounding to the strain,
Shakes with the martial music's novel din!
The heralds of a warrior's haughty reign,
High crested banners, wave thy walls within.

Of changing sentinels the distant hum,
The mirth of feasts, the clang of burnish'd arms,
The braying trumpet, and the hoarser drum,
Unite in concert with increased alarms.

An abbey once, a regal fortress[2] now,
Encircled by insulting rebel powers;
War's dread machines o'erhang thy threatening brow,
And dart destruction in sulphureous showers.

Ah! vain defence! the hostile traitor's siege,
Though oft repulsed, by guile o'ercomes the brave;
His thronging foes oppress the faithful Liege,
Rebellion's reeking standards o'er him wave.

Not unavenged, the raging Baron yields,
The blood of traitors smears the purple plain;
Unconquer'd still his faulchion there he wields,
And days of glory yet for him remain.

Still, in that hour the warrior wish'd to strew
Self-gather'd laurels on a self-sought grave;
But Charles' protecting genius hither flew,
The monarch's friend, the monarch's hope, to save.

Trembling she snatch'd him[3] from the unequal strife,
In other fields the torrent to repel,
For nobler combats here reserved his life,
To lead the band where god-like Falkland[4] fell.

From thee, poor pile! to lawless plunder given,
While dying groans their painful requiem sound,
Far different incense now ascends to heaven—
Such victims wallow on the gory ground.

There, many a pale and ruthless robber's corse,
Noisome and ghast, defiles thy sacred sod;
O'er mingling man, and horse commix'd with horse,
Corruption's heap, the savage spoilers trod.

Graves, long with rank and sighing weeds o'erspread,
Ransack'd, resign perforce their mortal mould;
From ruffian fangs escape not e'en the dead,
Raked from repose, in search of buried gold.

[1] As one poem on this subject is printed in the beginning, the author had originally no intention of inserting the following: it is now added at the particular request of some friends.

[2] Henry II. founded Newstead, soon after the murder of Thomas a Becket.

[3] This word is used by Walter Scott, in his poem, "The Wild Huntsman," as synonymous with Vassal.

[4] The Red Cross was the badge of the Crusaders.

[5] As "Gloaming," the Scottish word for Twilight, is far more poetical, and has been recommended by many eminent literary men, particularly Dr Moore, in his Letters to Burns, I have ventured to use it on account of its harmony.

[6] The Priory was dedicated to the Virgin.

[1] At the dissolution of the Monasteries, Henry VIII. bestowed Newstead Abbey on Sir John Byron.

[2] Newstead sustained a considerable siege in the war between Charles I. and his Parliament.

[3] Lord Byron and his brother Sir William held high commands in the royal army: the former was General in Chief in Ireland, Lieutenant of the Tower, and Governor to James Duke of York, afterwards the unhappy James II. The latter had a principal share in many actions. *Vide* Clarendon, Hume, etc.

[4] Lucius Cary, Lord Viscount Falkland, the most accomplished man of his age, was killed at the battle of Newberry, charging in the ranks of Lord Byron's regiment of cavalry.

Hush'd is the harp, unstrung the warlike lyre,
The minstrel's palsied hand reclines in death;
No more he strikes the quivering chords with fire,
Or sings the glories of the martial wreath.

At length, the sated murderers, gorged with prey,
Retire—the clamour of the fight is o'er;
Silence again resumes her awful sway,
And sable Horror guards the massy door.

Here Desolation holds her dreary court;
What satellites declare her dismal reign!
Shrieking their dirge, ill-omen'd birds resort
To flit their vigils in the hoary fane.

Soon a new morn's restoring beams dispel
The clouds of anarchy from Britain's skies;
The fierce usurper seeks his native hell,
And Nature triumphs as the tyrant dies.

With storms she welcomes his expiring groans,
Whirlwinds responsive greet his labouring breath;
Earth shudders as her cave receives his bones,
Loathing[1] the offering of so dark a death.

The legal Ruler[2] now resumes the helm,
He guides thro' gentle seas the prow of state:
Hope cheers with wonted smiles the peaceful realm,
And heals the bleeding wounds of wearied Hate.

The gloomy tenants, Newstead, of thy cells,
Howling resign their violated nest;
Again the master on his tenure dwells,
Enjoy'd, from absence, with enraptured zest.

Vassals within thy hospitable pale,
Loudly carousing, bless their Lord's return;
Culture again adorns the gladdening vale,
And matrons, once lamenting, cease to mourn.

A thousand songs on tuneful echo float,
Unwonted foliage mantles o'er the trees;
And, hark! the horns proclaim a mellow note,
The hunter's cry hangs lengthening on the breeze.

Beneath their coursers' hoofs the valleys shake:
What fears, what anxious hopes attend the chase!
The dying stag seeks refuge in the lake,
Exulting shouts announce the finish'd race.

Ah! happy days! too happy to endure!
Such simple sports our plain forefathers knew:
No splendid vices glitter'd to allure—
Their joys were many, as their cares were few.

From these descending, sons to sires succeed,
Time steals along, and Death uprears his dart;
Another chief impels the foaming steed,
Another crowd pursue the panting hart.

Newstead! what saddening change of scene is thine!
Thy yawning arch betokens slow decay;
The last and youngest of a noble line
Now holds thy mouldering turrets in his sway.

Deserted now, he scans thy gray-worn towers—
Thy vaults, where dead of feudal ages sleep—
Thy cloisters, pervious to the wintry showers—
These, these he views, and views them but to weep.

Yet are his tears no emblem of regret,
Cherish'd affection only bids them flow;
Pride, Hope, and Love forbid him to forget,
But warm his bosom with impassion'd glow.

Yet, he prefers thee to the gilded domes,
Or gew-gaw grottos of the vainly great;
Yet lingers 'mid thy damp and mossy tombs,
Nor breathes a murmur 'gainst the will of fate.

Haply thy sun emerging yet may shine,
Thee to eradiate with meridian ray;
Hours splendid as the past may still be thine,
And bless thy future as thy former day.

[1] This is an historical fact. A violent tempest occurred immediately subsequent to the death, or interment, of Cromwell, which occasioned many disputes between his partisans and the cavaliers; both interpreted the circumstance into divine interposition, but whether as approbation or condemnation, we leave to the casuists of that age to decide. I have made such use of the occurrence as suited the subject of my poem.

[2] Charles II.

TO E. N. L. ESQ.

Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.

HOR. E.

Dear L——, in this sequester'd scene,
While all around in slumber lie,
The joyous days which ours have been
Come rolling fresh on Fancy's eye:
Thus, if amidst the gathering storm,
While clouds the darken'd noon deform,
Yon heaven assumes a varied glow,
I hail the sky's celestial bow,
Which spreads the sign of future peace,
And bids the war of tempests cease.
Ah! though the present brings but pain,
I think those days may come again;
Or if, in melancholy mood,
Some lurking envious fear intrude,
To check my bosom's fondest thought,
And interrupt the golden dream;
I crush the fiend with malice fraught,
And still indulge my wonted theme;
Although we ne'er again can trace,
In Granta's vale, the pedant's lore,
Nor through the groves of Ida chase
Our raptured visions as before;
Though Youth has flown on rosy pinion,
And Manhood claims his stern dominion,
Age will not every hope destroy,
But yield some hours of sober joy.

Yes, I will hope that Time's broad wing
Will shed around some dews of spring;
But, if his scythe must sweep the flowers
Which bloom among the fairy bowers,
Where smiling Youth delights to dwell,
And hearts with early rapture swell;
If frowning Age, with cold controul,
Confines the current of the soul,
Congeals the tear of Pity's eye,
Or checks the sympathetic sigh,
Or hears unmoved Misfortune's groan,
And bids me feel for self alone;
Oh! may my bosom never learn,
To soothe its wonted heedless flow,
Still, still, despise the censor stern,
But ne'er forget another's woe.
Yes, as you knew me in the days
O'er which Remembrance yet delays,

Still may I rove untutor'd, wild,
And even in age at heart a child.

Though now on airy visions borne,
To you my soul is still the same,
Oft has it been my fate to mourn,
And all my former joys are tame.
But, hence! ye hours of sable hue,
Your frowns are gone, my sorrows o'er;
By every bliss my childhood knew,
I'll think upon your shade no more.
Thus, when the whirlwind's rage is past,
And caves their sullen roar enclose,
We heed no more the wintry blast,
When lull'd by zephyr to repose.
Full often has my infant Muse,
Attuned to love her languid lyre;
But now, without a theme to choose,
The strains in stolen sighs expire;
My youthful nymphs, alas! are flown;
E—— is a wife, and C—— a mother,
And Carolina sighs alone,
And Mary 's given to another;
And Cora's eye, which roll'd on me,
Can now no more my love recal;
In truth, dear L——, 't was time to flee,
For Cora's eye will shine on all.
And though the Sun, with genial rays,
His beams alike to all displays,
And every lady's eye 's a *sun*,
These last should be confined to one.
The soul's meridian don't become her
Whose sun displays a general *summer*.
Thus faint is every former flame,
And Passion's self is now a name:
As when the ebbing flames are low,
The aid which once improved their light,
And bade them burn with fiercer glow,
Now quenches all their sparks in night;
Thus has it been with passion's fires,
As many a boy and girl remembers,
While all the force of love expires,
Extinguish'd with the dying embers.

But now dear L——, 't is midnight's noon,
And clouds obscure the watery moon,
Whose beauties I shall not rehearse,
Described in every stripling's verse;
For why should I the path go o'er,
Which every bard has trod before?
Yet, ere yon silver lamp of night
Has thrice perform'd her stated round,
Has thrice retraced her path of light,
And chased away the gloom profound,
I trust that we, my gentle friend,
Shall see her rolling orbit wend
Above the dear loved peaceful seat
Which once contain'd our youth's retreat;
And then, with those our childhood knew,
We 'll mingle with the festive crew;
While many a tale of former day
Shall wing the laughing hours away;
And all the flow of soul shall pour
The sacred intellectual shower,
Nor cease, till Luna's waning horn
Scarce glimmers through the mist of Morn.

TO ——

On! had my fate been join'd with thine,
As once this pledge appear'd a token,
These follies had not then been mine,
For then my peace had not been broken.

To thee these early faults I owe,
To thee, the wise and old reproving;
They know my sins, but do not know
'T was thine to break the bonds of loving.

For once my soul, like thine, was pure,
And all its rising fires could smother;
But now thy vows no more endure,
Bestow'd by thee upon another.

Perhaps his peace I could destroy,
And spoil the blisses that await him;
Yet, let my rival smile in joy,
For thy dear sake I cannot hate him.

Ah! since thy angel form is gone,
My heart no more can rest with any;
But what it sought in thee alone,
Attempts, alas! to find in many.

Then fare thee well, deceitful maid,
'T were vain and fruitless to regret thee;
Nor hope nor memory yield their aid,
But pride may teach me to forget thee.

Yet all this giddy waste of years,
This tiresome round of palling pleasures,
These varied loves, these matron's fears,
These thoughtless strains to passion's measures,

If thou wert mine, had all been hush'd;
This cheek, now pale from early riot,
With Passion's hectic ne'er had flush'd,
But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,
For nature seem'd to smile before thee;
And once my breast abhorr'd deceit,
For then it beat but to adore thee.

But now I seek for other joys;
To think would drive my soul to madness;
In thoughtless throngs and empty noise,
I conquer half my bosom's sadness.

Yet, even in these a thought will steal,
In spite of every vain endeavour;
And fiends might pity what I feel,
To know that thou art lost for ever.

STANZAS.

I WOULD I were a careless child,
Still dwelling in my Highland cave,
Or roaming through the dusky wild,
Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave.
The cumbrous pomp of Saxon[1] pride
Accords not with the free-born soul,
Which loves the mountain's craggy side,
And seeks the rocks where billows roll.

Fortune! take back these cultured lands,
Take back this name of splendid sound!
I hate the touch of servile hands—
I hate the slaves that cringe around:

[1] Sassenagh, or Saxon, a Gaelic word signifying either Lowland or English.

Place me along the rocks I love,
Which sound to ocean's wildest roar;
I ask but this—again to rove
Through scenes my youth hath known before.

Few are my years, and yet I feel
The world was ne'er design'd for me;
Ah! why do darkning shades conceal
The hour when man must cease to be?
Once I beheld a splendid dream,
A visionary scene of bliss;
Truth! wherefore did thy hated beam
Awake me to a world like this?

I loved—but those I loved are gone;
Had friends—my early friends are fled;
How cheerless feels the heart alone,
When all its former hopes are dead!
Though gay companions o'er the bowl,
Dispel awhile the sense of ill,
Though Pleasure stirs the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still.

How dull to hear the voice of those
Whom Rank or Chance, whom Wealth or Power,
Have made, though neither Friends nor Foes,
Associates of the festive hour.
Give me again a faithful few,
In years and feelings still the same,
And I will fly the midnight crew,
Where boist'rous Joy is but a name.

And Woman! lovely Woman, thou,
My hope, my comforter, my all!
How cold must be my bosom now,
When e'en thy smiles begin to pall!
Without a sigh would I resign
This busy scene of splendid woe,
To make that calm contentment mine
Which Virtue knows, or seems to know.

Fain would I fly the haunts of men—
I seek to shun, not hate mankind;
My breast requires the sullen glen,
Whose gloom may suit a darken'd mind.
Oh! that to me the wings were given
Which bear the turtle to her nest!
Then would I cleave the vault of Heaven,
To flee away and be at rest.[1]

LINES

WRITTEN BENEATH AN ELM IN THE CHURCHYARD OF HARROW ON THE HILL.

SEPT. 2, 1807.

Spot of my youth! whose hoary branches sigh,
Swept by the breeze that fans thy cloudless sky;
Where now alone I muse, who oft have trod,
With those I loved, thy soft and verdant sod;
With those who, scatter'd far, perchance deplore,
Like me, the happy scenes they knew before:
Oh! as I trace again thy winding hill,
Mine eyes admire, my heart adores thee still,
Thou drooping Elm! beneath whose boughs I lay,
And frequent mused the twilight hours away;
Where, as they once were wont, my limbs recline,
But ah! without the thoughts which then were mine:
How do thy branches, moaning to the blast,
Invite the bosom to recal the past;
And seem to whisper, as they gently swell,
«Take, while thou can'st, a lingering last farewell!»
When Fate shall chill at length this fever'd breast,
And calm its cares and passions into rest,
Oft have I thought 't would soothe my dying hour,
If aught may soothe when life resigns her power,
To know some humbler grave, some narrow cell,
Would hide my bosom where it loved to dwell:
With this fond dream methinks 't were sweet to die—
And here it linger'd, here my heart might lie;
Here might I sleep, where all my hopes arose,
Scene of my youth, and couch of my repose:
For ever stretch'd beneath this mantling shade,
Prest by the turf where once my childhood play'd,
Wrapt by the soil that veils the spot I loved,
Mix'd with the earth o'er which my footsteps moved;
Blest by the tongues that charm'd my youthful ear,
Mourn'd by the few my soul acknowledged here,
Deplored by those in early days allied,
And unremember'd by the world beside.

[1] Psalm lv. v. 6.—«And I said, Oh! that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest.» This verse also constitutes a part of the most beautiful anthem in our language.

THE DEATH OF CALMAR AND ORLA.

AN IMITATION OF MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN.[1]

Dear are the days of youth! Age dwells on their remembrance through the mist of time In the twilight he recals the sunny hours of morn. He lifts his spear with trembling hand. «Not thus feebly did I raise the steel before my fathers!» Past is the race of heroes! but their fame rises on the harp; their souls ride on the wings of the wind! they hear the sound through the sighs of the storm, and rejoice in their hall of clouds! Such is Calmar. The gray stone marks his narrow house. He looks down from eddying tempests, he rolls his form in the whirlwind; and hovers on the blast of the mountain.

In Morven dwelt the chief; a beam of war to Fingal. His steps in the field were marked in blood; Lochlin's sons had fled before his angry spear: but mild was the eye of Calmar; soft was the flow of his yellow locks—they stream'd like the meteor of the night. No maid was the sigh of his soul; his thoughts were given to friendship, to dark-haired Orla, destroyer of heroes! Equal were their swords in battle; but fierce was the pride of Orla, gentle alone to Calmar. Together they dwelt in the cave of Oithona.

From Lochlin, Swaran bounded o'er the blue waves. Erin's sons fell beneath his might. Fingal roused his chiefs to combat. Their ships cover the ocean! Their hosts throng on the green hills. They come to the aid of Erin.

Night rose in clouds. Darkness veils the armies; but the blazing oaks gleam through the valley. The sons of Lochlin slept: their dreams were of blood. They lift the spear in thought, and Fingal flies. Not so the host of Morven. To watch was the post of Orla. Calmar stood by his side. Their spears were in their hands. Fingal called his chiefs. They stood around. The king was in the midst. Gray were his locks, but strong was the arm of the king. Age withered not his powers.

[1] It may be necessary to observe, that the story, though considerably varied in the catastrophe, is taken from «Nisus and Eurya-lus,» of which episode a translation has been already given.

«Sons of Morven,» said the hero, «to-morrow we meet the foe; but where is Cuthullin, the shield of Erin? He rests in the halls of Tura; he knows not of our coming. Who will speed through Lochlin to the hero, and call the chief to arms? The path is by the swords of foes, but many are my heroes. They are thunderbolts of war. Speak, ye chiefs! who will arise?»

«Son of Trenmor! mine be the deed,» said dark-haired Orla, «and mine alone. What is death to me? I love the sleep of the mighty, but little is the danger. The sons of Lochlin dream. I will seek car-borne Cuthullin. If I fall, raise the song of bards, and lay me by the stream of Lubar.»—«And shalt thou fall alone?» said fair-haired Calmar. «Wilt thou leave thy friend afar? Chief of Oithona! not feeble is my arm in fight. Could I see thee die, and not lift the spear? No, Orla! ours has been the chase of the roebuck, and the feast of shells; ours be the path of danger: ours has been the cave of Oithona; ours be the narrow dwelling on the banks of Lubar.»—«Calmar!» said the chief of Oithona, «why should thy yellow locks be darkened in the dust of Erin? Let me fall alone. My father dwells in his hall of air: he will rejoice in his boy: but the blue-eyed Mora spreads the feast for her son in Morven. She listens to the steps of the hunter on the heath, and thinks it is the tread of Calmar. Let him not say, 'Calmar is fallen by the steel of Lochlin; he died with gloomy Orla, the chief of the dark brow.' Why should tears dim the azure eye of Mora? Why should her voice curse Orla, the destroyer of Calmar? Live, Calmar! live to raise my stone of moss; live to revenge me in the blood of Lochlin! Join the song of bards above my grave. Sweet will be the song of death to Orla, from the voice of Calmar. My ghost shall smile on the notes of praise.»—«Orla!» said the son of Mora, «could I raise the song of death to my friend? Could I give his fame to the winds? No; my heart would speak in sighs; faint and broken are the sounds of sorrow. Orla! our souls shall hear the song together. One cloud shall be ours on high; the bards will mingle the names of Orla and Calmar.»

They quit the circle of the chiefs. Their steps are to the host of Lochlin. The dying blaze of oak dim twinkles through the night. The northern star points the path to Tura. Swaran, the king, rests on his lonely hill. Here the troops are mixed: they frown in sleep. Their shields beneath their heads. Their swords gleam, at distance, in heaps. The fires are faint; their embers fail in smoke. All is hushed; but the gale sighs on the rocks above. Lightly wheel the heroes through the slumbering band. Half the journey is past, when Mathon, resting on his shield, meets the eye of Orla. It rolls in flame, and glistens through the shade: his spear is raised on high. «Why dost thou bend thy brow, Chief of Oithona?» said fair-haired Calmar. «We are in the midst of foes. Is this a time for delay?»—«It is a time for vengeance,» said Orla, of the gloomy brow. «Mathon of Lochlin sleeps: seest thou his spear? Its point is dim with the gore of my father. The blood of Mathon shall reek on mine; but shall I slay him sleeping, son of Mora? No! he shall feel his wound; my fame shall not soar on the blood of slumber. Rise, Mathon! rise! the son of Connal calls; thy life is his: rise to combat.» Mathon starts from sleep, but did he rise alone? No: the gathering chiefs bound on the plain. «Fly, Calmar fly!» said dark-haired Orla: «Mathon is mine; I shall die in joy; but Lochlin crowds around; fly through the shade of night.» Orla turns; the helm of Mathon is cleft; his shield falls from his arm: he shudders in his blood. He rolls by the side of the blazing oak. Strumon sees him fall. His wrath rises; his weapon glitters on the head of Orla; but a spear pierced his eye. His brain gushes through the wound, and foams on the spear of Calmar. As roll the waves of Ocean on two mighty barks of the north, so pour the men of Lochlin on the chiefs. As, breaking the surge in foam, proudly steer the barks of the north, so rise the chiefs of Morven on the scattered crests of Lochlin. The din of arms came to the ear of Fingal. He strikes his shield: his sons throng around; the people pour along the heath. Ryno bounds in joy. Ossian stalks in his arms. Oscar shakes the spear. The eagle wing of Fillan floats on the wind. Dreadful is the clang of death! many are the widows of Lochlin. Morven prevails in its strength.

Morn glimmers on the hills: no living foe is seen; but the sleepers are many: grim they lie on Erin. The breeze of ocean lifts their locks: yet they do not awake. The hawks scream above their prey.

Whose yellow locks wave o'er the breast of a chief? bright as the gold of the stranger, they mingle with the dark hair of his friend. 'Tis Calmar—he lies on the bosom of Orla. Theirs is one stream of blood. Fierce is the look of the gloomy Orla. He breathes not; but his eye is still a flame: it glares in death unclosed. His hand is grasped in Calmar's; but Calmar lives: he lives, though low. «Rise,» said the king, «rise, son of Mora; 'tis mine to heal the wounds of heroes. Calmar may yet bound on the hills of Morven.»

«Never more shall Calmar chase the deer of Morven with Orla;» said the hero, «what were the chase to me, alone? Who would share the spoils of battle with Calmar? Orla is at rest! Rough was thy soul, Orla! yet soft to me as the dew of morn. It glared on others in lightning; to me a silver beam of night. Bear my sword to blue-eyed Mora: let it hang in my empty hall. It is not pure from blood: but it could not save Orla. Lay me with my friend: raise the song when I am dark.»

They are laid by the stream of Lubar. Four gray stones mark the dwelling of Orla and Calmar.

When Swaran was bound, our sails rose on the blue waves. The winds gave our barks to Morven. The Bards raised the song.

«What form rises on the roar of clouds? whose dark ghost gleams on the red streams of tempests? his voice rolls on the thunder. 'Tis Orla; the brown chief of Oithona. He was unmatched in war. Peace to thy soul, Orla! thy fame will not perish. Nor thine, Calmar! Lovely wast thou, son of blue-eyed Mora; but not harmless was thy sword. It hangs in thy cave. The ghosts of Lochlin shriek around its steel. Hear thy praise, Calmar! it dwells on the voice of the mighty. Thy name shakes on the echoes of Morven. Then raise thy fair locks, son of Mora. Spread them on the arch of the rainbow, and smile through the tears of the storm.»[1]

[1] I fear Laing's late edition has completely overthrown every hope that Macpherson's Ossian might prove the Translation of a series of Poems, complete in themselves; but, while the imposture is discovered, the merit of the work remains undisputed, though not without faults, particularly in some parts, turgid and bombastic diction.—The present humble imitation will be pardoned by the admirers of the original, as an attempt, however inferior, which evinces an attachment to their favourite author.

CRITIQUE

EXTRACTED FROM THE EDINBURGH REVIEW, NO. 22, FOR JANUARY 1808.

Hours of Idleness; a Series of Poems, original and translated. By GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON, a Minor. 8vo. pp. 200.—Newark, 1807.

THE poesy of this young Lord belongs to the class which neither gods nor men are said to permit. Indeed, we do not recollect to have seen a quantity of verse with so few deviations in either direction from that exact standard. His effusions are spread over a dead flat, and can no more get above or below the level, than if they were so much stagnant water. As an extenuation of this offence, the noble author is peculiarly forward in pleading minority. We have it in the title-page, and on the very back of the volume; it follows his name like a favourite part of his *style*. Much stress is laid upon it in the preface, and the poems are connected with this general statement of his case, by particular dates, substantiating the age at which each was written. Now, the law upon the point of minority we hold to be perfectly clear. It is a plea available only to the defendant; no plaintiff can offer it as a supplementary ground of action. Thus, if any suit could be brought against Lord Byron, for the purpose of compelling him to put into court a certain quantity of poetry, and if judgment were given against him, it is highly probable that an exception would be taken were he to deliver for poetry the contents of this volume. To this he might plead *minority;* but, as he now makes voluntary tender of the article, he hath no right to sue, on that ground, for the price in good current praise, should the goods be unmarketable. This is our view of the law on the point, and, we dare to say, so will it be ruled. Perhaps however, in reality, all that he tells us about his youth is rather with a view to increase our wonder, than to soften our censures. He possibly means to say, « See how a minor can write! This poem was actually composed by a young man of eighteen, and this by one of only sixteen!»—But, alas! we all remember the poetry of Cowley at ten, and Pope at twelve; and so far from hearing, with any degree of surprise, that very poor verses were written by a youth from his leaving school to his leaving college, inclusive, we really believe this to be the most common of all occurrences; that it happens in the life of nine men in ten who are educated in England; and that the tenth man writes better verse than Lord Byron.

His other plea of privilege, our author rather brings forward in order to wave it. He certainly, however, does allude frequently to his family and ancestors—sometimes in poetry, sometimes in notes; and while giving up his claim on the score of rank, he takes care to remember us of Dr Johnson's saying, that when a nobleman appears as an author, his merit should be handsomely acknowledged. In truth, it is this consideration only, that induces us to give Lord Byron's poems a place in our review, beside our desire to counsel him, that he do forthwith abandon poetry, and turn his talents, which are considerable, and his opportunities, which are great, to better account.

With this view, we must beg leave seriously to assure him, that the mere rhyming of the final syllable, even when accompanied by the presence of a certain number of feet; nay, although (which does not always happen) those feet should scan regularly, and have been all counted accurately, upon the fingers,—it is not the whole art of poetry. We would entreat him to believe, that a certain portion of liveliness, somewhat of fancy, is necessary to constitute a poem, and that a poem in the present day, to be read, must contain at least one thought, either in a little degree different from the ideas of former writers, or differently expressed. We put it to his candour, whether there is any thing so deserving the name of poetry in verses like the following, written in 1806; and whether, if a youth of eighteen could say any thing so uninteresting to his ancestors, a youth of nineteen should publish it:

« Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant, departing
From the seat of his ancestors, bids you adieu!
Abroad or at home, your remembrance imparting
New courage, he 'll think upon glory and you.

« Though a tear dim his eye at this sad separation,
'T is nature, not fear, that excites his regret:
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation;
The fame of his fathers he ne'er can forget.

« That fame, and that memory, still will he cherish,
He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your renown;
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish;
When decay'd, may he mingle his dust with your own.»

Now we positively do assert, that there is nothing better than these stanzas in the whole compass of the noble minor's volume.

Lord Byron should also have a care of attempting what the greatest poets have done before him, for comparisons (as he must have had occasion to see at his writing-master's) are odious.—Gray's Ode on Eton College should really have kept out the ten hobbling stanzas « On a distant view of the village and school of Harrow.»

« Where fancy yet joys to retrace the resemblance
Of comrades, in friendship and mischief allied;
How welcome to me your ne'er fading remembrance,
Which rests in the bosom, though hope is denied.»

In like manner, the exquisite lines of Mr Rogers « *On a Tear,*» might have warned the noble author off those premises, and spared us a whole dozen such stanzas as the following:

« Mild Charity's glow,
To us mortals below,
Shows the soul from barbarity clear;
Compassion will melt,
Where this virtue is felt,
And its dew is diffused in a Tear.

« The man doom'd to sail,
With the blast of the gale,
Through billows Atlantic to steer,
As he bends o'er the wave,
Which may soon be his grave,
The green sparkles bright with a Tear.»

And so of instances in which former poets had failed. Thus, we do not think Lord Byron was made for translating, during his non-age, Adrian's Address to his Soul, when Pope succeeded so indifferently in the attempt. If our readers, however, are of another opinion, they may look at it.

« Ah! gentle, fleeting, wavering sprite,
Friend and associate of this clay!
To what unknown region borne,
Wilt thou now wing thy distant flight?
No more with wonted humour gay,
But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn.»

However, be this as it may, we fear his translations and imitations are great favourites with Lord Byron. We have them of all kinds, from Anacreon to Ossian; and, viewing them as school exercises, they may pass. Only, why print them after they have had their day and served their turn? And why call the thing in p. 79,[1] a translation, where *two* words (*θελω λεγειν*) of the original are expanded into four lines, and the other thing in p. 81,[2] where *μεσονυκτιος ποθ' ὁ ρατις*, is rendered by means of six hobbling verses? As to his Ossianic poesy we are not very good judges, being, in truth, so moderately skilled in that species of composition, that we should, in all probability, be criticising some bit of the genuine Macpherson itself, were we to express our opinion of Lord Byron's rhapsodies. If, then, the following beginning of a «Song of Bards,» is by his Lordship, we venture to object to it, as far as we can comprehend it. «What form rises on the roar of clouds, whose dark ghost gleams on the red stream of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder; 'tis Orla, the brown chief of Oithona. He was,» etc. After detaining this «brown chief» some time, the bards conclude by giving him their advice to «raise his fair locks;» then to «spread them on the arch of the rainbow;» and «to smile through the tears of the storm.» Of this kind of thing there are no less than *nine* pages; and we can so far venture an opinion in their favour, that they look very like Macpherson; and we are positive they are pretty nearly as stupid and tiresome.

It is a sort of privilege of poets to be egotists; but they should «use it as not abusing it;» and particularly one who piques himself (though indeed at the ripe age of nineteen) of being «an infant bard.»—(«The artless Helicon I boast is youth;»)—should either not know, or should seem not to know, so much about his own ancestry. Besides a poem above cited, on the family seat of the Byrons, we have another of eleven pages, on the self-same subject, introduced with an apology, «he certainly had no intention of inserting it,» but really «the particular request of some friends,» etc. etc. It concludes with five stanzas on himself, «the last and youngest of a noble line.» There is a good deal also about his maternal ancestors, in a poem on Lachin y Gair, a mountain where he spent part of his youth, and might have learnt that pibroch is not a bagpipe, any more than duet means a fiddle.

As the author has dedicated so large a part of his volume to immortalize his employments at school and college, we cannot possibly dismiss it without presenting the reader with a specimen of these ingenious effusions. In an ode with a Greek motto, called Granta, we have the following magnificent stanzas:

« There, in apartments small and damp,
The candidate for college prizes
Sits poring by the midnight lamp,
Goes late to bed, yet early rises.

« Who reads false quantities in Sele,
Or puzzles o'er the deep triangle,
Deprived of many a wholesome meal,
In barbarous latin doom'd to wrangle.

« Renouncing every pleasing page,
From authors of historic use,
Preferring to the letter'd sage
The square of the hypothenuse.

« Still harmless are these occupations,
That hurt none but the hapless student,
Compared with other recreations,
Which bring together the imprudent.»

We are sorry to hear so bad an account of the college psalmody as is contained in the following Attic stanzas:

« Our choir would scarcely be excused
Even as a band of raw beginners;
All mercy now must be refused
To such a set of croaking sinners.

« If David, when his toils were ended,
Had heard these blockheads sing before him,
To us his psalms had ne'er descended:
In furious mood he would have tore 'em!»

But whatever judgment may be passed on the poems of this noble minor, it seems we must take them as we find them, and be content; for they are the last we shall ever have from him. He is, at best, he says, but an intruder into the groves of Parnassus; he never lived in a garret, like thorough-bred poets; and «though he once roved a careless mountaineer in the Highlands of Scotland,» he has not of late enjoyed this advantage. Moreover, he expects no profit from his publication; and, whether it succeeds or not, «it is highly improbable, from his situation and pursuits hereafter,» that he should again condescend to become an author. Therefore, let us take what we get, and be thankful. What right have we poor devils to be nice? We are well off to have got so much from a man of this Lord's station, who does not live in a garret, but «has the sway» of Newstead Abbey. Again, we say, let us be thankful; and, with honest Sancho, bid God bless the giver, nor look the gift horse in the mouth.

[1] See page 10.
[2] Page 11.

English Bards and Scotch Reviewers;

A SATIRE.

I had rather be a kitten, and cry mew!
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers.
Shakspeare.

Such shameless Bards we have; and yet, 't is true,
There are as mad, abandon'd Critics too.
Pope.

PREFACE.[1]

All my friends, learned and unlearned, have urged me not to publish this Satire with my name. If I were to be « turned from the career of my humour by quibbles quick, and paper bullets of the brain,» I should have complied with their counsel. But I am not to be terrified by abuse, or bullied by reviewers, with or without arms. I can safely say that I have attacked none *personally* who did not commence on the offensive. An author's works are public property: he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion if he pleases; and the authors I have endeavoured to commemorate may do by me as I have done by them: I dare say they will succeed better in condemning my scribblings, than in mending their own. But my object is not to prove that I can write well, but, *if possible*, to make others write better.

As the Poem has met with far more success than I expected, I have endeavoured in this edition to make some additions and alterations, to render it more worthy of public perusal.

In the first edition of this Satire, published anonymously, fourteen lines on the subject of Bowles's Pope were written and inserted at the request of an ingenious friend of mine, who has now in the press a volume of poetry. In the present edition they are erased, and some of my own substituted in their stead; my only reason for this being that which I conceive would operate with any other person in the same manner—a determination not to publish with my name any production which was not entirely and exclusively my own composition.

With regard to the real talents of many of the poetical persons whose performances are mentioned or alluded to in the following pages, it is presumed by the author that there can be little difference of opinion in the public at large; though, like other sectaries, each has his separate tabernacle of proselytes, by whom his abilities are overrated, his faults overlooked, and his metrical canons received without scruple and without consideration. But the unquestionable possession of considerable genius by several of the writers here censured, renders their mental prostitution more to be regretted. Imbecility may be pitied, or, at worst, laughed at and forgotten; perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension. No one can wish more than the author, that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure; but Mr Gifford has devoted himself to Massinger, and, in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum, to prevent the extension of so deplorable an epidemic, provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady. A caustic is here offered, as it is to be feared nothing short of actual cautery can recover the numerous patients afflicted with the present prevalent and distressing *rabies* for rhyming.—As to the *Edinburgh Reviewers*, it would indeed require a Hercules to crush the Hydra; but if the author succeeds in merely « bruising one of the heads of the serpent,» though his own hand should suffer in the encounter, he will be amply satisfied.

[1] This Preface was written for the second edition of this Poem, and printed with it.

ENGLISH BARDS,

etc. etc.

Still must I hear?—shall hoarse Fitzgerald[1] bawl
His creaking couplets in a tavern hall,
And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch Reviews
Should dub me scribbler, and denounce my Muse?
Prepare for rhyme—I 'll publish, right or wrong:
Fools are my theme, let Satire be my song.

Oh! Nature's noblest gift—my gray goose-quill!
Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,
Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen,
That mighty instrument of little men!
The pen! foredoom'd to aid the mental throes
Of brains that labour, big with verse or prose,
Though nymphs forsake, and critics may deride
The lover's solace, and the author's pride:
What wits, what poets dost thou daily raise!
How frequent is thy use, how small thy praise!
Condemn'd at length to be forgotten quite,
With all the pages which 'twas thine to write.
But thou, at least, mine own especial pen!
Once laid aside, but now assumed again,

[1] IMITATION.

« Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam
Vexatus toties rauci Theseide Codri?»—*Juvenal, Sat.* 1.

Mr Fitzgerald, facetiously termed by Cobbett the « Small Beer Poet,» inflicts his annual tribute of verse on the « Literary Fund:» not content with writing, he spouts in person, after the company have imbibed a reasonable quantity of bad port, to enable them to sustain the operation.

Our task complete, like Hamet's[1] shall be free;
Tho' spurn'd by others, yet beloved by me:
Then let us soar to-day; no common theme,
No eastern vision, no distemper'd dream
Inspires—our path, though full of thorns, is plain;
Smooth be the verse, and easy be the strain.

When Vice triumphant holds her sovereign sway,
And men, through life her willing slaves, obey;
When Folly, frequent harbinger of crime,
Unfolds her motley store to suit the time;
When knaves and fools combined o'er all prevail,
When Justice halts, and Right begins to fail,
E'en then the boldest start from public sneers,
Afraid of shame, unknown to other fears,
More darkly sin, by Satire kept in awe,
And shrink from ridicule, though not from law.

Such is the force of Wit! but not belong
To me the arrows of satiric song;
The royal vices of our age demand
A keener weapon, and a mightier hand.
Still there are follies e'en for me to chase,
And yield at least amusement in the race:
Laugh when I laugh, I seek no other fame—
The cry is up, and Scribblers are my game;
Speed, Pegasus!—ye strains of great and small,
Ode, Epic, Elegy, have at you all!
I too can scrawl, and once upon a time
I pour'd along the town a flood of rhyme—
A school-boy freak, unworthy praise or blame:
I printed—older children do the same.
'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print;
A book 's a book, altho' there 's nothing in 't.
Not that a title's sounding charm can save
Or scrawl or scribbler from an equal grave:
This Lambe must own, since his patrician name
Fail'd to preserve the spurious farce from shame.[2]
No matter, George continues still to write,[3]
Though now the name is veil'd from public sight.
Moved by the great example, I pursue
The self-same road, but make my own review:
Not seek great Jeffrey's—yet, like him, will be
Self-constituted judge of poesy.

A man must serve his time to every trade,
Save censure—critics all are ready made.
Take hackney'd jokes from Miller, got by rote,
With just enough of learning to misquote;
A mind well skill'd to find or forge a fault;
A turn for punning, call it Attic salt;
To Jeffrey go, be silent and discreet,
His pay is just ten sterling pounds per sheet:
Fear not to lie, 't will seem a lucky hit;
Shrink not from blasphemy, 't will pass for wit;
Care not for feeling—pass your proper jest,
And stand a critic, hated yet caress'd.

And shall we own such judgment? no—as soon
Seek roses in December, ice in June;
Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff;
Believe a woman, or an epitaph;
Or any other thing that 's false, before
You trust in critics who themselves are sore;
Or yield one single thought to be misled
By Jeffrey's heart, or Lambe's Bœotian head.[1]

To these young tyrants,[2] by themselves misplaced,
Combined usurpers on the throne of Taste;
To these, when authors bend in humble awe,
And hail their voice as truth, their word as law;
While these are censors, 't would be sin to spare;
While such are critics, why should I forbear?
But yet, so near all modern worthies run,
'T is doubtful whom to seek, or whom to shun;
Nor know we when to spare, or where to strike,
Our bards and censors are so much alike.

[3] Then should you ask me, why I venture o'er
The path which Pope and Gifford trod before:
If not yet sicken'd, you can still proceed:
Go on; my rhyme will tell you as you read.

Time was, ere yet in these degenerate days
Ignoble themes obtain'd mistaken praise,
When Sense and Wit with Poesy allied,
No fabled Graces, flourish'd side by side,
From the same fount their inspiration drew,
And, rear'd by Taste, bloom'd fairer as they grew.
Then, in this happy isle, a Pope's pure strain
Sought the rapt soul to charm, nor sought in vain;
A polish'd nation's praise aspired to claim,
And raised the people's, as the poet's fame.
Like him great Dryden pour'd the tide of song,
In stream less smooth, indeed, yet doubly strong.
Then Congreve's scenes could cheer, or Otway's melt—
For nature then an English audience felt.
But why these names, or greater still, retrace,
When all to feebler bards resign their place?
Yet to such times our lingering looks are cast,
When taste and reason with those times are past.
Now look around, and turn each trifling page,
Survey the precious works that please the age;
This truth at least let Satire's self allow,
No dearth of bards can be complain'd of now:
The loaded press beneath her labour groans,
And printers' devils shake their weary bones;
While Southey's epics cram the creaking shelves,
And Little's lyrics shine in hot-press'd twelves.

Thus saith the Preacher,[4] «nought beneath the sun
Is new;» yet still from change to change we run:
What varied wonders tempt us as they pass!
The cow-pox, tractors, galvanism, and gas,
In turns appear, to make the vulgar stare,
Till the swoln bubble bursts—and all is air!
Nor less new schools of poetry arise,
Where dull pretenders grapple for the prize:
O'er Taste awhile these pseudo-bards prevail;
Each country book-club bows the knee to Baal,

[1] Cid Hamet Benengeli promises repose to his pen in the last chapter of Don Quixote. Oh! that our voluminous gentry would follow the example of Cid Hamet Benengeli!

[2] This ingenious youth is mentioned more particularly, with his production, in another place.

[3] In the Edinburgh Review.

[1] Messrs Jeffrey and Lambe are the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, of the Edinburgh Review: the others are mentioned hereafter.

[2] « Stulta est clementia, cum tot ubique
———occurras perituræ parcere chartæ.»—*Juvenal, Sat.* 1.

[3] IMITATION.

« Cur tamen hoc potius libeat decurrere campo
Per quem magnus eques Auruncæ flexit alumnos:
Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam.»—*Juvenal, Sat.* 1.

[4] Ecclesiastes, Cap. 1.

And, hurling lawful genius from the throne,
Erects a shrine and idol of its own;
Some leaden calf—but whom it matters not,
From soaring Southey down to groveling Stott.[1]

Behold! in various throngs the scribbling crew,
For notice eager, pass in long review:
Each spurs his jaded Pegasus apace,
And rhyme and blank maintain an equal race;
Sonnets on sonnets crowd, and ode on ode;
And tales of terror jostle on the road;
Immeasurable measures move along;
For simpering Folly loves a varied song,
To strange mysterious Dullness still the friend,
Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.
Thus Lays of Minstrels [2]—may they be the last!—
On half-strung harps whine mournful to the blast,
While mountain spirits prate to river sprites,
That dames may listen to their sound at nights;
And goblin brats, of Gilpin Horner's [3] brood,
Decoy young border-nobles through the wood,
And skip at every step, Lord knows how high,
And frighten foolish babes, the Lord knows why;
While high-born ladies in their magic cell,
Forbidding knights to read who cannot spell,
Dispatch a courier to a wizard's grave,
And fight with honest men to shield a knave.

Next view in state, proud prancing on his roan,
The golden-crested haughty Marmion,
Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,
Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight,
The gibbet or the field prepared to grace—
A mighty mixture of the great and base.
And think'st thou, Scott! by vain conceit perchance,
On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
Though Murray with his Miller may combine
To yield thy muse just half-a-crown per line?
No! when the sons of song descend to trade,
Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade.
Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame:
Low may they sink to merited contempt,
And scorn remunerate the mean attempt!
Such be their meed, such still the just reward
Of prostituted muse and hireling bard!
For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
And bid a long «good night to Marmion.»[1]

These are the themes that claim our plaudits now;
These are the bards to whom the muse must bow:
While Milton, Dryden, Pope, alike forgot,
Resign their hallow'd bays to Walter Scott.

The time has been when yet the muse was young,
When Homer swept the lyre, and Maro sung,
An epic scarce ten centuries could claim,
While awe-struck nations hailed the magic name:
The work of each immortal bard appears
The single wonder of a thousand years.[2]
Empires have moulder'd from the face of earth,
Tongues have expired with those who gave them birth,
Without the glory such a strain can give,
As even in ruin bids the language live.
Not so with us, though minor bards, content,
On one great work a life of labour spent:
With eagle pinions soaring to the skies,
Behold the ballad-monger, Southey, rise!
To him let Camoens, Milton, Tasso, yield,
Whose annual strains, like armies, take the field.
First in the ranks see Joan of Arc advance,
The scourge of England, and the boast of France!
Though burnt by wicked Bedford for a witch,
Behold her statue placed in glory's niche;
Her fetters burst, and just released from prison,
A virgin Phœnix from her ashes risen.
Next see tremendous Thalaba come on,[3]
Arabia's monstrous, wild, and wondrous son;
Domdaniel's dread destroyer, who o'erthrew
More mad magicians than the world e'er knew.
Immortal hero! all thy foes o'ercome,
For ever reign—the rival of Tom Thumb!
Since startled metre fled before thy face,
Well wert thou doom'd the last of all thy race!
Well might triumphant Genii bear thee hence,
Illustrious conqueror of common sense?

[1] Stott, better known in the «Morning Post» by the name of Hafiz. This personage is at present the most profound explorer of the bathos. I remember, to the reigning family of Portugal, a special ode of Master Stott's, beginning thus:

(Stott loquitur quoad Hibernia.)

«Princely offspring of Braganza,
Erin greets thee with a stanza,» etc. etc.

Also a Sonnet to Rats, well worthy of the subject, and a most thundering ode commencing as follows:

«Oh! for a lay! loud as the surge
That lashes Lapland's sounding shore.»

Lord have mercy on us! the «Lay of the Last Minstrel» was nothing to this.

[2] See the «Lay of the Last Minstrel,» *passim*. Never was any plan so incongruous and absurd as the ground-work of this production. The entrance of Thunder and Lightning prologuising to Bayes' tragedy, unfortunately takes away the merit of originality from the dialogue between Messieurs the Spirits of Flood and Fell, in the first canto. Then we have the amiable William of Deloraine, «a stark moss-trooper,» videlicet, a happy compound of poacher, sheep-stealer, and highwayman. The propriety of his magical lady's injunction not to read, can only be equalled by his candid acknowledgment of his independence of the trammels of spelling, although, to use his own elegant phrase, «'twas his neck-verse at hairibee,» i. e. the gallows.

[3] The Biography of Gilpin Horner, and the marvellous pedestrian page, who travelled twice as fast as his master's horse, without the aid of seven-leagued boots, are *chefs-d'œuvre* in the improvement of taste. For incident we have the invisible, but by no means sparing, box on the ear bestowed on the page, and the entrance of a Knight and Charger into the castle, under the very natural disguise of a wain of hay. Marmion, the hero of the latter romance, is exactly what William of Deloraine would have been, had he been able to read or write. The Poem was manufactured for Messrs Constable, Murray, and Miller, worshipful Booksellers, in consideration of the receipt of a sum of money, and, truly, considering the inspiration, it is a very creditable production. If Mr Scott will write for hire, let him do his best for his paymasters, but not disgrace his genius, which is undoubtedly great, by a repetition of black-letter ballad imitations.

[1] «Good night to Marmion»—the pathetic and also prophetic exclamation of Henry Blount, Esquire, on the death of honest Marmion.

[2] As the Odyssey is so closely connected with the story of the Iliad, they may almost be classed as one grand historical poem. In alluding to Milton and Tasso, we consider the «Paradise Lost,» and «Gierusalemme Liberata,» as their standard efforts, since neither the «Jerusalem Conquered» of the Italian, nor the «Paradise Regained» of the English Bard, obtained a proportionate celebrity to their former poems. Query: Which of Mr Southey's will survive?

[3] Thalaba, Mr Southey's second poem, is written in open defiance of precedent and poetry. Mr S. wished to produce something novel, and succeeded to a miracle. Joan of Arc was marvellous enough, but Thalaba was one of those poems «which (in the words of Porson) will be read when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, but—*not till then.*»

Now, last and greatest, Madoc spreads his sails,
Cacique in Mexico, and Prince in Wales;
Tells us strange tales, as other travellers do,
More old than Mandeville's, and not so true.
Oh! Southey, Southey![1] cease thy varied song!
A Bard may chaunt too often and too long:
As thou art strong in verse, in mercy spare!
A fourth, alas! were more than we could bear.
But if, in spite of all the world can say,
Thou still wilt verseward plod thy weary way;
If still in Berkley ballads, most uncivil,
Thou wilt devote old women to the devil,[2]
The babe unborn thy dread intent may rue;
« God help thee,» Southey, and thy readers too.[3]

Next comes the dull disciple of thy school,
That mild apostate from poetic rule,
The simple Wordsworth, framer of a lay
As soft as evening in his favourite May;
Who warns his friend « to shake off toil and trouble;
And quit his books, for fear of growing double;»[4]
Who, both by precept and example, shows
That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose,
Convincing all, by demonstration plain,
Poetic souls delight in prose insane;
And Christmas stories, tortured into rhyme,
Contain the essence of the true sublime:
Thus when he tells the tale of Betty Foy,
The idiot mother of « an idiot Boy;»
A moon-struck silly lad who lost his way,
And, like his bard, confounded night with day,[5]
So close on each pathetic part he dwells,
And each adventure so sublimely tells,
That all who view the « idiot in his glory,»
Conceive the Bard the hero of the story.

Shall gentle Coleridge pass unnoticed here,
To turgid ode, and tumid stanza dear?
Though themes of innocence amuse him best,
Yet still obscurity's a welcome guest.
If Inspiration should her aid refuse
To him who takes a Pixy for a Muse,[6]
Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass
The bard who soars to elegize an ass.
How well the subject suits his noble mind!
« A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind!»

Oh! wonder-working Lewis! Monk, or Bard,
Who fain wouldst make Parnassus a church-yard!
Lo! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy brow,
Thy Muse a sprite, Apollo's sexton thou!
Whether on ancient tombs thou tak'st thy stand,
By gibb'ring spectres hail'd, thy kindred band;
Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,
To please the females of our modest age,
All hail, M. P.![1] from whose infernal brain
Thin-sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train;
At whose command, « grim women» throng in crowds,
And kings of fire, of water, and of clouds,
With « small grey men,»—« wild yagers,» and what not,
To crowd with honour thee and Walter Scott:
Again, all hail! If tales like thine may please,
St Luke alone can vanquish the disease;
Even Satan's self with thee might dread to dwell,
And in thy skull discern a deeper hell.

Who in soft guise, surrounded by a choir
Of virgins melting, not to Vesta's fire,
With sparkling eyes, and cheek by passion flush'd,
Strikes his wild lyre, whilst listening dames are hush'd?
'Tis Little! young Catullus of his day,
As sweet, but as immoral in his lay!
Grieved to condemn, the Muse must still be just,
Nor spare melodious advocates of lust.
Pure is the flame which o'er her altar burns;
From grosser incense with disgust she turns:
Yet, kind to youth, this expiation o'er,
She bids thee « mend thy line and sin no more.»

For thee, translator of the tinsel song,
To whom such glittering ornaments belong,
Hibernian Strangford! with thine eyes of blue,[2]
And boasted locks of red, or auburn hue,
Whose plaintive strain each love-sick Miss admires,
And o'er harmonious fustian half expires,
Learn, if thou canst, to yield thine author's sense,
Nor vend thy sonnets on a false pretence.
Think'st thou to gain thy verse a higher place
By dressing Camoens in a suit of lace?
Mend, Strangford! mend thy morals and thy taste;
Be warm, but pure; be amorous, but be chaste:
Cease to deceive; thy pilfer'd harp restore,
Nor teach the Lusian Bard to copy Moore.

In many marble-cover'd volumes view
Hayley, in vain attempting something new:
Whether he spin his comedies in rhyme,
Or scrawl, as Woon and Barclay walk, 'gainst time,
His style in youth or age is still the same,
For ever feeble and for ever tame.
Triumphant first see « Temper's Triumphs» shine!
At least, I 'm sure, they triumph'd over mine.

[1] We beg Mr Southey's pardon: « Madoc disdains the degraded title of epic.» See his preface. Why is epic degraded? and by whom? Certainly the late Romaunts of Masters Cottle, Laureat Pye, Ogilvy, Hoyle, and gentle Mistress Cowley, have not exalted the Epic Muse: but as Mr Southey's poem « disdains the appellation,» allow us to ask—has he substituted any thing better in its stead? or must he be content to rival Sir Richard Blackmore, in the quantity as well as quality of his verse.

[2] See The old Woman of Berkley, a Ballad by Mr Southey, wherein an aged Gentlewoman is carried away by Beelzebub, on a « high-trotting horse.»

[3] The last line, « God help thee,» is an evident plagiarism from the Anti-jacobin to Mr Southey, on his Dactylics:

« God help thee, silly one.»—Poetry of the Anti-jacobin, pag. 23.

[4] Lyrical Ballads, page 4.—« The tables turned.» Stanza I.

« Up, up, my friend, and clear your looks—
Why all this toil and trouble?
Up, up, my friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double.»

[5] Mr W., in his preface, labours hard to prove that prose and verse are much the same, and certainly his precepts and practice are strictly conformable:

« And thus to Betty's questions he
Made answer, like a traveller bold,
The cock did crow to-whoo, to-whoo,
And the sun did shine so cold » etc., etc.
Lyrical Ballads, page 129.

[6] Coleridge's Poems, page 11. Songs of the Pixies, i. e. Devonshire Fairies. Page 42, we have, « Lines to a Young Lady,» and page 52, « Lines to a Young Ass.»

[1] « For every one knows little Matt's an M. P.»—See a Poem to Mr Lewis, in The Statesman, supposed to be written by Mr Jekyll.

[2] The reader who may wish for an explanation of this, may refer to « Strangford's Camoens,» page 127, note to page 56, or to the last page of the Edinburgh Review of Strangford's Camoens. It is also to be remarked, that the things given to the public as Poems of Camoens, are no more to be found in the original Portuguese than in the Song of Solomon.

Of «Music's Triumphs» all who read may swear
That luckless Music never triumph'd there.[1]

Moravians, rise! bestow some meet reward
On dull Devotion—lo! the Sabbath Bard,
Sepulchral GRAHAME, pours his notes sublime
In mangled prose, nor e'en aspires to rhyme,
Breaks into blank the Gospel of St Luke,
And boldly pilfers from the Pentateuch;
And, undisturbed by conscientious qualms,
Perverts the Prophets, and purloins the Psalms.[2]

Hail, Sympathy! thy soft ideа brings
A thousand visions of a thousand things,
And shows, dissolved in thine own melting tears,
The maudlin Prince of mournful sonneteers.
And art thou not their Prince, harmonious BOWLES?
Thou first, great oracle of tender souls?
Whether in sighing winds thou seek'st relief,
Or consolation in a yellow leaf;
Whether thy muse most lamentably tells
What merry sounds proceed from Oxford bells,[3]
Or, still in bells delighting, finds a friend,
In every chime that jingled from Ostend?
Ah! how much juster were thy Muse's hap,
If to thy bells thou wouldst but add a cap!
Delightful BOWLES! still blessing and still blest,
All love thy strain, but children like it best.
'T is thine, with gentle LITTLE's moral song,
To soothe the mania of the amorous throng!
With thee our nursery damsels shed their tears,
Ere Miss as yet completes her infant years:
But in her teens thy whining powers are vain:
She quits poor BOWLES, for LITTLE's purer strain.
Now to soft themes thou scornest to confine
The lofty numbers of a harp like thine:
«Awake a louder and a loftier strain,»[4]
Such as none heard before, or will again;
Where all discoveries jumbled from the flood,
Since first the leaky ark reposed in mud,
By more or less, are sung in every book,
From Captain NOAH down to Captain Cook.
Nor this alone, but pausing on the road,
The bard sighs forth a gentle episode;[5]
And gravely tells—attend each beauteous Miss!—
When first Madeira trembled to a kiss.
BOWLES! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
Stick to thy Sonnets, man! at least they sell.

But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,
Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for a scribe;
If chance some bard, though once by dunces feared,
Now, prone in dust, can only be revered;
If POPE, whose fame and genius from the first
Have foil'd the best of critics, needs the worst,
Do thou essay; each fault, each failing scan;
The first of poets was, alas! but man!
Rake from each ancient dunghill every pearl,
Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in CURLL;[1]
Let all the scandals of a former age
Perch on thy pen and flutter o'er thy page;
Affect a candour which thou canst not feel,
Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal;
Write as if St John's soul could still inspire,
And do from hate what MALLET[2] did for hire.
Oh! hadst thou lived in that congenial time,
To rave with DENNIS, and with RALPH to rhyme,[3]
Throng'd with the rest around his living head,
Not raised thy hoof against the lion dead,
A meet reward had crown'd thy glorious gains,
And link'd thee to the Dunciad for thy pains.[4]

Another Epic! who inflicts again
More books of blank upon the sons of men?
Bœotian COTTLE, rich Bristowa's boast,
Imports old stories from the Cambrian coast,
And sends his goods to market—all alive!
Lines forty thousand, Cantos twenty-five!
Fresh fish from Helicon! who 'll buy? who 'll buy?
The precious bargain's cheap—in faith not I.
Too much in turtle Bristol's sons delight,
Too much o'er bowls of 'rack prolong the night:
If commerce fills the purse, she clogs the brain,
And AMOS COTTLE strikes the Lyre in vain.
In him an author's luckless lot behold!
Condemn'd to make the books which once he sold.
Oh! AMOS COTTLE! Phœbus!—what a name
To fill the speaking trump of future fame!—
Oh! AMOS COTTLE! for a moment think
What meagre profits spread from pen and ink!
When thus devoted to poetic dreams,
Who will peruse thy prostituted reams?
Oh! pen perverted! paper misapplied!
Had COTTLE[5] still adorn'd the counter's side,
Bent o'er the desk, or, born to useful toils,
Been taught to make the paper which he soils,
Plough'd, delved, or plied the oar with lusty limb,
He had not sung of Wales, nor I of him.

As Sisyphus against the infernal steep
Rolls the huge rock, whose motions ne'er may sleep,

[1] HAYLEY's two most notorious verse productions, are «Triumphs of Temper,» and «Triumphs of Music.» He has also written much comedy in rhyme, Epistles, etc. etc. As he is rather an elegant writer of notes and biography, let us recommend POPE's Advice to WYCHERLEY to Mr H.'s consideration; viz. «to convert his poetry into prose,» which may be easily done by taking away the final syllable of each couplet.

[2] Mr GRAHAME has poured forth two volumes of Cant, under the name of «Sabbath Walks,» and «Biblical Pictures.»

[3] See BOWLES's Sonnets, etc.—«Sonnet to Oxford,» and «Stanzas on hearing the Bells of Ostend.»

[4] «Awake a louder.» etc. etc. is the first line in BOWLES's «Spirit of Discovery;» a very spirited and pretty Dwarf Epic. Among other exquisite lines we have the following:—

«————————A Kiss
Stole on the list'ning silence, never yet
Here heard; they trembled even as if the power,» etc. etc.

—That is the woods of Madeira trembled to a kiss, very much astonished, as well they might be, at such a phenomenon.

[5] The episode above alluded to, is the story of «Robert a Machin,» and «Anna d'Arfet,» a pair of constant lovers, who performed the kiss above-mentioned, that startled the woods of Madeira.

[1] CURLL is one of the heroes of the Dunciad, and was a Bookseller. Lord Fanny is the poetical name of Lord HERVEY, author of «Lines to the Imitator of Horace.»

[2] Lord BOLINGBROKE hired MALLET to traduce POPE after his decease, because the Poet had retained some copies of a work by Lord BOLINGBROKE (the Patriot King), which that splendid, but malignant genius, had ordered to be destroyed.

[3] DENNIS the critic, and RALPH the rhymester.

«Silence ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia bowls,
Making night hideous—answer him, ye owls!»—*Dunciad.*

[4] See BOWLES's late edition of POPE's works, for which he received 300 *l.*: thus Mr B. has experienced how much easier it is to profit by the reputation of another, than to elevate his own.

[5] Mr COTTLE, AMOS or JOSEPH, I don't know which, but one or both, once sellers of books they did not write, and now writers of books that do not sell, have published a pair of Epics. «Alfred» (poor Alfred! PYE has been at him too!) and the Fall of «Cambria.»

So up thy hill, ambrosial Richmond! heaves
Dull MAURICE[1] all his granite weight of leaves:
Smooth, solid monuments of mental pain!
The petrifactions of a plodding brain.
That ere they reach the top fall lumbering back again.

With broken lyre and cheek serenely pale,
Lo! sad ALCÆUS wanders down the vale!
Though fair they rose, and might have bloom'd at last,
His hopes have perish'd by the northern blast:
Nipp'd in the bud by Caledonian gales,
His blossoms wither as the blast prevails!
O'er his lost works let *classic* SHEFFIELD weep;
May no rude hand disturb their early sleep![2]

Yet say! why should the Bard at once resign
His claim to favour from the sacred Nine?
For ever startled by the mingled howl
Of northern wolves, that still in darkness prowl:
A coward brood, which mangle as they prey,
By hellish instinct, all that cross their way;
Aged or young, the living or the dead,
No mercy find—these harpies must be fed.
Why do the injured unresisting yield
The calm possession of their native field?
Why tamely thus before their fangs retreat,
Nor hunt the bloodhounds back to ARTHUR'S Seat?[3]

Health to immortal JEFFREY! once, in name,
England could boast a judge almost the same:
In soul so like, so merciful, yet just,
Some think that Satan has resign'd his trust,
And given the Spirit to the world again,
To sentence letters as he sentenced men;
With hand less mighty, but with heart as black,
With voice as willing to decree the rack;
Bred in the courts betimes, though all that law
As yet hath taught him is to find a flaw.
Since well instructed in the patriot school
To rail at party, though a party tool,
Who knows, if chance his patrons should restore
Back to the sway they forfeited before,
His scribbling toils some recompense may meet,
And raise this Daniel to the Judgment Seat.
Let JEFFRIES' shade indulge the pious hope,
And greeting thus, present him with a rope:
"Heir to my virtues! man of equal mind!
Skill'd to condemn as to traduce mankind,
This cord receive—for thee reserved with care,
To yield in judgment, and at length to wear."

Health to great JEFFREY! Heaven preserve his life,
To flourish on the fertile shores of Fife,
And guard it sacred in his future wars,
Since authors sometimes seek the field of Mars!
Can none remember that eventful day,
That ever glorious, almost fatal fray,
When LITTLE'S leadless pistol met his eye,
And Bow-street myrmidons stood laughing by?[1]
Oh day disastrous! on her firm-set rock,
Dunedin's castle felt a secret shock;
Dark roll'd the sympathetic waves of Forth.
Low groan'd the startled whirlwinds of the north;
TWEED ruffled half his wave to form a tear,
The other half pursued its calm career;[2]
ARTHUR'S steep summit nodded to its base,
The surly Tolbooth scarcely kept her place;
The Tolbooth felt—for marble sometimes can,
On such occasions, feel as much as man—
The Tolbooth felt defrauded of his charms
If JEFFREY died, except within her arms:[3]
Nay, last, not least, on that portentous morn
The sixteenth storey, where himself was born,
His patrimonial garret fell to ground,
And pale Edina shudder'd at the sound:
Strew'd were the streets around with milk-white reams,
Flow'd all the Canongate with inky streams;
This of his candour seem'd the sable dew,
That of his valour shew'd the bloodless hue,
And all with justice deem'd the two combined
The mingled emblems of his mighty mind.
But Caledonia's Goddess hover'd o'er
The field, and saved him from the wrath of MOORE,
From either pistol snatch'd the vengeful lead,
And straight restored it to her favourite's head:
That head, with greater than magnetic power,
Caught it, as Danaë the golden shower,
And, though the thickening dross will scarce refine,
Augments its ore, and is itself a mine.
"My son," she cried, "ne'er thirst for gore again,
Resign the pistol, and resume the pen;
O'er politics and poesy preside,
Boast of thy country, and Britannia's guide!
For, long as Albion's heedless sons submit,
Or Scottish taste decides on English wit,
So long shall last thine unmolested reign,
Nor any dare to take thy name in vain.
Behold a chosen band shall aid thy plan,
And own thee chieftain of the critic clan.
First in the ranks illustrious shall be seen
The travell'd Thane! Athenian Aberdeen.[4]
HERBERT shall wield THOR'S hammer,[5] and sometimes,
In gratitude, thou 'lt praise his rugged rhymes.

[1] Mr MAURICE hath manufactured the component parts of a ponderous quarto, upon the beauties of "Richmond Hill," and the like.—it also takes in a charming view of Turnham Green, Hammersmith, Brentford, Old and New, and the parts adjacent.

[2] Poor MONTGOMERY! though praised by every English Review, has been bitterly reviled by the EDINBURGH. After all, the Bard of Sheffield is a man of considerable genius: his "Wanderer of Switzerland" is worth a thousand "Lyrical Ballads," and at least fifty "Degraded Epics."

[3] Arthur's Seat, the hill which overhangs Edinburgh.

[1] In 1806, Messrs JEFFREY and MOORE met at Chalk-Farm. The duel was prevented by the interference of the magistracy; and, on examination, the balls of the pistols, like the courage of the combatants, were found to have evaporated. This incident gave occasion to much waggery in the daily prints.

[2] The Tweed here behaved with proper decorum: it would have been highly reprehensible in the English half of the river to have shown the smallest symptom of apprehension.

[3] This display of sympathy on the part of the Tolbooth (the principal prison in Edinburgh), which truly seems to have been most affected on this occasion, is much to be commended. It was to be apprehended, that the many unhappy criminals executed in the front, might have rendered the edifice more callous. She is said to be of the softer sex, because her delicacy of feeling on this day was truly feminine, though, like most feminine impulses, perhaps a little selfish.

[4] His lordship has been much abroad, is a member of the Athenian Society, and reviewer of "GELL'S Topography of Troy."

[5] Mr HERBERT is a translator of Icelandic and other Poetry. One of the principal pieces is a "Song on the Recovery of THOR'S Hammer:" the translation is a pleasant chaunt in the vulgar tongue, and ended thus:—

"Instead of money and rings, I wot,
The hammer's bruises were her lot;
Thus Odin's son his hammer got."

Smug SYDNEY[1] too thy bitter page shall seek,
And classic HALLAM,[2] much renown'd for Greek.
SCOTT may perchance his name and influence lend,
And paltry PILLANS[3] shall traduce his friend:
While gay Thalia's luckless votary, LAMBE,[4]
As he himself was damn'd, shall try to damn.
Known be thy name, unbounded be thy sway!
Thy HOLLAND'S banquets shall each toil repay;
While grateful Britain yields the praise she owes
To HOLLAND'S hirelings, and to Learning's foes.
Yet mark one caution, ere thy next Review
Spread its light wings of saffron and of blue,
Beware lest blundering BROUGHAM[5] destroy the sale,
Turn beef to bannocks, cauliflowers to kail.»
Thus having said, the kilted goddess kist
Her son, and vanish'd in a Scottish mist.[6]
Illustrious HOLLAND! hard would be his lot,
His hirelings mention'd, and himself forgot!
HOLLAND, with HENRY PETTY at his back,
The whipper-in and huntsman of the pack.
Blest be the banquets spread at Holland House,
Where Scotchmen feed, and critics may carouse!
Long, long beneath that hospitable roof,
Shall Grub-street dine, while duns are kept aloof.
See honest HALLAM lay aside his fork,
Resume his pen, review his lordship's work,
And, grateful to the founder of the feast,
Declare his landlord can translate, at least![7]
Dunedin! view thy children with delight,
They write for food, and feed because they write;
And lest, when heated with th' unusual grape,
Some glowing thoughts should to the press escape,
And tinge with red the female reader's cheek,
My lady skims the cream of each critique;
Breathes o'er the page her purity of soul,
Reforms each error and refines the whole.[1]

Now to the Drama turn: Oh motley sight!
What precious scenes the wondering eyes invite!
Puns, and a prince within a barrel pent,[2]
And DIBDIN'S nonsense, yield complete content.
Though now, thank Heaven! the Rosciomania's o'er,
And full-grown actors are endured once more;
Yet what avail their vain attempts to please,
While British critics suffer scenes like these?
While REYNOLDS vents his «dammes, poohs,» and «zounds,»[3]
And common place, and common sense confounds?
While KENNY'S World, just suffer'd to proceed,
Proclaims the audience very kind indeed?
And BEAUMONT'S pilfer'd Caratach affords
A tragedy complete in all but words?[4]
Who but must mourn while these are all the rage,
The degradation of our vaunted stage?
Heavens! is all sense of shame and talent gone?
Have we no living bard of merit?—none?
Awake, GEORGE COLMAN, CUMBERLAND, awake!
Ring the alarum-bell, let folly quake!
Oh SHERIDAN! if aught can move thy pen,
Let Comedy resume her throne again,
Abjure the mummery of German schools,
Leave new Bizarros to translating fools;
Give, as thy last memorial to the age,
One classic drama, and reform the stage.
Gods! o'er those boards shall Folly rear her head
Where GARRICK trod, and KEMBLE lives to tread?
On those shall Farce display buffoonery's mask,
And HOOKE conceal his heroes in a cask?
Shall sapient managers new scenes produce
From CHERRY, SKEFFINGTON, and MOTHER GOOSE?
While SHAKSPEARE, OTWAY, MASSINGER, forgot,
On stalls must moulder, or in closets rot?
Lo! with what pomp the daily prints proclaim
The rival candidates for Attic fame!
In grim array though LEWIS' spectres rise,
Still SKEFFINGTON and GOOSE divide the prize.
And sure *great* SKEFFINGTON must claim our praise,
For skirtless coats and skeletons of plays
Renown'd alike; whose genius ne'er confines
Her flight to garnish GREENWOOD'S gay designs;[5]
Nor sleeps with «Sleeping Beauties,» but anon
In five facetious acts comes thundering on,[6]
While poor John Bull, bewilder'd with the scene,
Stares, wondering what the devil it can mean;

[1] The REV. SYDNEY SMITH, the reputed Author of Peter Plymley's Letters, and sundry criticisms.

[2] Mr HALLAM reviewed PAYNE KNIGHT'S Taste, and was exceedingly severe on some Greek verses therein: it was not discovered that the lines were PINDAR'S, till the press rendered it impossible to cancel the critique, which still stands an everlasting monument of HALLAM'S ingenuity.

The said HALLAM is incensed, because he is falsely accused, seeing that he never dineth at Holland House. If this be true, I am sorry—not for having said so, but on his account, as I understand his lordship's feasts are preferable to his compositions. If he did not review Lord HOLLAND'S performance, I am glad, because it must have been painful to read, and irksome to praise it. If Mr HALLAM will tell me who did review it, the real name shall find a place in the text, provided nevertheless the said name be of two orthodox musical syllables and will come into the verse: till then, HALLAM must stand for want of a better.

[3] PILLANS is a tutor at Eton.

[4] The Hon. G. LAMBE reviewed «BERESFORD'S Miseries,» and is moreover author of a Farce enacted with much applause at the Priory, Stanmore, and damned with great expedition at the late Theatre Covent-Garden. It was entitled «Whistle for It.»

[5] Mr BROUGHAM, in N° XXV of the Edinburgh Review, throughout the article concerning Don Pedro de Cavallos, has displayed more politics than policy: many of the worthy burgesses of Edinburgh being so incensed at the infamous principles it evinces, as to have withdrawn their subscriptions.

It seems that Mr BROUGHAM is not a Pict as I supposed, but a Borderer, and his name is pronounced Broom, from Trent to Tay. So be it.

[6] I ought to apologise to the worthy Deities for introducing a new Goddess with short petticoats to their notice: but, alas! what was to be done? I could not say Caledonia's Genius, it being well known there is no Genius to be found from Clackmannan to Caithness: yet, without supernatural agency, how was Jeffrey to be saved? The «national Kelpies,» etc. are too unpoetical, and the «Brownies» and «Guide Neighbours» (Spirits of a good disposition), refused to extricate him. A Goddess therefore has been called for the purpose, and great ought to be the gratitude of Jeffrey, seeing it is the only communication he ever held, or is likely to hold, with any thing heavenly.

[7] Lord H. has translated some specimens of Lope de Vega inserted in his life of the Author: both are bepraised by his *disinterested* guests.

[1] Certain it is, her ladyship is suspected of having displayed her matchless wit in the Edinburgh Review: however that may be, we know from good authority that the manuscripts are submitted to her perusal—no doubt for correction.

[2] In the melo-drame of Tekeli, that heroic prince is clapt into a barrel on the stage—a new asylum for distressed heroes.

[3] All these are favourite expressions of Mr R. and prominent in his Comedies, living and defunct.

[4] Mr T. Sheridan, the new Manager of Drury-Lane Theatre, stripped the Tragedy of Bonduca of the Dialogue, and exhibited the scenes as the spectacles of Caractacus. Was this worthy of his sire, or of himself?

[5] Mr GREENWOOD is, we believe, Scene-Painter to Drury-Lane Theatre: as such Mr S. is much indebted to him.

[6] Mr S. is the illustrious author of the «Sleeping Beauty:» and some Comedies, particularly «Maids and Bachelors;» Baccalaurei baculo magis quam lauro digni.

But as some hands applaud, a venal few!
Rather than sleep, why John applauds it too.

Such are we now, ah! wherefore should we turn
To what our fathers were, unless to mourn?
Degenerate Britons! are ye dead to shame,
Or, kind to dulness, do ye fear to blame?
Well may the nobles of our present race
Watch each distortion of a Naldi's face;
Well may they smile on Italy's buffoons,
And worship Catalani's pantaloons,[1]
Since their own drama yields no fairer trace
Of wit than puns, of humour than grimace.

Then let Ausonia, skill'd in every art,
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart,
Pour her exotic follies o'er the town,
To sanction vice and hunt decorum down:
Let wedded strumpets languish o'er Deshayes,
And bless the promise which his form displays;
While Gayton bounds before the enraptured looks
Of hoary marquisses and stripling dukes:
Let high-born letchers eye the lively Presle
Twirl her light limbs that spurn the needless veil:
Let Angiolini bare her breast of snow,
Wave the white arm and point the pliant toe:
Collini trill her love-inspiring song,
Strain her fair neck and charm the listening throng!
Raise not your scythe, suppressors of our vice!
Reforming saints, too delicately nice!
By whose decrees, our sinful souls to save,
No Sunday tankards foam, no barbers shave,
And beer undrawn and beards unmown display
Your holy reverence for the sabbath-day.

Or hail at once the patron and the pile
Of vice and folly, Greville and Argyle![2]
Where yon proud palace, Fashion's hallow'd fane,
Spreads wide her portals for the motley train,
Behold the new Petronius[3] of the day,
The arbiter of pleasure and of play!
There the hired eunuch, the Hesperian choir,
The melting lute, the soft lascivious lyre,
The song from Italy, the step from France,
The midnight orgy, and the mazy dance,
The smile of beauty, and the flush of wine,
For fops, fools, gamesters, knaves, and lords combine:
Each to his humour,—Comus all allows;
Champaign, dice, music, or your neighbour's spouse.

Talk not to us, ye starving sons of trade!
Of piteous ruin, which ourselves have made:
In Plenty's sunshine Fortune's minions bask,
Nor think of Poverty, except «en masque,»
When for the night some lately titled ass
Appears the beggar which his grandsire was.
The curtain dropp'd, the gay burletta o'er,
The audience take their turn upon the floor;
Now round the room the circling dow'gers sweep,
Now in loose waltz the thin-clad daughters leap:
The first in lengthen'd line majestic swim,
The last display the free, unfetter'd limb:
Those for Hibernia's lusty sons repair
With art the charms which Nature could not spare;
These after husbands wing their eager flight,
Nor leave much mystery for the nuptial night.

Oh! blest retreats of infamy and ease!
Where, all forgotten but the power to please,
Each maid may give a loose to genial thought,
Each swain may teach new systems, or be taught:
There the blithe youngster, just return'd from Spain,
Cuts the light pack, or calls the rattling main;
The jovial caster's set, and seven's the nick,
Or—done!—a thousand on the coming trick!
If mad with loss, existence 'gins to tire,
And all your hope or wish is to expire,
Here's Powell's pistol ready for your life,
And, kinder still, a Paget for your wife.
Fit consummation of an earthly race
Begun in folly, ended in disgrace,
While none but menials o'er the bed of death,
Wash thy red wounds, or watch thy wavering breath:
Traduced by liars, and forgot by all,
The mangled victim of a drunken brawl,
To live like Clodius,[1] and like Falkland[2] fall.
Truth! rouse some genuine bard, and guide his hand
To drive this pestilence from out the land.
Even I—least thinking of a thoughtless throng,
Just skill'd to know the right and chuse the wrong,
Freed at that age when Reason's shield is lost,
To fight my course through Passion's countless host,
Whom every path of pleasure's flowery way
Has lured in turn, and all have led astray—
E'en I must raise my voice, e'en I must feel
Such scenes, such men, destroy the public weal;
Altho' some kind, censorious friend will say,
«What art thou better, meddling fool, than they?»
And every brother rake will smile to see
That miracle, a moralist, in me.
No matter—when some bard, in virtue strong,
Gifford perchance, shall raise the chastening song,
Then sleep my pen for ever! and my voice
Be only heard to hail him and rejoice;
Rejoice, and yield my feeble praise; though I
May feel the lash that virtue must apply.

[1] Naldi and Catalani require little notice, for the visage of the one, and the salary of the other, will enable us long to recollect these amusing vagabonds, besides, we are still black and blue from the squeeze on the first night of the lady's appearance in trousers.

[2] To prevent any blunder, such as mistaking a street for a man, I beg leave to state, that it is the Institution, and not the Duke of that name, which is here alluded to.

A gentleman with whom I am slightly acquainted, lost in the Argyle Rooms several thousand pounds at backgammon. It is but justice to the manager in this instance to say, that some degree of disapprobation was manifested. But why are the implements of gaming allowed in a place devoted to the society of both sexes? A pleasant thing for the wives and daughters of those who are blest or cursed with such connections, to hear the billiard-tables rattling in one room, and the dice in another! That this is the case I myself can testify, as a late unworthy member of an institution which materially affects the morals of the higher orders, while the lower may not even move to the sound of a tabor and fiddle, without a chance of indictment for riotous behaviour.

[3] Petronius, «arbiter elegantiarum» to Nero, «and a very pretty fellow in his day,» as Mr Congreve's old Bachelor saith.

[1] Mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.

[2] I knew the late Lord Falkland well. On Sunday night I beheld him presiding at his own table, in all the honest pride of hospitality; on Wednesday morning at three o'clock, I saw, stretched before me, all that remained of courage, feeling, and a host of passions. He was a gallant and successful officer; his faults were the faults of a sailor—as such, Britons will forgive them. He died like a brave man in a better cause, for had he fallen in like manner on the deck of the frigate to which he was just appointed, his last moments would have been held up by his countrymen as an example to succeeding heroes.

As for the smaller fry, who swarm in shoals,
From silly Hafiz [1] up to simple Bowles,
Why should we call them from their dark abode,
In broad St Giles's or in Tottenham Road?
Or (since some men of fashion nobly dare
To scrawl in verse) from Bond-street, or the Square?
If things of ton their harmless lays indite,
Most wisely doom'd to shun the public sight,
What harm? in spite of every critic elf,
Sir T. may read his stanzas to himself;
Miles Andrews still his strength in couplets try,
And live in prologues, though his dramas die.
Lords too are bards: such things at times befal,
And 'tis some praise in peers to write at all.
Yet, did or taste or reason sway the times,
Ah! who would take their titles with their rhymes?
Roscommon! Sheffield! with your spirits fled,
No future laurels deck a noble head;
No Muse will cheer, with renovating smile,
The paralytic puling of Carlisle:
The puny school-boy and his early lay
Men pardon, if his follies pass away;
But who forgives the senior's ceaseless verse,
Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes grow worse?
What heterogeneous honours deck the Peer!
Lord, rhymester, petit-maître, pamphleteer![2]
So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,
His scenes alone had damn'd our sinking stage:
But managers for once cried « hold, enough!»
Nor drugg'd their audience with the tragic stuff.
Yet at their judgment let his lordship laugh,
And case his volumes in congenial calf:
Yes! doff that covering where morocco shines,
And hang a calf-skin[3] on those recreant lines.

With you, ye Druids! rich in native lead,
Who daily scribble for your daily bread,
With you I war not: Gifford's heavy hand
Has crush'd, without remorse, your numerous band.
On « all the Talents» vent your venal spleen,
Want your defence, let Pity be your screen.
Let Monodies on Fox regale your crew,
And Melville's Mantle[4] prove a Blanket too!
One common Lethe waits each hapless bard,
And peace be with you! 'tis your best reward.
Such damning fame as Dunciads only give,
Could bid your lines beyond a morning live;
But now at once your fleeting labours close,
With names of greater note in blest repose.
Far be 't from me unkindly to upbraid
The lovely Rosa's prose in masquerade,
Whose strains, the faithful echoes of her mind,
Leave wondering comprehension far behind.[1]
Though Crusca's bards no more our journals fill,
Some stragglers skirmish round their columns still.
Last of the howling host which once was Bell's,
Matilda snivels yet, and Hafiz yells;
And Merry's metaphors appear anew,
Chain'd to the signature of O. P. Q.[2]

When some brisk youth, the tenant of a stall,
Employs a pen less pointed than his awl,
Leaves his snug shop, forsakes his store of shoes,
St Crispin quits, and cobbles for the Muse,
Heavens! how the vulgar stare! how crowds applaud!
How ladies read, and literati laud!
If chance some wicked wag should pass his jest,
'T is sheer ill-nature; don't the world know best?
Genius must guide when wits admire the rhyme,
And Capel Lofft [3] declares 't is quite sublime.
Hear, then, ye happy sons of needless trade!
Swains! quit the plough, resign the useless spade:
Lo! Burns and Bloomfield,[4] nay, a greater far,
Gifford was born beneath an adverse star,
Forsook the labours of a servile state,
Stemm'd the rude storm, and triumph'd over Fate.
Then why no more? if Phœbus smiled on you,
Bloomfield! why not on brother Nathan too?
Him too the Mania, not the Muse, has seized;
Not inspiration, but a mind diseased:
And now no boor can seek his last abode,
No common be inclosed, without an ode.
Oh! since increased refinement deigns to smile
On Britain's sons, and bless our genial isle,
Let Poesy go forth, pervade the whole,
Alike the rustic and mechanic soul:
Ye tuneful cobblers! still your notes prolong,
Compose at once a slipper and a song;
So shall the fair your handiwork peruse;
Your sonnets sure shall please—perhaps your shoes.
May Moorland[5] weavers boast Pindaric skill,
And tailors' lays be longer than their bill!
While punctual beaux reward the grateful notes,
And pay for poems—when they pay for coats.

To the famed throng now paid the tribute due,
Neglected Genius! let me turn to you.
Come forth, Oh Campbell![6] give thy talents scope;
Who dares aspire if thou must cease to hope?
And thou, melodious Rogers! rise at last,
Recal the pleasing memory of the past;

[1] What would be the sentiments of the Persian Anacreon, Hafiz, could he rise from his splendid sepulchre at Shceraz, where he reposes with Ferdousi and Sadi, the Oriental Homer and Catullus, and behold his name assumed by one Scott of Dromore, the most impudent and execrable of literary poachers for the daily prints?

[2] The Earl of Carlisle has lately published an eighteenpenny pamphlet on the state of the stage, and offers his plan for building a new theatre: it is to be hoped his lordship will be permitted to bring forward any thing for the stage, except his own tragedies.

[3] « Doff that lion's hide,
And hang a calf-skin on those recreant limbs.»
Shaks. *King John.*

Lord C.'s works, most resplendently bound, form a conspicuous ornament to his book-shelves:

« The rest is all but leather and prunella.»

[4] Melville's Mantle, a parody on « Elijah's Mantle,» a poem.

[1] This lovely little Jessica, the daughter of the noted Jew K——, seems to be a follower of the Della Crusca School, and has published two volumes of very respectable absurdities in rhyme, as times go; besides sundry novels in the style of the first edition of the Monk.

[2] These are the signatures of various worthies who figure in the poetical departments of the newspapers.

[3] Capel Lofft, Esq. the Mæcenas of shoemakers, and Preface-writer general to distressed versemen; a kind of gratis accoucheur to those who wish to be delivered of rhyme, but do not know how to bring it forth.

[4] See Nathaniel Bloomfield's ode, elegy, or whatever he or any one else chooses to call it, on the enclosure of « Honington Green.»

[5] Vide « Recollections of a Weaver in the Moorlands of Staffordshire.»

[6] It would be superfluous to recal to the mind of the reader the author of « The Pleasures of Memory,» and « The Pleasures of Hope,» the most beautiful didactic poems in our language, if we except Pope's Essay on Man: but so many poetasters have started up, that even the names of Campbell and Rogers are become strange.

Arise! let blest remembrance still inspire,
And strike to wonted tones thy hallow'd lyre!
Restore Apollo to his vacant throne,
Assert thy country's honour and thine own.
What! must deserted Poesy still weep
Where her last hopes with pious Cowper sleep?
Unless, perchance, from his cold bier she turns,
To deck the turf that wraps her minstrel, Burns!
No! though contempt hath mark'd the spurious brood,
The race who rhyme from folly, or for food;
Yet still some genuine sons 't is her's to boast,
Who, least affecting, still affect the most;
Feel as they write, and write but as they feel—
Bear witness, Gifford, Sotheby, Macneil.[1]

« Why slumbers Gifford?» once was ask'd in vain:[2]
Why slumbers Gifford? let us ask again:
Are there no follies for his pen to purge?
Are there no fools whose backs demand the scourge?
Are there no sins for Satire's Bard to greet?
Stalks not gigantic Vice in every street?
Shall peers or princes tread Pollution's path,
And 'scape alike the law's and Muse's wrath?
Nor blaze with guilty glare through future time,
Eternal beacons of consummate crime?
Arouse thee, Gifford! be thy promise claim'd,
Make bad men better, or at least ashamed.

Unhappy White![3] while life was in its spring,
And thy young muse just waved her joyous wing,
The spoiler came, and all thy promise fair
Has sought the grave, to sleep for ever there.
Oh! what a noble heart was here undone,
When Science self destroy'd her favourite son!
Yes! she too much indulged thy fond pursuit,
She sow'd the seeds, but death has reap'd the fruit.
'T was thine own genius gave the final blow,
And help'd to plant the wound that laid thee low:
So the struck eagle, stretch'd upon the plain,
No more through rolling clouds to soar again,
View'd his own feather on the fatal dart,
And wing'd the shaft that quiver'd in his heart:
Keen were his pangs, but keener far to feel
He nursed the pinion which impell'd the steel,
While the same plumage that had warm'd his nest
Drank the last life-drop of his bleeding breast.

There be who say in these enlighten'd days
That splendid lies are all the poet's praise;
That strain'd invention, ever on the wing,
Alone impels the modern bard to sing:
'T is true that all who rhyme, nay, all who write,
Shrink from that fatal word to genius—trite;
Yet truth sometimes will lend her noblest fires,
And decorate the verse herself inspires:
This fact in virtue's name let Crabbe attest—
Though nature's sternest painter, yet the best.

And here let Shee[1] and genius find a place,
Whose pen and pencil yield an equal grace;
To guide whose hand the sister arts combine,
And trace the poet's or the painter's line;
Whose magic touch can bid the canvas glow,
Or pour the easy rhyme's harmonious flow,
While honours doubly merited attend
The poet's rival, but the painter's friend.

Blest is the man who dares approach the bower
Where dwelt the Muses at their natal hour;
Whose steps have press'd, whose eye has mark'd afar
The clime that nursed the sons of song and war,
The scenes which glory still must hover o'er,
Her place of birth, her own Achaian shore:
But doubly blest is he whose heart expands
With hallow'd feelings for those classic lands;
Who rends the veil of ages long gone by,
And views their remnants with a poet's eye!
Wright![2] 't was thy happy lot at once to view
Those shores of glory, and to sing them too;
And sure no common muse inspired thy pen
To hail the land of gods and godlike men.

And you, associate Bards![3] who snatch'd to light
Those gems too long withheld from modern sight;
Whose mingling taste combined to cull the wreath
Where Attic flowers Aonian odours breathe,
And all their renovated fragrance flung,
To grace the beauties of your native tongue,
Now let those minds that nobly could transfuse
The glorious spirit of the Grecian muse,
Though soft the echo, scorn a borrow'd tone,
Resign Achaia's lyre, and strike your own.

Let these, or such as these, with just applause,
Restore the Muse's violated laws:
But not in flimsy Darwin's pompous chime,
That mighty master of unmeaning rhyme;
Whose gilded cymbals more adorn'd than clear,
The eye delighted, but fatigued the ear,
In show the simple lyre could once surpass,
But now worn down, appear in native brass;
While all his train of hovering sylphs around,
Evaporate in similies and sound:
Him let them shun, with him let tinsel die:
False glare attracts, but more offends the eye.[4]

Yet let them not to vulgar Wordsworth stoop,
The meanest object of the lowly group,
Whose verse, of all but childish prattle void,
Seems blessed harmony to Lambe and Lloyd:[5]
Let them—but hold, my muse, nor dare to teach
A strain far, far beyond thy humble reach:

[1] Gifford, author of the Baviad and Mæviad, the first satires of the day, and translator of Juvenal.

Sotheby, translator of Wieland's Oberon and Virgil's Georgics, and author of Saul, an epic poem.

Macneil, whose poems are deservedly popular: particularly «Scotland's Scaith, or the Wars of War,» of which ten thousand copies were sold in one month.

[2] Mr Gifford promised publicly that the Baviad and Mæviad should not be his last original works: let him remember, «mox in reluctantes dracones.»

[3] Henry Kirke White died at Cambridge, in October 1806, in consequence of too much exertion in the pursuit of studies, that would have matured a mind which disease and poverty could not impair, and which Death itself destroyed rather than subdued. His poems abound in such beauties as must impress the reader with the liveliest regret that so short a period was allotted to talents which would have dignified even the sacred functions he was destined to assume.

[1] Mr Shee, author of «Rhymes on Art,» and «Elements of Art.»

[2] Mr Wright, late Consul-General for the Seven Islands, is author of a very beautiful poem just published: it is entitled, «Horæ Ionicæ,» and is descriptive of the Isles and the adjacent coast of Greece.

[3] The translators of the Anthology have since published separate poems, which evince genius that only requires opportunity to attain eminence.

[4] The neglect of the «Botanic Garden» is some proof of returning taste: the scenery is its sole recommendation.

[5] Messrs Lambe and Lloyd, the most ignoble followers of Southey and Co.

The native genius with their feeling given
Will point the path, and peal their notes to heaven.

And thou, too, SCOTT![1] resign to minstrels rude
The wilder slogan of a Border feud:
Let others spin their meagre lines for hire—
Enough for genius if itself inspire!
Let Southey sing, although his teeming muse,
Prolific every string, be too profuse;
Let simple WORDSWORTH chime his childish verse,
And brother COLERIDGE lull the babe at nurse;
Let spectre-mongering LEWIS aim at most
To rouse the galleries, or to raise a ghost;
Let MOORE be lewd; let STRANGFORD steal from MOORE,
And swear that CAMOENS sang such notes of yore:
Let HALEY hobble on, MONTGOMERY rave,
And godly GRAHAME chaunt a stupid stave;
Let sonnetteering BOWLES his strains refine,
And whine and whimper to the fourteenth line;
Let STOTT, CARLISLE,[2] MATILDA, and the rest
Of Grub-street, and of Grosvenor-Place the best,
Scrawl on, till death release us from the strain,
Or common sense assert her rights again;
But thou, with powers that mock the aid of praise,
Should'st leave to humbler bards ignoble lays:
Thy country's voice, the voice of all the Nine,
Demand a hallow'd harp—that harp is thine.
Say! will not Caledonia's annals yield
The glorious record of some nobler field,
Than the vile foray of a plundering clan,
Whose proudest deeds disgrace the name of man?
Or Marmion's acts of darkness, fitter food
For outlaw'd Sherwood's tales of Robin Hood?
Scotland! still proudly claim thy native bard,
And be thy praise his first, his best reward!
Yet not with thee alone his name should live,
But own the vast renown a world can give;
Be known, perchance, when Albion is no more,
And tell the tale of what she was before;
To future times her faded fame recal,
And save her glory, though his country fall.

Yet what avails the sanguine poet's hope
To conquer ages, and with time to cope?
New eras spread their wings, new nations rise,
And other victors[1] fill the applauding skies:
A few brief generations fleet along,
Whose sons forget the poet and his song:
E'en now what once-loved minstrels scarce may claim
The transient mention of a dubious name!
When Fame's loud trump hath blown its noblest blast,
Though long the sound, the echo sleeps at last,
And glory, like the phœnix midst her fires,
Exhales her odours, blazes, and expires.

Shall hoary Granta call her sable sons,
Expert in science, more expert at puns?
Shall these approach the muse? ah, no! she flies,
And even spurns the great Seatonian prize,
Though printers condescend the press to soil
With rhyme by HOARE, and epic blank by HOYLE:
Not him whose page, if still upheld by whist,
Requires no sacred theme to bid us list.[2]
Ye who in Granta's honours would surpass,
Must mount her Pegasus, a full-grown ass—
A foal well worthy of her ancient dam,
Whose Helicon is duller than her Cam.
There CLARKE, still striving piteously «to please,»
Forgetting doggrel leads not to degrees,
A would-be satirist, a hired buffoon,
A monthly scribbler of some low lampoon,
Condemn'd to drudge, the meanest of the mean,
And furbish falsehoods for a magazine,
Devotes to scandal his congenial mind—
Himself a living libel on mankind.[3]
Oh, dark asylum of a Vandal race![4]
At once the boast of learning, and disgrace;
So sunk in dulness and so lost in shame,
That SMYTHE and HODGSON[5] scarce redeem thy fame!
But where fair Isis rolls her purer wave,
The partial muse delighted loves to lave;
On her green banks a greener wreath is wove,
To crown the bards that haunt her classic grove,
Where RICHARDS wakes a genuine poet's fires,
And modern Britons justly praise their sires.[6]

For me, who thus unask'd have dared to tell
My country what her sons should know too well,
Zeal for her honour bade me here engage
The host of idiots that infest her age.

[1] By the bye, I hope that in Mr SCOTT's next poem his hero or heroine will be less addicted to «gramarye,» and more to grammar, than the Lady of the Lay, and her bravo, William of Deloraine.

[2] It may be asked why I have censured the Earl of CARLISLE, my guardian and relative, to whom I dedicated a volume of puerile poems a few years ago. The guardianship was nominal, at least as far as I have been able to discover; the relationship I cannot help, and am very sorry for it; but as his lordship seemed to forget it on a very essential occasion to me, I shall not burthen my memory with the recollection. I do not think that personal differences sanction the unjust condemnation of a brother scribbler; but I see no reason why they should act as a preventive, when the author, noble or ignoble, has for a series of years beguiled a «discerning public» (as the advertisements have it) with divers reams of most orthodox, imperial nonsense. Besides I do not step aside to vituperate the Earl; no—his works come fairly in review with those of other patrician literati. If, before I escaped from my teens, I said any thing in favour of his lordship's paper books, it was in the way of dutiful dedication, and more from the advice of others than my own judgment, and I seize the first opportunity of pronouncing my sincere recantation. I have heard that some persons conceive me to be under obligations to Lord CARLISLE: if so, I shall be most particularly happy to learn what they are, and when conferred, that they may be duly appreciated and publicly acknowledged. What I have humbly advanced as an opinion on his printed things, I am prepared to support, if necessary, by quotations from elegies, eulogies, odes, episodes, and certain facetious and dainty tragedies, bearing his name and mark:

«What can ennoble knaves or *fools*, or cowards?
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards!»

So says POPE. Amen.

[1] «Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora.»—VIRGIL.

[2] The «Games of Hoyle,» well known to the votaries of whist, chess, etc. are not to be superseded by the vagaries of his poetical namesake, whose poem comprised, as expressly stated in the advertisement, all the «Plagues of Egypt.»

[3] This person, who has lately betrayed the most rapid symptoms of confirmed authorship, is writer of a poem denominated the «Art of Pleasing,» as «lucus a non lucendo,» containing little pleasantry, and less poetry. He also acts as monthly stipendiary and collector of calumnies for the Satirist. If this unfortunate young man would exchange the magazines for the mathematics, and endeavour to take a decent degree in his university, it might eventually prove more serviceable than his present salary.

[4] «Into Cambridgeshire the Emperor Probus transported a considerable body of Vandals.»—Gibbon's Decline and Fall, page 83, vol. 2. There is no reason to doubt the truth of this assertion—the breed is still in high perfection.

[5] This gentleman's name requires no praise: the man who in translation displays unquestionable genius, may well be expected to excel in original composition, of which it is to be hoped we shall soon see a splendid specimen.

[6] The «Aboriginal Britons,» an excellent poem by RICHARDS.

No just applause her honour'd name shall lose,
As first in freedom, dearest to the muse.
Oh, would thy bards but emulate thy fame,
And rise more worthy, Albion, of thy name!
What Athens was in science, Rome in power,
What Tyre appear'd in her meridian hour,
'T is thine at once, fair Albion, to have been,
Earth's chief dictatress, Ocean's mighty queen:
But Rome decay'd, and Athens strew'd the plain,
And Tyre's proud piers lie shatter'd in the main:
Like these thy strength may sink in ruin hurl'd,
And Britain fall, the bulwark of the world.
But let me cease, and dread Cassandra's fate,
With warning ever scoff'd at, 'till too late;
To themes less lofty still my lay confine,
And urge thy bards to gain a name like thine.

Then, hapless Britain! be thy rulers blest,
The senate's oracles, the people's jest!
Still hear thy motley orators dispense
The flowers of rhetoric, though not of sense,
While CANNING's colleagues hate him for his wit,
And old dame PORTLAND[1] fills the place of PITT.

Yet once again adieu? ere this the sail
That wafts me hence is shivering in the gale:
And Afric's coast and Calpe's[2] adverse height,
And Stamboul's[3] minarets must greet my sight;
Thence shall I stray through beauty's[4] native clime,
Where Kaff[5] is clad in rocks, and crown'd with snows sublime.
But should I back return, no letter'd rage
Shall drag my common-place book on the stage:
Let vain VALENTIA[6] rival luckless CARR,
And equal him whose work he sought to mar;
Let ABERDEEN and ELGIN[7] still pursue
The shade of fame through regions of virtu;
Waste useless thousands on their Phidian freaks,
Misshapen monuments and maim'd antiques;
And make their grand saloons a general mart
For all the mutilated blocks of art:
Of Dardan tours let dilettanti tell,
I leave topography to classic GELL;[8]
And quite content, no more shall interpose
To stun mankind with poesy or prose.

Thus far I've held my undisturb'd career,
Prepared for rancour, steel'd 'gainst selfish fear:
This thing of rhyme I ne'er disdain'd to own—
Though not obtrusive, yet not quite unknown:
My voice was heard again, though not so loud;
My page, though nameless, never disavow'd,
And now at once I tear the veil away:
Cheer on the pack! the quarry stands at bay,
Unscared by all the din of MELBOURNE-house,
By LAMBE's resentment, or by HOLLAND's spouse,
By JEFFREY's harmless pistol, HALLAM's rage,
EDINA's brawny sons and brimstone page.
Our men in buckram shall have blows enough,
And feel they too are «penetrable stuff:»
And though I hope not hence unscathed to go,
Who conquers me shall find a stubborn foe.
The time hath been, when no harsh sound would fall
From lips that now may seem imbued with gall,
Nor fools nor follies tempt me to despise
The meanest thing that crawl'd beneath my eyes:
But now, so callous grown, so changed since youth,
I've learned to think and sternly speak the truth;
Learn'd to deride the critic's starch decree,
And break him on the wheel he meant for me;
To spurn the rod a scribbler bids me kiss,
Nor care if courts and crowds applaud or hiss:
Nay, more, though all my rival rhymesters frown,
I too can hunt a poetaster down;
And, arm'd in proof, the gauntlet cast at once
To Scotch marauder, and to southern dunce.
Thus much I've dared to do; how far my lay
Hath wrong'd these righteous times, let others say;
This let the world, which knows not how to spare,
Yet rarely blames unjustly, now declare.

POSTSCRIPT.[1]

I HAVE been informed, since the present edition went to the press, that my trusty and well beloved cousins, the Edinburgh Reviewers, are preparing a most vehement critique on my poor, gentle, *unresisting* muse, whom they have already so bedeviled with their ungodly ribaldry:

«Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ!»

I suppose I must say of JEFFREY as Sir ANDREW AGUECHEEK saith, «an I had known he was so cunning of «fence, I had seen him damned ere I had fought him.» What a pity it is that I shall be beyond the Bosphorus before the next number has passed the Tweed. But yet I hope to light my pipe with it in Persia.

My northern friends have accused me, with justice, of personality towards their great literary Anthropophagus, JEFFREY: but what else was to be done with him and his dirty pack, who feed «by lying and slandering,» and slake their thirst by «evil-speaking?» I have adduced facts already well known, and of Jeffrey's mind I have stated my free opinion, nor has he thence sustained any injury: what scavenger was ever soiled by being pelted with mud? It may be said that I quit England because I have censured there «persons of honour and wit about town;» but I am coming back again, and their vengeance will keep hot till my return. Those who know me can testify that my motives for leaving England are very different from fears, literary or personal; those who do not, may one day be convinced.

[1] Published to the Second Edition.

[1] A friend of mine being asked why his Grace of P. was likened to an old woman? replied, «he supposed it was because he was past bearing.»

[2] Calpe is the ancient name of Gibraltar.

[3] Stamboul is the Turkish word for Constantinople.

[4] Georgia, remarkable for the beauty of its inhabitants.

[5] Mount Caucasus.

[6] Lord VALENTIA (whose tremendous travels are forthcoming, with due decorations, graphical, topographical, and typographical) deposed, on Sir JOHN CARR's unlucky suit, that DUBOIS' satire prevented his purchase of the «Stranger in Ireland.»—Oh fie, my Lord! has your lordship no more feeling for a fellow-tourist? but «two of a trade,» they say etc.

[7] Lord ELGIN would fain persuade us that all the figures, with and without noses, in his stone-shop, are the work of Phidias! «Credat Judæus.»

[8] Mr GELL's Topography of Troy and Ithaca cannot fail to ensure the approbation of every man possessed of classical taste, as well for the information Mr G. conveys to the mind of the reader, as for the ability and research the respective works display.

Since the publication of this thing, my name has not been concealed; I have been mostly in London, ready to answer for my transgressions, and in daily expectation of sundry cartels; but, alas! «The age of chivalry is over;» or, in the vulgar tongue, there is no spirit now-a-days.

There is a youth yclept Hewson Clarke, (subaudi, Esq.) a sizer of Emanuel College, and I believe a denizen of Berwick upon Tweed, whom I have introduced in these pages to much better company than he has been accustomed to meet: he is, notwithstanding, a very sad dog, and, for no reason that I can discover, except a personal quarrel with a bear, kept by me at Cambridge to sit for a fellowship, and whom the jealousy of his Trinity cotemporaries prevented from success, has been abusing me, and, what is worse, the defenceless innocent above mentioned, in the Satirist, for one year and some months. I am utterly unconscious of having given him any provocation; indeed I am guiltless of having heard his name, till it was coupled with the Satirist. He has therefore no reason to complain, and I dare say that, like Sir Fretful Plagiary, he is rather *pleased* than otherwise. I have now mentioned all who have done me the honour to notice me and mine, that is, my bear and my book, except the editor of the Satirist, who, it seems, is a gentleman, God wot! I wish he could impart a little of his gentility to his subordinate scribblers. I hear that Mr Jerningham is about to take up the cudgels for his Mæcenas, Lord Carlisle: I hope not; he was one of the few who, in the very short intercourse I had with him, treated me with kindness when a boy, and whatever he may say or do, «pour on, I will endure.» I have nothing further to add, save a general note of thanksgiving to readers, purchasers, and publisher; and, in the words of Scott, I wish

«To all and each a fair good night,
And rosy dreams and slumbers light.»

The following Lines were written by Mr Fitzgerald, *in a Copy of* English Bards and Scotch Reviewers:—

I find Lord Byron scorns my muse—
Our fates are ill agreed!
His verse is safe—I can't abuse
Those lines I never read.

W. F. F.

His Lordship accidentally met with the Copy, and subjoined the following pungent Reply:—

What 's writ on me, cried Fitz, I never read;—
What 's wrote by thee, dear Fitz, none will indeed.
The case stands simply thus, then, honest Fitz:—
Thou and thine enemies are fairly quits,
Or rather *would* be, if, for time to come,
They luckily were *deaf*, or thou wert *dumb*—
But, to their *pens*, while scribblers add their *tongues*,[1]
The waiter only can escape their lungs.

[1] Mr Fitzgerald is in the habit of *reciting* his own poetry.—See note to English Bards, p. 26.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

A ROMAUNT.

L'univers est une espèce de livre, dont on n'a lu que la première page, quand on n'a vu que son pays. J'en ai feuilleté un assez grand nombre, que j'ai trouvées également mauvaises. Cet examen ne m'a point été infructueux. Je haïssais ma patrie. Toutes les impertinences des peuples divers, parmi lesquels j'ai vécu, m'ont réconcilié avec elle. Quand je n'aurais tiré d'autre bénéfice de mes voyages que celui-là, je n'en regretterais ni les frais ni les fatigues.
LE COSMOPOLITE.

PREFACE.

The following poem was written, for the most part, amidst the scenes which it attempts to describe. It was begun in Albania; and the parts relative to Spain and Portugal were composed from the author's observations in those countries. Thus much it may be necessary to state for the correctness of the descriptions. The scenes attempted to be sketched are in Spain, Portugal, Epirus, Acarnania, and Greece. There for the present the poem stops: its reception will determine whether the author may venture to conduct his readers to the capital of the East, through Ionia and Phrygia: these two cantos are merely experimental.

A fictitious character is introduced for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece; which, however, makes no pretension to regularity. It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in this fictitious character, «Childe Harold,» I may incur the suspicion of having intended some real personage: this I beg leave, once for all, to disclaim—Harold is the child of imagination, for the purpose I have stated. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such a notion; but in the main points, I should hope, none whatever.

It is almost superfluous to mention that the appellation «Childe,» as «Childe Waters,» «Childe Childers,» etc. is used as more consonant with the old structure of versification which I have adopted. The «Good Night,» in the beginning of the first canto, was suggested by «Lord Maxwell's Good Night,» in the Border Minstrelsy, edited by Mr Scott.

With the different poems which have been published on Spanish subjects, there may be found some slight coincidence in the first part, which treats of the peninsula, but it can only be casual; as, with the exception of a few concluding stanzas, the whole of this poem was written in the Levant.

The stanza of Spenser, according to one of our most successful poets, admits of every variety. Dr Beattie makes the following observation: «Not long ago I began a poem in the style and stanza of Spenser, in which I propose to give full scope to my inclination,

and be either droll or pathetic, descriptive or sentimental, tender or satirical, as the humour strikes me; for, if I mistake not, the measure which I have adopted admits equally of all these kinds of composition.»[1]—Strengthened in my opinion by such authority, and by the example of some in the highest order of Italian poets, I shall make no apology for attempts at similar variations in the following composition; satisfied that, if they are unsuccessful, their failure must be in the execution, rather than in the design sanctioned by the practice of Ariosto, Thomson, and Beattie.

ADDITION TO THE PREFACE.

I have now waited till almost all our periodical journals have distributed their usual portion of criticism. To the justice of the generality of their criticisms I have nothing to object; it would ill become me to quarrel with their very slight degree of censure, when, perhaps, if they had been less kind they had been more candid. Returning, therefore, to all and each my best thanks for their liberality, on one point alone shall I venture an observation. Amongst the many objections justly urged to the very indifferent character of the «vagrant Childe» (whom, notwithstanding many hints to the contrary, I still maintain to be a fictitious personage), it has been stated that, besides the anachronism, he is very *unknightly*, as the times of the knights were times of love, honour, and so forth. Now it so happens that the good old times, when «l'amour du bon vieux temps, l'amour antique» flourished, were the most profligate of all possible centuries. Those who have any doubts on this subject may consult St Palaye, *passim*, and more particularly vol. ii. page 69. The vows of chivalry were no better kept than any other vows whatsoever, and the songs of the Troubadours were not more decent, and certainly were much less refined, than those of Ovid.—The «Cours d'amour, parlements d'amour ou de courtoisie et de gentilesse,» had much more of love than of courtesy or gentleness.—See Roland on the same subject with St Palaye.—Whatever other objection may be urged to that most unamiable personage Childe Harold, he was so far perfectly knightly in his attributes—«No waiter, but a knight templar.»[2]—By the bye, I fear that Sir Tristram and Sir Lancelot were no better than they should be, although very poetical personages and true knights «sans peur,» though not «sans reproche.»—If the story of the institution of the «Garter» be not a fable, the knights of that order have for several centuries borne the badge of a Countess of Salisbury, of indifferent memory. So much for chivalry. Burke need not have regretted that its days are over, though Maria Antoinette was quite as chaste as most of those in whose honours lances were shivered, and knights unhorsed.

Before the days of Bayard, and down to those of Sir Joseph Banks (the most chaste and celebrated of ancient and modern times), few exceptions will be found to this statement, and I fear a little investigation will teach us not to regret these monstrous mummeries of the middle ages.

I now leave «Childe Harold» to live his day, such as he is; it had been more agreeable, and certainly more easy, to have drawn an amiable character. It had been easy to varnish over his faults, to make him do more and express less, but he never was intended as an example, further than to show that early perversion of mind and morals leads to satiety of past pleasures and disappointment in new ones, and that even the beauties of nature, and the stimulus of travel (except ambition, the most powerful of all excitements), are lost on a soul so constituted, or rather misdirected. Had I proceeded with the poem, this character would have deepened as he drew to the close; for the outline which I once meant to fill up for him was, with some exceptions, the sketch of a modern Timon, perhaps a poetical Zeluco.

[1] Beattie's Letters.

[2] The Rovers.—*Antijacobin.*

TO IANTHE.

Not in those climes where I have late been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless deem'd;
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dream'd,
Hath aught like thee, in truth or fancy seem'd:
Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly seek
To paint those charms which varied as they beam'd—
To such as see thee not my words were weak;
To those who gaze on thee what language could they speak?

Ah! may'st thou ever be what now thou art,
Nor unbeseem the promise of thy spring,
As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,
Love's image upon earth without his wing,
And guileless beyond Hope's imagining!
And surely she who now so fondly rears
Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,
Beholds the rainbow of her future years,
Before whose heavenly hues all sorrow disappears.

Young Peri of the West!—'t is well for me
My years already doubly number thine;
My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,
And safely view thy ripening beauties shine;
Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline,
Happier, that while all younger hearts shall bleed,
Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign
To those whose admiration shall succeed,
But mix'd with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours decreed.

Oh! let that eye, which, wild as the gazelle's,
Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,
Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny
That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh,
Could I to thee be ever more than friend:
This much, dear maid, accord; nor question why
To one so young my strain I would commend,
But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined;
And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast
On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined
Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last:
My days once numbered, should this homage past
Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
Of him who hail'd thee, loveliest as thou wast,
Such is the most my memory may desire;
Though more than Hope can claim, could Friendship less require?

CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE.

A Romaunt.

CANTO I.

I.

Oh, thou! in Hellas deem'd of heavenly birth,
Muse! form'd or fabled at the minstrel's will!
Since shamed full oft by later lyres on earth,
Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred hill:
Yet there I 've wander'd by thy vaunted rill;
Yes! sigh'd o'er Delphi's long-deserted shrine,[1]
Where, save that feeble fountain, all is still;
Nor mote my shell awake the weary Nine,
To grace so plain a tale—this lowly lay of mine.

II.

Whilome in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth,
Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;
But spent his days in riot most uncouth,
And vex'd with mirth the drowsy ear of night.
Ah, me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,
Sore given to revel and ungodly glee;
Few earthly things found favour in his sight
Save concubines and carnal companie,
And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

III.

Childe Harold was he hight:—but whence his name
And lineage long, it suits me not to say;
Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
And had been glorious in another day:
But one sad losel soils a name for aye,
However mighty in the olden time;
Nor all that heralds rake from coffin'd clay,
Nor florid prose, nor honied lies of rhyme,
Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

IV.

Childe Harold bask'd him in the noon-tide sun,
Disporting there like any other fly;
Nor deem'd before his little day was done,
One blast might chill him into misery.
But long ere scarce a third of his pass'd by,
Worse than adversity the Childe befel;
He felt the fulness of satiety:
Then loathed he in his native land to dwell,
Which seem'd to him more lone than eremite's sad cell.

V.

For he through sin's long labyrinth had run,
Nor made atonement when he did amiss,
Had sigh'd to many, though he loved but one,
And that loved one, alas! could ne'er be his.
Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him whose kiss
Had been pollution unto aught so chaste;
Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
And spoil'd her goodly lands to gild his waste,
Nor calm domestic peace had ever deign'd to taste.

VI.

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,
And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;
'T is said, at times the sullen tear would start,
But pride congeal'd the drop within his ee:
Apart he stalk'd in joyless reverie,
And from his native land resolved to go,
And visit scorching climes beyond the sea;
With pleasure drugg'd he almost long'd for woe,
And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below.

VII.

The Childe departed from his father's hall:
It was a vast and venerable pile:
So old, it seemed only not to fall,
Yet strength was pillar'd in each massy aisle.
Monastic dome! condemn'd to uses vile!
Where superstition once had made her den
Now Paphian girls were known to sing and smile;
And monks might deem their time was come agen,
If ancient tales say true, nor wrong these holy men.

VIII.

Yet oft-times in his maddest mirthful mood
Strange pangs would flash along Childe Harold's brow,
As if the memory of some deadly feud
Or disappointed passion lurk'd below:
But this none knew, nor haply cared to know;
For his was not that open, artless soul,
That feels relief by bidding sorrow flow,
Nor sought he friend to counsel or condole,
Whate'er this grief mote be, which he could not control.

IX.

And none did love him—though to hall and bower
He gather'd revellers from far and near,
He knew them flatterers of the festal hour;
The heartless parasites of present cheer.
Yea, none did love him—not his lemans dear—
But pomp and power alone are woman's care,
And where these are light Eros finds a feere;
Maidens, like moths, are ever caught by glare,
And Mammon wins his way where seraphs might despair.

X.

Childe Harold had a mother—not forgot,
Though parting from that mother he did shun;
A sister whom he loved, but saw her not
Before his weary pilgrimage begun:
If friends he had, he bade adieu to none.
Yet deem not thence his breast a breast of steel;
Ye who have known what 't is to dote upon
A few dear objects, will in sadness feel
Such partings break the heart they fondly hope to heal.

XI.

His house, his home, his heritage, his lands,
The laughing dames in whom he did delight,
Whose large blue eyes, fair locks, and snowy hands,
Might shake the saintship of an anchorite,
And long had fed his youthful appetite;
His goblets brimm'd with every costly wine,
And all that mote to luxury invite,
Without a sigh he left, to cross the brine,
And traverse Paynim shores, and pass earth's central line.

XII.

The sails were fill'd, and fair the light winds blew,
As glad to waft him from his native home;
And fast the white rocks faded from his view,
And soon were lost in circumambient foam:
And then, it may be, of his wish to roam
Repented he, but in his bosom slept
The silent thought, nor from his lips did come
One word of wail, whilst others sate and wept,
And to the reckless gales unmanly moaning kept.

XIII.

But when the sun was sinking in the sea,
He seized his harp, which he at times could string,
And strike, albeit with untaught melody,
When deem'd he no strange ear was listening:
And now his fingers o'er it he did fling,
And tuned his farewell in the dim twilight.
While flew the vessel on her snowy wing,
And fleeting shores receded from his sight,
Thus to the elements he pour'd his last «Good Night.»

1.

«Adieu, adieu! my native shore
Fades o'er the waters blue;
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
Yon sun that sets upon the sea
We follow in his flight;
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
My native Land—Good Night!

2.

«A few short hours and he will rise
To give the morrow birth;
And I shall hail the main and skies,
But not my mother earth.
Deserted is my own good hall,
Its hearth is desolate;
Wild weeds are gathering on the wall;
My dog howls at the gate.

3.

«Come hither, hither, my little page!
Why dost thou weep and wail?
Or dost thou dread the billows' rage,
Or tremble at the gale?
But dash the tear-drop from thine eye;
Our ship is swift and strong:
Our fleetest falcon scarce can fly
More merrily along.»

4.

'Let winds be shrill, let waves roll high,
I fear not wave nor wind;
Yet marvel not, Sir Childe, that I
Am sorrowful in mind;
For I have from my father gone,
A mother whom I love,
And have no friend, save these alone,
But thee—and one above.

5.

'My father bless'd me fervently,
Yet did not much complain;
But sorely will my mother sigh
Till I come back again.'—
«Enough, enough, my little lad!
Such tears become thine eye;
If I thy guileless bosom had,
Mine own would not be dry.

6.

«Come hither, hither, my staunch yeoman,
Why dost thou look so pale?
Or dost thou dread a French foeman?
Or shiver at the gale?»—
'Deem'st thou I tremble for my life?
Sir Childe, I 'm not so weak;
But thinking on an absent wife
Will blanch a faithful cheek.

7.

'My spouse and boys dwell near thy hall,
Along the bordering lake,
And when they on their father call,
What answer shall she make?'—
«Enough, enough, my yeoman good,
Thy grief let none gainsay;
But I, who am of lighter mood,
Will laugh to flee away.

8.

«For who would trust the seeming sighs
Of wife or paramour?
Fresh feeres will dry the bright blue eyes
We late saw streaming o'er.
For pleasures past I do not grieve,
Nor perils gathering near;
My greatest grief is that I leave
No thing that claims a tear.

9.

«And now I 'm in the world alone,
Upon the wide, wide sea:
But why should I for others groan,
When none will sigh for me?
Perchance my dog will whine in vain,
Till fed by stranger hands;
But long ere I come back again,
He 'd tear me where he stands.

10.

«With thee, my bark, I 'll swiftly go
Athwart the foaming brine;
Nor care what land thou bear'st me to,
So not again to mine.
Welcome, welcome, ye dark-blue waves!
And when you fail my sight,
Welcome, ye deserts, and ye caves!
My native Land—Good Night!»

XIV.

On, on the vessel flies, the land is gone,
And winds are rude in Biscay's sleepless bay.
Four days are sped, but with the fifth, anon,
New shores descried make every bosom gay;
And Cintra's mountain greets them on their way,
And Tagus dashing onward to the deep,
His fabled golden tribute bent to pay;
And soon on board the Lusian pilots leap,
And steer 'twixt fertile shores where yet few rustics reap.

XV.

Oh, Christ! it is a goodly sight to see
What Heaven hath done for this delicious land!
What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!
But man would mar them with an impious hand:
And when the Almighty lifts his fiercest scourge
'Gainst those who most transgress his high command,
With treble vengeance will his hot shafts urge
Gaul's locust host, and earth from fellest foemen purge.

XVI.

What beauties doth Lisboa first unfold?
Her image floating on that noble tide,
Which poets vainly pave with sands of gold,
But now whereon a thousand keels did ride
Of mighty strength, since Albion was allied,
And to the Lusians did her aid afford:
A nation swoln with ignorance and pride,
Who lick yet loathe the hand that waves the sword
To save them from the wrath of Gaul's unsparing lord.

XVII.

But whoso entereth within this town,
That, sheening far, celestial seems to be,
Disconsolate will wander up and down,
'Mid many things unsightly to strange ee;
For hut and palace show like filthily,
The dingy denizens are reared in dirt;
Ne personage of high or mean degree
Doth care for cleanness of surtout or shirt,
Though shent with Egypt's plague, unkempt, unwash'd, unhurt.

XVIII.

Poor, paltry slaves! yet born 'midst noblest scenes—
Why, Nature, waste thy wonders on such men?
Lo! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes
In variegated maze of mount and glen.
Ah, me! what hand can pencil guide, or pen,
To follow half on which the eye dilates,
Through views more dazzling unto mortal ken
Than those whereof such things the bard relates,
Who to the awe-struck world unlock'd Elysium's gates?

XIX.

The horrid crags, by toppling convent crown'd,
The cork-trees hoar that clothe the shaggy steep,
The mountain-moss by scorching skies imbrown'd,
The sunken glen, whose sunless shrubs must weep,
The tender azure of the unruffled deep,
The orange tints that gild the greenest bough,
The torrents that from cliff to valley leap,
The vine on high, the willow branch below,
Mix'd in one mighty scene, with varied beauty glow.

XX.

Then slowly climb the many-winding way,
And frequent turn to linger as you go,
From loftier rocks new loveliness survey,
And rest ye at our "Lady's house of woe;"[2]
Where frugal monks their little relics show,
And sundry legends to the stranger tell:
Here impious men have punish'd been, and lo!
Deep in yon cave Honorius long did dwell,
In hope to merit heaven by making earth a hell.

XXI.

And here and there, as up the crags you spring,
Mark many rude-carved crosses near the path:
Yet deem not these devotion's offering—
These are memorials frail of murderous wrath:
For wheresoe'er the shrieking victim hath
Pour'd forth his blood beneath the assassin's knife,
Some hand erects a cross of mouldering lath;
And grove and glen with thousand such are rife
Throughout this purple land, where law secures not life.[3]

XXII.

On sloping mounds, or in the vale beneath,
Are domes where whilome kings did make repair;
But now the wild flowers round them only breathe;
Yet ruin'd splendour still is lingering there.
And yonder towers the prince's palace fair:
There thou too, Vathek! England's wealthiest son,
Once form'd thy paradise, as not aware
When wanton wealth her mightiest deeds hath done,
Meek peace voluptuous lures was ever wont to shun.

XXIII.

Here didst thou dwell, here schemes of pleasure plan,
Beneath yon mountain's ever-beauteous brow:
But now, as if a thing unblest by man,
Thy fairy dwelling is as lone as thou!
Here giant weeds a passage scarce allow
To halls deserted, portals gaping wide:
Fresh lessons to the thinking bosom, how
Vain are the pleasaunces on earth supplied;
Swept into wrecks anon by time's ungentle tide!

XXIV.

Behold the hall where chiefs were late convened![4]
Oh! dome displeasing unto British eye!
With diadem hight foolscap, lo! a fiend,
A little fiend that scoffs incessantly,
There sits in parchment robe array'd, and by
His side is hung a seal and sable scroll,
Where blazon'd glare names known to chivalry,
And sundry signatures adorn the roll,
Whereat the urchin points and laughs with all his soul.

XXV.

Convention is the dwarfish demon styled
That foil'd the knights in Marialva's dome:
Of brains (if brains they had) he them beguiled,
And turned a nation's shallow joy to gloom.
Here folly dash'd to earth the victor's plume,
And policy regain'd what arms had lost:
For chiefs like ours in vain may laurels bloom!
Woe to the conqu'ring, not the conquer'd host,
Since baffled triumph droops on Lusitania's coast!

XXVI.

And ever since that martial synod met,
Britannia sickens, Cintra! at thy name;
And folks in office at the mention fret,
And fain would blush, if blush they could, for shame.
How will posterity the deed proclaim!
Will not our own and fellow-nations sneer,
To view these champions cheated of their fame,
By foes in fight o'erthrown, yet victors here,
Where scorn her finger points through many a coming year?

XXVII.

So deem'd the Childe, as o'er the mountains he
Did take his way in solitary guise:
Sweet was the scene, yet soon he thought to flee,
More restless than the swallow in the skies:
Though here awhile he learn'd to moralize,
For meditation fix'd at times on him;
And conscious reason whisper'd to despise
His early youth, mispent in maddest whim;
But as he gazed on truth his aching eyes grew dim.

XXVIII.

To horse! to horse! he quits, for ever quits
A scene of peace, though soothing to his soul:
Again he rouses from his moping fits,
But seeks not now the harlot and the bowl.
Onward he flies, nor fix'd as yet the goal
Where he shall rest him on his pilgrimage;
And o'er him many changing scenes must roll
Ere toil his thirst for travel can assuage,
Or he shall calm his breast, or learn experience sage.

XXIX.

Yet Mafra shall one moment claim delay,[5]
Where dwelt of yore the Lusian's luckless queen;
And church and court did mingle their array,
And mass and revel were alternate seen;
Lordlings and freeres—ill-sorted fry I ween!
But here the Babylonian whore hath built
A dome, where flaunts she in such glorious sheen,
That men forget the blood which she hath spilt,
And how the knee to pomp that loves to varnish guilt.

XXX.

O'er vales that teem with fruits, romantic hills,
(Oh, that such hills upheld a freeborn race!)
Whereon to gaze the eye with joyaunce fills,
Childe Harold wends through many a pleasant place.
Though sluggards deem it but a foolish chase,
And marvel men should quit their easy chair,
The toilsome way, and long, long league to trace,
Oh! there is sweetness in the mountain air,
And life, that bloated ease can never hope to share.

XXXI.

More bleak to view the hills at length recede,
And, less luxuriant, smoother vales extend:
Immense horizon-bounded plains succeed!
Far as the eye discerns, withouten end,
Spain's realms appear whereon her shepherds tend
Flocks, whose rich fleece right well the trader knows—
Now must the pastor's arm his lambs defend:
For Spain is compass'd by unyielding foes,
And all must shield their all, or share subjection's woes.

XXXII.

Where Lusitania and her sister meet,
Deem ye what bounds the rival realms divide?
Or ere the jealous queens of nations greet,
Doth Tayo interpose his mighty tide?
Or dark Sierras rise in craggy pride?
Or fence of art, like China's vasty wall?—
Ne barrier wall, ne river deep and wide,
Ne horrid crags, nor mountains dark and tall,
Rise like the rocks that part Hispania's land from Gaul:

XXXIII.

But these between a silver streamlet glides,
And scarce a name distinguisheth the brook,
Though rival kingdoms press its verdant sides.
Here leans the idle shepherd on his crook,
And vacant on the rippling waves doth look,
That peaceful still 'twixt bitterest foemen flow;
For proud each peasant as the noblest duke:
Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know
'Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low.[6]

XXXIV.

But, ere the mingling bounds have far been pass'd,
Dark Guadiana rolls his power along
In sullen billows, murmuring and vast,
So noted ancient roundelays among,
Whilome upon his banks did legions throng
Of Moor and knight, in mailed splendour drest:
Here ceased the swift their race, here sunk the strong;
The Paynim turban and the Christian crest
Mix'd on the bleeding stream, by floating hosts oppress'd.

XXXV.

Oh, lovely Spain! renown'd, romantic land!
Where is that standard which Pelagio bore,
When Cava's traitor-sire first called the band
That dyed thy mountain streams with Gothic gore?[7]
Where are those bloody banners which of yore
Waved o'er thy sons, victorious to the gale,
And drove at last the spoilers to their shore?
Red gleam'd the cross, and waned the crescent pale,
While Afric's echoes thrill'd with Moorish matrons' wail.

XXXVI.

Teems not each ditty with the glorious tale?
Ah! such, alas! the hero's amplest fate!
When granite moulders and when records fail,
A peasant's plaint prolongs his dubious date.
Pride! bend thine eye from heaven to thine estate,
See how the mighty shrink into a song!
Can volume, pillar, pile preserve thee great?
Or must thou trust tradition's simple tongue,
When flattery sleeps with thee, and history does thee wrong?

XXXVII.

Awake, ye sons of Spain! awake! advance!
Lo! Chivalry, your ancient goddess, cries,
But wields not, as of old, her thirsty lance,
Nor shakes her crimson plumage in the skies:
Now on the smoke of blazing bolts she flies,
And speaks in thunder through yon engine's roar.
In every peal she calls—«Awake! arise!»
Say, is her voice more feeble than of yore,
When her war-song was heard on Andalusia's shore?

XXXVIII.

Hark!—heard you not those hoofs of dreadful note?
Sounds not the clang of conflict on the heath?
Saw ye not whom the reeking sabre smote;
Nor saved your brethren ere they sank beneath
Tyrants and tyrants' slaves?—the fires of death,
The bale-fires flash on high:—from rock to rock
Each volley tells that thousands cease to breathe;
Death rides upon the sulphury Siroc,
Red battle stamps his foot, and nations feel the shock.

XXXIX.

Lo! where the giant on the mountain stands,
His blood-red tresses deep'ning in the sun,
With death-shot glowing in his fiery hands,
And eye that scorcheth all it glares upon;
Restless it rolls, now fix'd, and now anon
Flashing afar,—and at his iron feet
Destruction cowers to mark what deeds are done;
For on this morn three potent nations meet,
To shed before his shrine the blood he deems most sweet.

XL.

By Heaven! it is a splendid sight to see
(For one who hath no friend, no brother there)
Their rival scarfs of mix'd embroidery,
Their various arms that glitter in the air!
What gallant war-hounds rouse them from their lair,
And gnash their fangs, loud yelling for the prey!
All join the chase, but few the triumph share;
The grave shall bear the chiefest prize away,
And havoc scarce for joy can number their array.

XLI.

Three hosts combine to offer sacrifice;
Three tongues prefer strange orisons on high;
Three gaudy standards flout the pale blue skies;
The shouts are France, Spain, Albion, Victory!
The foe, the victim, and the fond ally
That fights for all, but ever fights in vain,
Are met—as if at home they could not die—
To feed the crow on Talavera's plain,
And fertilize the field that each pretends to gain.

XLII.

There shall they rot—ambition's honour'd fools!
Yes, honour decks the turf that wraps their clay!
Vain sophistry! in these behold the tools,
The broken tools, that tyrants cast away
By myriads, when they dare to pave their way
With human hearts—to what?—a dream alone.
Can despots compass aught that hails their sway?
Or call with truth one span of earth their own,
Save that wherein at last they crumble bone by bone?

XLIII.

Oh, Albuera! glorious field of grief!
As o'er thy plain the pilgrim prick'd his steed,
Who could foresee thee, in a space so brief,
A scene where mingling foes should boast and bleed!
Peace to the perish'd! may the warrior's meed
And tears of triumph their reward prolong!
Till others fall where other chieftains lead,
Thy name shall circle round the gaping throng,
And shine in worthless lays, the theme of transient song!

XLIV.

Enough of battle's minions! let them play
Their game of lives, and barter breath for fame:
Fame that will scarce reanimate their clay,
Though thousands fall to deck some single name.
In sooth 't were sad to thwart their noble aim
Who strike, blest hirelings! for their country's good,
And die, that living might have proved her shame;
Perish'd, perchance, in some domestic feud,
Or in a narrower sphere wild rapine's path pursued.

XLV.

Full swiftly Harold wends his lonely way
Where proud Sevilla triumphs unsubdued:
Yet is she free—the spoiler's wish'd-for prey!
Soon, soon shall conquest's fiery foot intrude,
Blackening her lovely domes with traces rude.
Inevitable hour! 'gainst fate to strive
Where desolation plants her famished brood
Is vain, or Ilion, Tyre might yet survive,
And virtue vanquish all, and murder cease to thrive.

XLVI.

But all unconscious of the coming doom,
The feast, the song, the revel here abounds;
Strange modes of merriment the hours consume,
Nor bleed these patriots with their country's wounds:
Not here war's clarion, but love's rebeck sounds;
Here folly still his votaries enthralls;
And young-eyed lewdness walks her midnight rounds:
Girt with the silent crimes of capitals,
Still to the last kind vice clings to the tott'ring walls.

XLVII.

Not so the rustic—with his trembling mate
He lurks, nor casts his heavy eye afar,
Lest he should view his vineyard desolate,
Blasted below the dun hot breath of war.
No more beneath soft eve's consenting star
Fandango twirls his jocund castanet:
Ah, monarchs! could ye taste the mirth ye mar,
Not in the toils of glory would ye fret;
The hoarse dull drum would sleep, and man be happy yet.

XLVIII.

How carols now the lusty muleteer?
Of love, romance, devotion, is his lay,
As whilome he was wont the leagues to cheer,
His quick bells wildly jingling on the way?
No? as he speeds, he chaunts:—«Vivâ el Rey!»[8]
And checks his song to execrate Godoy,
The royal wittol Charles, and curse the day
When first Spain's queen beheld the black-eyed boy,
And gore-faced treason sprung from her adulterate joy.

XLIX.

On yon long, level plain, at distance crown'd
With crags, whereon those Moorish turrets rest,
Wide-scatter'd hoof-marks dint the wounded ground;
And, scathed by fire, the green sward's darken'd vest
Tells that the foe was Andalusia's guest:
Here was the camp, the watch-flame, and the host,
Here the bold peasant storm'd the dragon's nest;
Still does he mark it with triumphant boast,
And points to yonder cliffs, which oft were won and lost.

L.

And whomsoe'er along the path you meet
Bears in his cap the badge of crimson hue,
Which tells you whom to shun and whom to greet: [9]
Woe to the man that walks in public view
Without of loyalty this token true:
Sharp is the knife, and sudden is the stroke;
And sorely would the Gallic foeman rue,
If subtle poniards, wrapt beneath the cloke,
Could blunt the sabre's edge, or clear the cannon's smoke.

LI.

At every turn Morena's dusky height
Sustains aloft the battery's iron load;
And, far as mortal eye can compass sight,
The mountain-howitzer, the broken road,
The bristling palisade, the fosse o'erflow'd,
The station'd bands, the never-vacant watch,
The magazine in rocky durance stow'd,
The holster'd steed beneath the shed of thatch,
The ball-piled pyramid, the ever-blazing match, [10]

LII.

Portend the deeds to come:—but he whose nod
Has tumbled feebler despots from their sway
A moment pauseth ere he lifts the rod;
A little moment deigneth to delay:
Soon will his legions sweep through these their way;
The West must own the scourger of the world.
Ah, Spain! how sad will be thy reckoning-day,
When soars Gaul's vulture, with his wings unfurl'd,
And thou shalt view thy sons in crowds to Hades hurl'd.

LIII.

And must they fall? the young, the proud, the brave,
To swell one bloated chief's unwholesome reign?
No step between submission and a grave?
The rise of rapine and the fall of Spain?
And doth the power that man adores ordain
Their doom, nor heed the suppliant's appeal?
Is all that desperate valour acts in vain?
And counsel sage, and patriotic zeal,
The veteran's skill, youth's fire, and manhood's heart of steel?

LIV.

Is it for this the Spanish maid, aroused,
Hangs on the willow her unstrung guitar,
And, all unsex'd, the anlace hath espoused,
Sung the loud song, and dared the deed of war?
And she, whom once the semblance of a scar
Appall'd, an owlet's larum chill'd with dread,
Now views the column-scattering bay'net jar,
The falchion flash, and o'er the yet warm dead
Stalks with Minerva's step where Mars might quake to tread.

LV.

Ye who shall marvel when you hear her tale,
Oh! had you known her in her softer hour,
Mark'd her black eye that mocks her coal-black veil,
Heard her light, lively tones in lady's bower,
Seen her long locks that foil the painter's power,
Her fairy form, with more than female grace,
Scarce would you deem that Saragoza's tower
Beheld her smile in danger's Gorgon face,
Thin the closed ranks, and lead in glory's fearful chase.

LVI.

Her lover sinks—she sheds no ill-timed tear;
Her chief is slain—she fills his fatal post;
Her fellows flee—she checks their base career;
The foe retires—she heads the sallying host:
Who can appease like her a lover's ghost?
Who can avenge so well a leader's fall?
What maid retrieve when man's flush'd hope is lost?
Who hang so fiercely on the flying Gaul,
Foil'd by a woman's hand, before a batter'd wall? [11]

LVII.

Yet are Spain's maids no race of Amazons,
But form'd for all the witching arts of love:
Though thus in arms they emulate her sons,
And in the horrid phalanx dare to move,
'T is but the tender fierceness of the dove,
Pecking the hand that hovers o'er her mate:
In softness as in firmness far above
Remoter females, famed for sickening prate;
Her mind is nobler sure, her charms perchance as great.

LVIII.

The seal love's dimpling finger hath impressed
Denotes how soft that chin which bears his touch: [12]
Her lips, whose kisses pout to leave their nest,
Bid man be valiant ere he merit such:
Her glance how wildly beautiful! how much
Hath Phœbus woo'd in vain to spoil her cheek,
Which glows yet smoother from his amorous clutch!
Who round the north for paler dames would seek?
How poor their forms appear! how languid, wan, and weak!

LIX.

Match me, ye climes! which poets love to laud;
Match me, ye harams of the land! where now
I strike my strain, far distant, to applaud
Beauties that ev'n a cynic must avow;
Match me those houries, whom ye scarce allow
To taste the gale lest love should ride the wind,
With Spain's dark-glancing daughters—deign to know
There your wise prophet's paradise we find,
His black-eyed maids of heaven, angelically kind.

LX.

Oh, thou Parnassus! [13] whom I now survey,
Not in the phrenzy of a dreamer's eye,
Not in the fabled landscape of a lay,
But soaring snow-clad through thy native sky,
In the wild pomp of mountain majesty!
What marvel if I thus essay to sing?
The humblest of thy pilgrims passing by
Would gladly woo thine echoes with his string,
Though from thy heights no more one muse will wave her wing.

LXI.

Oft have I dream'd of thee! whose glorious name
Who knows not, knows not man's divinest lore:
And now I view thee, 't is, alas! with shame
That I in feeblest accents must adore.
When I recount thy worshippers of yore
I tremble, and can only bend the knee;
Nor raise my voice, nor vainly dare to soar,
But gaze beneath thy cloudy canopy
In silent joy to think at last I look on thee!

LXII.

Happier in this than mightiest bards have been,
Whose fate to distant homes confined their lot,
Shall I unmoved behold the hallow'd scene,
Which others rave of, though they know it not?
Though here no more Apollo haunts his grot,
And thou, the muses' seat, art now their grave,
Some gentle spirit still pervades the spot,
Sighs in the gale, keeps silence in the cave,
And glides with glassy foot o'er yon melodious wave.

LXIII.

Of thee hereafter.—Even amidst my strain
I turn'd aside to pay my homage here;
Forgot the land, the sons, the maids of Spain;
Her fate, to every freeborn bosom dear,
And hail'd thee, not perchance without a tear.
Now to my theme—but from thy holy haunt
Let me some remnant, some memorial bear;
Yield me one leaf of Daphne's deathless plant,
Nor let thy votary's hope be deem'd an idle vaunt.

LXIV.

But ne'er didst thou, fair mount! when Greece was young,
See round thy giant base a brighter choir,
Nor e'er did Delphi, when her priestess sung
The Pythian hymn with more than mortal fire,
Behold a train more fitting to inspire
The song of love, than Andalusia's maids,
Nurst in the glowing lap of soft desire:
Ah! that to these were given such peaceful shades
As Greece can still bestow, though glory fly her glades.

LXV.

Fair is proud Seville; let her country boast
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days;[14]
But Cadiz, rising on the distant coast,
Calls forth a sweeter, though ignoble praise.
Ah, vice! how soft are thy voluptuous ways!
While boyish blood is mantling who can 'scape
The fascination of thy magic gaze?
A cherub-hydra round us dost thou gape,
And mould to every taste thy dear delusive shape.

LXVI.

When Paphos fell by time—accursed time!
The queen who conquers all must yield to thee—
The Pleasures fled, but sought as warm a clime;
And Venus, constant to her native sea,
To nought else constant, hither deign'd to flee;
And fix'd her shrine within these walls of white:
Though not to one dome circumscribeth she
Her worship, but, devoted to her rite,
A thousand altars rise, for ever blazing bright.

LXVII.

From morn till night, from night till startled morn
Peeps blushing on the revel's laughing crew,
The song is heard, the rosy garland worn,
Devices quaint, and frolics ever new,
Tread on each others kibes. A long adieu
He bids to sober joy that here sojourns:
Nought interrupts the riot, though in lieu
Of true devotion monkish incense burns,
And love and prayer unite, or rule the hour by turns.

LXVIII.

The sabbath comes, a day of blessed rest;
What hallows it upon this Christian shore?
Lo! it is sacred to a solemn feast:
Hark! heard you not the forest-monarch's roar?
Crashing the lance, he snuffs the spouting gore
Of man and steed, o'erthrown beneath his horn;
The throng'd arena shakes with shouts for more;
Yells the mad crowd o'er entrails freshly torn,
Nor shrinks the female eye, nor even affects to mourn.

LXIX.

The seventh day this; the jubilee of man.
London! right well thou know'st the day of prayer:
Then thy spruce citizen, wash'd artizan,
And smug apprentice gulp their weekly air:
Thy coach of Hackney, whiskey, one-horse chair,
And humblest gig through sundry suburbs whirl,
To Hampstead, Brentford, Harrow, make repair;
Till the tired jade the wheel forgets to hurl,
Provoking envious gibe from each pedestrian churl.

LXX.

Some o'er thy Thamis row the ribbon'd fair,
Others along the safer turnpike fly;
Some Richmond-hill ascend, some scud to Ware,
And many to the steep of Highgate hie.
Ask ye, Bœotian shades! the reason why?[15]
'T is to the worship of the solemn horn,
Grasp'd in the holy hand of mystery,
In whose dread name both men and maids are sworn,
And consecrate the oath with draught and dance till morn.

LXXI.

All have their fooleries—not alike are thine,
Fair Cadiz, rising o'er the dark blue sea!
Soon as the matin bell proclaimeth nine,
Thy saint adorers count the rosary:
Much is the Virgin teased to shrive them free
(Well do I ween the only virgin there)
From crimes as numerous as her beadsmen be;
Then to the crowded circus forth they fare,
Young, old, high, low, at once the same diversion share.

LXXII.

The lists are oped, the spacious area clear'd,
Thousands on thousands piled are seated round;
Long ere the first loud trumpet's note is heard,
Ne vacant space for lated wight is found:
Here dons, grandees, but chiefly dames abound,
Skill'd in the ogle of a roguish eye,
Yet ever well inclined to heal the wound;
None through their cold disdain are doom'd to die,
As moon-struck bards complain, by love's sad archery.

LXXIII.

Hush'd is the din of tongues—on gallant steeds,
With milk-white crest, gold spur, and light-poised lance,
Four cavaliers prepare for venturous deeds,
And lowly bending to the lists advance;
Rich are their scarfs, their chargers featly prance:
If in the dangerous game they shine to day,
The crowd's loud shout and ladies' lovely glance,
Best prize of better acts, they bear away,
And all that kings or chiefs e'er gain their toils repay.

LXXIV.

In costly sheen and gaudy cloak array'd,
But all a-foot, the light-limb'd Matadore
Stands in the centre, eager to invade
The lord of lowing herds; but not before
The ground, with cautious tread, is traversed o'er,
Lest aught unseen should lurk to thwart his speed:
His arm 's a dart, he fights aloof, nor more
Can man achieve without the friendly steed,
Alas! too oft condemn'd for him to bear and bleed.

LXXV.

Thrice sounds the clarion; lo! the signal falls,
The den expands, and expectation mute
Gapes round the silent circle's peopled walls.
Bounds with one lashing spring the mighty brute,
And, wildly staring, spurns, with sounding foot,
The sand, nor blindly rushes on his foe:
Here, there, he points his threatening front, to suit
His first attack, wide waving to and fro
His angry tail; red rolls his eye's dilated glow.

LXXVI.

Sudden he stops; his eye is fix'd: away,
Away, thou heedless boy! prepare the spear:
Now is thy time, to perish, or display
The skill that yet may check his mad career.
With well-timed croupe the nimble coursers veer;
On foams the bull, but not unscathed he goes;
Streams from his flank the crimson torrent clear:
He flies, he wheels, distracted with his throes;
Dart follows dart; lance, lance; loud bellowings speak his woes.

LXXVII.

Again he comes; nor dart nor lance avail,
Nor the wild plunging of the tortured horse;
Though man and man's avenging arms assail,
Vain are his weapons, vainer is his force.
One gallant steed is stretch'd a mangled corse;
Another, hideous sight! unseam'd appears,
His gory chest unveils life's panting source,
Though death-struck still his feeble frame he rears,
Staggering, but stemming all, his lord unharm'd he bears.

LXXVIII.

Foil'd, bleeding, breathless, furious to the last,
Full in the centre stands the bull at bay,
'Mid wounds, and clinging darts, and lances brast,
And foes disabled in the brutal fray:
And now the Matadores around him play,
Shake the red cloak, and poise the ready brand:
Once more through all he bursts his thundering way—
Vain rage! the mantle quits the conynge hand,
Wraps his fierce eye—'t is past—he sinks upon the sand!

LXXIX.

Where his vast neck just mingles with the spine,
Sheathed in his form the deadly weapon lies.
He stops—he starts—disdaining to decline:
Slowly he falls, amidst triumphant cries,
Without a groan, without a struggle, dies.
The decorated car appears—on high
The corse is piled—sweet sight for vulgar eyes—
Four steeds that spurn the rein, as swift as shy,
Hurl the dark bulk along, scarce seen in dashing by.

LXXX.

Such the ungentle sport that oft invites
The Spanish maid, and cheers the Spanish swain.
Nurtured in blood betimes, his heart delights
In vengeance, gloating on another's pain.
What private feuds the troubled village stain!
Though now one phalanx'd host should meet the foe,
Enough, alas! in humble homes remain,
To meditate 'gainst friends the secret blow,
For some slight cause of wrath, whence life's warm stream must flow.

LXXXI.

But jealousy has fled: his bars, his bolts,
His withered centinel, duenna sage!
And all whereat the generous soul revolts,
Which the stern dotard deem'd he could encage,
Have pass'd to darkness with the vanish'd age.
Who late so free as Spanish girls were seen
(Ere war uprose in his volcanic rage),
With braided tresses bounding o'er the green,
While on the gay dance shone night's lover-loving queen?

LXXXII.

Oh! many a time, and oft, had Harold loved,
Or dream'd he loved, since rapture is a dream;
But now his wayward bosom was unmoved,
For not yet had he drunk of Lethe's stream;
And lately had he learn'd with truth to deem
Love has no gift so grateful as his wings:
How fair, how young, how soft soe'er he seem,
Full from the fount of joy's delicious springs
Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.[16]

LXXXIII.

Yet to the beauteous form he was not blind,
Though now it moved him as it moves the wise;
Not that philosophy on such a mind
E'er deign'd to bend her chastely-awful eyes:
But passion raves herself to rest, or flies;
And vice, that digs her own voluptuous tomb,
Had buried long his hopes, no more to rise:
Pleasure's pall'd victim! life-abhorring gloom
Wrote on his faded brow curst Cain's unresting doom.

LXXXIV.

Still he beheld, nor mingled with the throng;
But view'd them not with misanthropic hate:
Fain would he now have join'd the dance, the song;
But who may smile that sinks beneath his fate?
Nought that he saw his sadness could abate:
Yet once he struggled 'gainst the demon's sway,
And as in beauty's bower he pensive sate,
Pour'd forth this unpremeditated lay,
To charms as fair as those that soothed his happier day.

TO INEZ.

1.

Nay, smile not at my sullen brow,
Alas! I cannot smile again;
Yet heaven avert that ever thou
Should'st weep, and haply weep in vain.

2.

And dost thou ask, what secret woe
I bear, corroding joy and youth?
And wilt thou vainly seek to know
A pang, even thou must fail to soothe?

3.

It is not love, it is not hate,
Nor low ambition's honours lost,
That bids me loathe my present state,
And fly from all I prized the most:

4.

It is that weariness which springs
From all I meet, or hear, or see:
To me no pleasure beauty brings;
Thine eyes have scarce a charm for me.

5.

It is that settled, ceaseless gloom
The fabled Hebrew wanderer bore;
That will not look beyond the tomb,
But cannot hope for rest before.

6.

What exile from himself can flee?
To zones, though more and more remote,
Still, still pursues, where'er I be,
The blight of life—the demon thought.

7.

Yet others rapt in pleasure seem,
And taste of all that I forsake;
Oh! may they still of transport dream,
And ne'er, at least like me, awake!

8.

Through many a clime 'tis mine to go,
With many a retrospection curst;
And all my solace is to know,
Whate'er betides, I've known the worst.

9.

What is that worst? Nay do not ask—
In pity from the search forbear:
Smile on—nor venture to unmask
Man's heart, and view the hell that's there.

LXXXV.

Adieu, fair Cadiz! yea, a long adieu!
Who may forget how well thy walls have stood?
When all were changing thou alone wert true,
First to be free and last to be subdued:
And if amidst a scene, a shock so rude,
Some native blood was seen thy streets to dye;
A traitor only fell beneath the feud: [17]
Here all were noble, save nobility;
None hugg'd a conqueror's chain, save fallen chivalry!

LXXXVI.

Such be the sons of Spain, and, strange her fate!
They fight for freedom who were never free;
A kingless people for a nerveless state,
Her vassals combat when their chieftains flee,
True to the veriest slaves of treachery:
Fond of a land which gave them nought but life,
Pride points the path that leads to liberty;
Back to the struggle, baffled in the strife,
War, war is still the cry, «war even to the knife!» [18]

LXXXVII.

Ye, who would more of Spain and Spaniards know,
Go, read whate'er is writ of bloodiest strife:
Whate'er keen vengeance urged on foreign foe
Can act, is acting there against man's life:
From flashing scimitar to secret knife,
War mouldeth there each weapon to his need—
So may he guard the sister and the wife,
So may he make each curst oppressor bleed,
So may such foes deserve the most remorseless deed!

LXXXVIII.

Flows there a tear of pity for the dead?
Look o'er the ravage of the reeking plain;
Look on the hands with female slaughter red;
Then to the dogs resign the unburied slain,
Then to the vulture let each corse remain;
Albeit unworthy of the prey-bird's maw,
Let their bleach'd bones, and blood's unbleaching stain,
Long mark the battle-field with hideous awe:
Thus only may our sons conceive the scenes we saw!

LXXXIX.

Nor yet, alas! the dreadful work is done,
Fresh legions pour adown the Pyrenees;
It deepens still, the work is scarce begun,
Nor mortal eye the distant end foresees.
Fallen nations gaze on Spain; if freed, she frees
More than her fell Pizarros once enchain'd:
Strange retribution! now Columbia's ease
Repairs the wrongs that Quito's sons sustain'd,
While o'er the parent clime prowls murder unrestrain'd.

XC.

Not all the blood at Talavera shed,
Not all the marvels of Barossa's fight,
Not Albuera, lavish of the dead,
Have won for Spain her well-asserted right.
When shall her olive branch be free from blight?
When shall she breathe her from the blushing toil?
How many a doubtful day shall sink in night,
Ere the Frank robber turn him from his spoil,
And freedom's stranger-tree grow native of the soil!

XCI.

And thou, my friend! [19]—since unavailing woe
Bursts from my heart, and mingles with the strain—
Had the sword laid thee with the mighty low,
Pride might forbid even friendship to complain:
But thus unlaurel'd to descend in vain,
By all forgotten, save the lonely breast,
And mix unbleeding with the boasted slain,
While glory crowns so many a meaner crest!
What hadst thou done to sink so peacefully to rest?

XCII.

Oh, known the earliest, and esteem'd the most!
Dear to a heart where nought was left so dear!
Though to my hopeless days for ever lost,
In dreams deny me not to see thee here!
And morn in secret shall renew the tear
Of consciousness awaking to her woes,
And fancy hover o'er thy bloodless bier,
Till my frail frame return to whence it rose,
And mourn'd and mourner lie united in repose.

XCIII.

Here is one fytte of Harold's pilgrimage:
Ye who of him may further see to know,
Shall find some tidings in a future page,
If he that rhymeth now may scribble moe.
Is this too much? stern critic! say not so:
Patience! and ye shall hear what he beheld
In other lands, where he was doom'd to go:
Lands that contain the monuments of Eld,
Ere Greece and Grecian arts by barbarous hands were quell'd.

CANTO II.

I.

Come, blue-eyed maid of heaven!—but thou, alas!
Didst never yet one mortal song inspire—
Goddess of wisdom! here thy temple was,
And is, despite of war and wasting fire,[1]
And years, that bade thy worship to expire:
But worse than steel, and flame, and ages slow,
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire
Of men who never felt the sacred glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polish'd breasts bestow.[2]

II.

Ancient of days! august Athena! where,
Where are thy men of might? thy grand in soul?
Gone, glimmering thro' the dream of things that were:
First in the race that led to glory's goal,
They won, and pass'd away—is this the whole?
A school-boy's tale, the wonder of an hour!
The warrior's weapon and the sophist's stole
Are sought in vain, and o'er each mouldering tower,
Dim with the mist of years, grey flits the shade of power.

III.

Son of the morning, rise! approach you here!
Come—but molest not yon defenceless urn:
Look on this spot—a nation's sepulchre!
Abode of gods, whose shrines no longer burn.
Even gods must yield—religions take their turn:
'T was Jove's—'t is Mahomet's—and other creeds
Will rise with other years, till man shall learn
Vainly his incense soars, his victim bleeds;
Poor child of doubt and death, whose hope is built on reeds.

IV.

Bound to the earth, he lifts his eye to heaven—
Is 't not enough, unhappy thing! to know
Thou art? Is this a boon so kindly given,
That being, thou wouldst be again, and go,
Thou know'st not, reck'st not to what region, so
On earth no more, but mingled with the skies?
Still wilt thou dream on future joy and woe?
Regard and weigh yon dust before it flies:
That little urn saith more than thousand homilies.

V.

Or burst the vanish'd hero's lofty mound;
Far on the solitary shore he sleeps:[3]
He fell, and falling nations mourn'd around;
But now not one of saddening thousands weeps,
Nor warlike-worshipper his vigil keeps
Where demi-gods appear'd, as records tell.
Remove yon skull from out the scatter'd heaps:
Is that a temple where a god may dwell?
Why even the worm at last disdains her shatter'd cell!

VI.

Look on its broken arch, its ruin'd wall,
Its chambers desolate, and portals foul:
Yes, this was once ambition's airy hall,
The dome of thought, the palace of the soul:
Behold through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,
The gay recess of wisdom and of wit,
And passion's host, that never brook'd control:
Can all, saint, sage, or sophist ever writ,
People this lonely tower, this tenement refit?

VII.

Well didst thou speak, Athena's wisest son!
«All that we know is, nothing can be known.»
Why should we shrink from what we cannot shun?
Each has his pang, but feeble sufferers groan
With brain-born dreams of evil all their own.
Pursue what chance or fate proclaimeth best;
Peace waits us on the shores of Acheron:
There no forced banquet claims the sated guest,
But silence spreads the couch of ever welcome rest.

VIII.

Yet if, as holiest men have deem'd, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore;
How sweet it were in concert to adore
With those who made our mortal labours light!
To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more!
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian sage, and all who taught the right!

IX.

There, thou!—whose love and life together fled,
Have left me here to love and live in vain—
Twined with my heart, and can I deem thee dead,
When busy memory flashes on my brain?
Well—I will dream that we may meet again,
And woo the vision to my vacant breast:
If aught of young remembrance then remain,
Be as it may futurity's behest,
For me 't were bliss enough to know thy spirit blest!

X.

Here let me sit upon this massy stone,
The marble column's yet unshaken base;
Here, son of Saturn! was thy fav'rite throne:[4]
Mightiest of many such! Hence let me trace
The latent grandeur of thy dwelling place.
It may not be: nor even can fancy's eye
Restore what time hath labour'd to deface.
Yet these proud pillars claim no passing sigh—
Unmoved the Moslem sits, the light Greek carols by.

XI.

But who, of all the plunderers of yon fane
On high, where Pallas linger'd, loth to flee
The latest relic of her ancient reign;
The last, the worst, dull spoiler, who was he?
Blush Caledonia! such thy son could be!
England! I joy no child he was of thine:
Thy free-born men should spare what once was free;
Yet they could violate each saddening shrine,
And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant brine.[5]

XII.

But most the modern Pict's ignoble boast,
To rive what Goth, and Turk, and time hath spared:[6]
Cold as the crags upon his native coast,
His mind as barren and his heart as hard,
Is he whose head conceived, whose hand prepared,
Aught to displace Athena's poor remains:
Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains,[7]
And never knew, till then, the weight of despot's chains.

XIII.

What! shall it e'er be said by British tongue,
Albion was happy in Athena's tears?
Though in thy name the slaves her bosom wrung,
Tell not the deed to blushing Europe's ears;
The ocean queen, the free Britannia bears
The last poor plunder from a bleeding land:
Yes, she, whose gen'rous aid her name endears,
Tore down those remnants with a harpy's hand,
Which envious Eld forbore, and tyrants left to stand.

XIV.

Where was thine ægis, Pallas! that appall'd
Stern Alaric and havoc on their way?[8]
Where Peleus' son? whom hell in vain enthrall'd,
His shade from Hades upon that dread day,
Bursting to light in terrible array!
What! could not Pluto spare the chief once more,
To scare a second robber from his prey?
Idly he wander'd on the Stygian shore,
Nor now preserved the walls he loved to shield e fore.

XV.

Cold is the heart, fair Greece! that looks on thee,
Nor feels as lovers o'er the dust they loved;
Dull is the eye that will not weep to see
Thy walls defaced, thy mouldering shrines removed
By British hands, which it had best behoved
To guard those relics ne'er to be restored.
Curst be the hour when from their isle they roved,
And once again thy hapless bosom gored,
And snatch'd thy shrinking gods to northern climes abhorr'd!

XVI.

But where is Harold? shall I then forget
To urge the gloomy wanderer o'er the wave?
Little reck'd he of all that men regret;
No loved-one now in feign'd lament could rave;
No friend the parting hand extended gave,
Ere the cold stranger pass'd to other climes:
Hard is his heart whom charms may not enslave;
But Harold felt not as in other times,
And left without a sigh the land of war and crimes.

XVII.

He that has sail'd upon the dark blue sea
Has view'd at times, I ween, a full fair sight;
When the fresh breeze is fair as breeze may be,
The white sail set, the gallant frigate tight;
Masts, spires, and strand retiring to the right,
The glorious main expanding o'er the bow,
The convoy spread like wild swans in their flight,
The dullest sailer wearing bravely now,
So gaily curl the waves before each dashing prow.

XVIII.

And oh, the little warlike world within!
The well-reeved guns, the netted canopy,[9]
The hoarse command, the busy humming din,
When, at a word, the tops are mann'd on high:
Hark to the boatswain's call, the cheering cry!
While through the seaman's hand the tackle glides:
Or school-boy midshipman that, standing by,
Strains his shrill pipe as good or ill betides,
And well the docile crew that skilful urchin guides.

XIX.

White is the glassy deck, without a stain,
Where on the watch the staid lieutenant walks:
Look on that part which sacred doth remain
For the lone chieftain, who majestic stalks,
Silent and fear'd by all—not oft he talks
With aught beneath him, if he would preserve
That strict restraint, which broken, ever balks
Conquest and fame: but Britons rarely swerve
From law, however stern, which tends their strength to nerve.

XX.

Blow! swiftly blow, thou keel-compelling gale!
Till the broad sun withdraws his lessening ray;
Then must the pennant-bearer slacken sail,
That lagging barks may make their lazy way.
Ah! grievance sore, and listless dull delay,
To waste on sluggish hulks the sweetest breeze!
What leagues are lost before the dawn of day,
Thus loitering pensive on the willing seas,
The flapping sail haul'd down to halt for logs like these!

XXI.

The moon is up; by Heaven a lovely eve!
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh, and maids believe:
Such be our fate when we return to land!
Meantime some rude Arion's restless hand
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure featly move,
Thoughtless, as if on shore they still were free to rove.

XXII.

Through Calpe's straits survey the steepy shore;
Europe and Afric on each other gaze!
Lands of the dark-eyed maid and dusky Moor
Alike beheld beneath pale Hecate's blaze:
How softly on the Spanish shore she plays,
Disclosing rock, and slope, and forest brown,
Distinct, though darkening with her waning phase;
But Mauritania's giant-shadows frown,
From mountain-cliff to coast descending sombre down.

XXIII.

'T is night, when meditation bids us feel
We once have loved, though love is at an end:
The heart, lone mourner of its baffled zeal,
Though friendless now, will dream it had a friend.
Who with the weight of years would wish to bend,
When youth itself survives young love and joy?
Alas! when mingling souls forget to blend,
Death hath but little left him to destroy!
Ah! happy years! once more who would not be a boy?

XXIV.

Thus bending o'er the vessel's laving side,
To gaze on Dian's wave-reflected sphere;
The soul forgets her schemes of hope and pride,
And flies unconscious o'er each backward year.
None are so desolate but something dear,
Dearer than self, possesses or possess'd
A thought, and claims the homage of a tear;
A flashing pang! of which the weary breast
Would still, albeit in vain, the heavy heart divest.

XXV.

To sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er, or rarely been;
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with nature's charms, and view her stores unroll'd.

XXVI.

But 'midst the crowd, the hum, the shock of men,
To hear, to see, to feel, and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none who bless us, none whom we can bless;
Minions of splendour shrinking from distress!
None that, with kindred consciousness endued,
If we were not, would seem to smile the less
Of all that flatter'd, follow'd, sought, and sued;
This is to be alone; this, this is solitude!

XXVII.

More blest the life of godly eremite,
Such as on lonely Athos may be seen,
Watching at eve upon the giant height,
Which looks o'er waves so blue, skies so serene,
That he who there at such an hour hath been
Will wistful linger on that hallow'd spot;
Then slowly tear him from the 'witching scene,
Sigh forth one wish that such had been his lot,
Then turn to hate a world he had almost forgot.

XXVIII.

Pass we the long, unvarying course, the track
Oft trod, that never leaves a trace behind;
Pass we the calm, the gale, the change, the tack,
And each well-known caprice of wave and wind;
Pass we the joys and sorrows sailors find,
Coop'd in their winged sea-girt citadel;
The foul, the fair, the contrary, the kind,
As breezes rise and fall and billows swell,
Till on some jocund morn—lo, land! and all is well.

XXIX.

But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,
The sister tenants of the middle deep;
There for the weary still a haven smiles,
Though the fair goddess long hath ceased to weep,
And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to keep
For him who dared prefer a mortal bride:
Here, too, his boy essay'd the dreadful leap
Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder tide;
While thus of both bereft, the nymph-queen doubly sigh'd.

XXX.

Her reign is past, her gentle glories gone:
But trust not this; too easy youth, beware!
A mortal sovereign holds her dangerous throne,
And thou may'st find a new Calypso there.
Sweet Florence! could another ever share
This wayward, loveless heart, it would be thine:
But check'd by every tie, I may not dare
To cast a worthless offering at thy shrine,
Nor ask so dear a breast to feel one pang for mine.

XXXI.

Thus Harold deem'd, as on that lady's eye
He look'd, and met its beam without a thought,
Save admiration glancing harmless by:
Love kept aloof, albeit nor far remote,
Who knew his votary often lost and caught,
But knew him as his worshipper no more,
And ne'er again the boy his bosom sought:
Since now he vainly urged him to adore,
Well deem'd the little god his ancient sway was o'er.

XXXII.

Fair Florence found, in sooth with some amaze,
One who, 't was said, still sigh'd to all he saw,
Withstand, unmoved, the lustre of her gaze,
Which others hail'd with real, or mimic awe,
Their hope, their doom, their punishment, their law;
All that gay beauty from her bondsmen claims:
And much she marvell'd that a youth so raw
Nor felt, nor feign'd at least, the oft-told flames,
Which, though sometimes they frown, yet rarely anger dames.

XXXIII.

Little knew she that seeming marble-heart,
Now mask'd in silence or withheld by pride,
Was not unskilful in the spoiler's art,
And spread its snares licentious far and wide;
Nor from the base pursuit had turn'd aside,
As long as aught was worthy to pursue:
But Harold on such arts no more relied;
And had he doated on those eyes so blue,
Yet never would he join the lover's whining crew.

XXXIV.

Not much he kens, I ween, of woman's breast,
Who thinks that wanton thing is won by sighs;
What careth she for hearts when once possess'd?
Do proper homage to thine idol's eyes;
But not too humbly, or she will despise
Thee and thy suit, though told in moving tropes:
Disguise even tenderness, if thou art wise;
Brisk confidence still best with woman copes;
Pique her and soothe in turn, soon passion crowns thy hopes.

XXXV.

'T is an old lesson; time approves it true,
And those who know it best, deplore it most;
When all is won that all desire to woo,
The paltry prize is hardly worth the cost:
Youth wasted, minds degraded, honour lost,
These are thy fruits, successful passion! these!
If, kindly cruel, early hope is crost,
Still to the last it rankles, a disease,
Not to be cured when love itself forgets to please.

XXXVI.

Away! nor let me loiter in my song,
For we have many a mountain-path to tread,
And many a varied shore to sail along,
By pensive sadness, not by fiction, led—
Climes, fair withal as ever mortal head
Imagined in its little schemes of thought;
Or e'er in new Utopias were ared,
To teach man what he might be, or he ought;
If that corrupted thing could ever such be taught.

XXXVII.

Dear nature is the kindest mother still,
Though alway changing, in her aspect mild;
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,
Her never-wean'd, though not her favour'd child.
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,
Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her path:
To me by day or night she ever smiled,
Though I have mark'd her when none other hath,
And sought her more and more, and loved her best in wrath.

XXXVIII.

Land of Albania! where Iskander rose,
Theme of the young, and beacon of the wise,
And he, his name-sake, whose oft-baffled foes
Shrunk from his deeds of chivalrous emprize:
Land of Albania![11] let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men!
The cross descends, thy minarets arise,
And the pale crescent sparkles in the glen,
Through many a cypress grove within each city's ken.

XXXIX.

Childe Harold sail'd, and pass'd the barren spot[12]
Where sad Penelope o'erlook'd the wave;
And onward view'd the mount, not yet forgot
The lover's refuge, and the Lesbian's grave.
Dark Sappho! could not verse immortal save
That breast imbued with such immortal fire?
Could she not live who life eternal gave?
If life eternal may await the lyre,
That only heaven to which earth's children may aspire.

XL.

'T was on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
Childe Harold hail'd Leucadia's cape afar:
A spot he long'd to see, nor cared to leave:
Oft did he mark the scenes of vanish'd war,
Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar;[13]
Mark them unmoved, for he would not delight
(Born beneath some remote inglorious star)
In themes of bloody fray, or gallant fight,
But loathed the bravo's trade, and laugh'd at martial wight.

XLI.

But when he saw the evening star above
Leucadia's far-projecting rock of woe,
And hail'd the last resort of fruitless love,[14]
He felt, or deem'd he felt, no common glow:
And as the stately vessel glided slow
Beneath the shadow of that ancient mount,
He watch'd the billows' melancholy flow,
And, sunk albeit in thought as he was wont,
More placid seem'd his eye, and smooth his pallid front.

XLII.

Morn dawns; and with it stern Albania's hills,
Dark Suli's rocks, and Pindus' inland peak,
Robed half in mist, bedew'd with snowy rills,
Array'd in many a dun and purple streak,
Arise; and, as the clouds along them break,
Disclose the dwelling of the mountaineer:
Here roams the wolf, the eagle whets his beak,
Birds, beasts of prey, and wilder men appear,
And gathering storms around convulse the closing year.

XLIII.

Now Harold felt himself at length alone,
And bade to christian tongues a long adieu;
Now he adventured on a shore unknown,
Which all admire, but many dread to view;
His breast was arm'd 'gainst fate, his wants were few;
Peril he sought not, but ne'er shrank to meet,
The scene was savage, but the scene was new;
This made the ceaseless toil of travel sweet,
Beat back keen winter's blast, and welcomed summer's heat.

XLIV.

Here the red cross, for still the cross is here,
Though sadly scoff'd at by the circumcised,
Forgets that pride to pamper'd priesthood dear;
Churchman and votary alike despised.
Foul superstition! howsoe'er disguised,
Idol, saint, virgin, prophet, crescent, cross,
For whatsoever symbol thou art prized,
Thou sacerdotal gain, but general loss!
Who from true worship's gold can separate thy dross?

XLV.

Ambracia's gulph behold, where once was lost
A world for woman, lovely, harmless thing!
In yonder rippling bay, their naval host
Did many a Roman chief and Asian king[15]
To doubtful conflict, certain slaughter bring:
Look where the second Cæsar's trophies rose![16]
Now, like the hands that rear'd them, withering:
Imperial anarchs, doubling human woes!
God! was thy globe ordain'd for such to win and lose?

XLVI.

From the dark barriers of that rugged clime,
Even to the centre of Illyria's vales,
Childe Harold pass'd o'er many a mount sublime,
Through lands scarce noticed in historic tales;
Yet in famed Attica such lovely dales
Are rarely seen; nor can fair Tempe boast
A charm they know not; loved Parnassus fails,
Though classic ground and consecrated most,
To match some spots that lurk within this lowering coast.

XLVII.

He pass'd bleak Pindus, Acherusia's lake,[17]
And left the primal city of the land,
And onwards did his further journey take
To greet Albania's chief,[18] whose dread command
Is lawless law; for with a bloody hand
He sways a nation, turbulent and bold:
Yet here and there some daring mountain-band
Disdain his power, and from their rocky hold
Hurl their defiance far, nor yield, unless to gold.[19]

XLVIII.

Monastic Zitza![20] from thy shady brow,
Thou small, but favour'd spot of holy ground!
Where'er we gaze, around, above, below,
What rainbow tints, what magic charms are found!
Rock, river, forest, mountain, all abound,
And bluest skies that harmonize the whole:
Beneath, the distant torrent's rushing sound
Tells where the volumed cataract doth roll
Between those hanging rocks, that shock yet please the soul.

XLIX.

Amidst the grove that crowns yon tufted hill,
Which, were it not for many a mountain nigh
Rising in lofty ranks, and loftier still,
Might well itself be deem'd of dignity,
The convent's white walls glisten fair on high:
Here dwells the caloyer,[21] nor rude is he,
Nor niggard of his cheer; the passer by
Is welcome still; nor heedless will he flee
From hence, if he delight kind nature's sheen to see.

L.

Here in the sultriest season let him rest,
Fresh is the green beneath those aged trees;
Here winds of gentlest wing will fan his breast,
From heaven itself he may inhale the breeze:
The plain is far beneath—oh! let him seize
Pure pleasure while he can; the scorching ray
Here pierceth not, impregnate with disease:
Then let his length the loitering pilgrim lay,
And gaze, untired, the morn, the noon, the eve away.

LI.

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,[22]
Chimæra's Alps extend from left to right:
Beneath, a living valley seems to stir;
Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mountain fir
Nodding above: behold black Acheron![23]
Once consecrated to the sepulchre.
Pluto! if this be hell I look upon,
Close shamed Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek for none!

LII.

No city's towers pollute the lovely view;
Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,
Veil'd by the screen of hills! here men are few,
Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot;
But, peering down each precipice, the goat
Browseth: and, pensive o'er his scatter'd flock,
The little shepherd in his white capote[24]
Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,
Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shock.

LIII.

Oh! where, Dodona! is thine aged grove,
Prophetic fount, and oracle divine?
What valley echoed the response of Jove?
What trace remaineth of the Thunderer's shrine?
All, all forgotten—and shall man repine
That his frail bonds to fleeting life are broke?
Cease, fool! the fate of gods may well be thine:
Wouldst thou survive the marble or the oak?
When nations, tongues, and worlds must sink beneath the stroke!

LIV.

Epirus' bounds recede, and mountains fail;
Tired of up-gazing still, the wearied eye
Reposes gladly on as smooth a vale
As ever spring yclad in grassy dye:
Even on a plain no humble beauties lie,
Where some bold river breaks the long expanse,
And woods along the banks are waving high,
Whose shadows in the glassy waters dance,
Or with the moon-beams sleep in midnight's solemn trance.

LV.

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit,[25]
And Laos wide and fierce came roaring by;[26]
The shades of wonted night were gathering yet,
When, down the steep banks winding warily,
Childe Harold saw, like meteors in the sky,
The glittering minarets of Tepalen,
Whose walls o'erlook the stream; and drawing nigh,
He heard the busy hum of warrior-men
Swelling the breeze that sigh'd along the lengthening glen.

LVI.

He pass'd the sacred haram's silent tower,
And underneath the wide o'erarching gate
Survey'd the dwelling of this chief of power,
Where all around proclaim'd his high estate.
Amidst no common pomp the despot sate,
While busy preparations shook the court,
Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons wait;
Within, a palace, and without, a fort:
Here men of every clime appear to make resort.

LVII.

Richly caparison'd, a ready row
Of armed horse, and many a warlike store
Circled the wide-extending court below:
Above, strange groups adorn'd the corridor;
And oft-times through the Area's echoing door
Some high-capp'd Tartar spurr'd his steed away:
The Turk, the Greek, the Albanian, and the Moor,
Here mingled in their many-hued array,
While the deep war-drum's sound announced the close of day.

LVIII.

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,
With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
And gold-embroider'd garments, fair to see;
The crimson-scarfed men of Macedon;
The Delhi with his cap of terror on,
And crooked glaive; the lively, supple Greek;
And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son;
The bearded Turk that rarely deigns to speak,
Master of all around, too potent to be meek,

LIX.

Are mix'd conspicuous: some recline in groups,
Scanning the motley scene that varies round;
There some grave Moslem to devotion stoops,
And some that smoke, and some that play, are found;
Here the Albanian proudly treads the ground;
Half whispering there the Greek is heard to prate;
Hark! from the mosque the nightly solemn sound,
The Muezzin's call doth shake the minaret,
«There is no god but God!—to prayer—lo! God is great!»

LX.

Just at this season Ramazani's fast
Through the long day its penance did maintain:
But when the lingering twilight hour was past,
Revel and feast assumed the rule again:
Now all was bustle, and the menial train
Prepared and spread the plenteous board within;
The vacant gallery now seem'd made in vain,
But from the chambers came the mingling din,
As page and slave anon were passing out and in.

LXI.

Here woman's voice is never heard: apart,
And scarce permitted, guarded, veil'd, to move,
She yields to one her person and her heart,
Tamed to her cage, nor feels a wish to rove:
For, not unhappy in her master's love,
And joyful in a mother's gentlest cares,
Blest cares! all other feelings far above!
Herself more sweetly rears the babe she bears,
Who never quits the breast no meaner passion shares.

LXII.

In marble-paved pavilion, where a spring
Of living water from the centre rose,
Whose bubbling did a genial freshness fling,
And soft voluptuous couches breathed repose,
Ali reclined, a man of war and woes;
Yet in his lineaments ye cannot trace,
While gentleness her milder radiance throws
Along that aged venerable face,
The deeds that lurk beneath, and stain him with disgrace.

LXIII.

It is not that yon hoary lengthening beard
Ill suits the passions which belong to youth;
Love conquers age—so Hafiz hath averr'd,
So sings the Teian, and he sings in sooth—
But crimes that scorn the tender voice of Ruth,
Beseeming all men ill, but most the man
In years, have mark'd him with a tiger's tooth;
Blood follows blood, and, through their mortal span,
In bloodier acts conclude those who with blood began.

LXIV.

'Mid many things most new to ear and eye
The pilgrim rested here his weary feet,
And gazed around on Moslem luxury,
Till quickly wearied with that spacious seat
Of wealth and wantonness, the choice retreat
Of sated grandeur from the city's noise:
And were it humbler it in sooth were sweet;
But peace abhorreth artificial joys,
And pleasure, leagued with pomp, the zest of both destroys.

LXV.

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
Who can so well the toil of war endure?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need:
Their wrath how deadly! but their friendship sure,
When gratitude or valour bids them bleed,
Unshaken rushing on where'er their chief may lead.

LXVI.

Childe Harold saw them in their chieftain's tower
Thronging to war in splendour and success;
And after view'd them, when, within their power,
Himself awhile the victim of distress;
That saddening hour when bad men hotlier press:
But these did shelter him beneath their roof,
When less barbarians would have cheer'd him less,
And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof—[27]
In aught that tries the heart how few withstand the proof!

LXVII.

It chanced that adverse winds once drove his bark
Full on the coast of Suli's shaggy shore,
When all around was desolate and dark;
To land was perilous, to sojourn more;
Yet for awhile the mariners forbore,
Dubious to trust where treachery might lurk:
At length they ventured forth, though doubting sore
That those who loathe alike the Frank and Turk
Might once again renew their ancient butcher-work.

LXVIII.

Vain fear! the Suliotes stretch'd the welcome hand,
Led them o'er rocks and past the dangerous swamp,
Kinder than polish'd slaves though not so bland,
And piled the hearth, and wrung their garments damp,
And fill'd the bowl, and trimm'd the cheerful lamp,
And spread their fare; though homely, all they had:
Such conduct bears philanthropy's rare stamp—
To rest the weary and to soothe the sad,
Doth lesson happier men, and shames at least the bad.

LXIX.

It came to pass, that when he did address
Himself to quit at length this mountain-land,
Combined marauders half-way barr'd egress,
And wasted far and near with glaive and brand;
And therefore did he take a trusty band
To traverse Acarnania's forest wide,
In war well season'd, and with labours tann'd,
Till he did greet white Achelous' tide,
And from his further bank Ætolia's wolds espied.

LXX.

Where lone Utraikey forms its circling cove,
And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast,
As winds come lightly whispering from the west,
Kissing, not ruffling, the blue deep's serene.—
Here Harold was received a welcome guest,
Nor did he pass unmoved the gentle scene,
For many a joy could he from night's soft presence glean.

LXXI.

On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,[28]
And he that unawares had there ygazed
With gaping wonderment had stared aghast;
For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past
The native revels of the troop began;
Each Palikar[29] his sabre from him cast,
And bounding hand in hand, man link'd to man,
Yelling their uncouth dirge, long daunced the kirtled clan.

LXXII.

Childe Harold at a little distance stood
And view'd, but not displeased, the revelric,
Nor hated harmless mirth, however rude:
In sooth, it was no vulgar sight to see
Their barbarous, yet their not indecent, glee,
And, as the flames along their faces gleam'd,
Their gestures nimble, dark eyes flashing free,
The long wild locks that to their girdles stream'd,
While thus in concert they this lay half sang, half scream'd:[30]

1.

[31] Tambourgi! Tambourgi![1] thy 'larum afar
Gives hope to the valiant, and promise of war;
All the sons of the mountains arise at the note,
Chimariot, Illyrian, and dark Suliote!

2.

Oh! who is more brave than a dark Suliote,
In his snowy camese and his shaggy capote?
To the wolf and the vulture he leaves his wild flock,
And descends to the plain like the stream from the rock.

3.

Shall the sons of Chimari, who never forgive
The fault of a friend, bid an enemy live?
Let those guns so unerring such vengeance forego?
What mark is so fair as the breast of a foe?

4.

Macedonia sends forth her invincible race;
For a time they abandon the cave and the chase:
But those scarfs of blood-red shall be redder, before
The sabre is sheathed and the battle is o'er.

5.

Then the pirates of Parga that dwell by the waves,
And teach the pale Franks what it is to be slaves,
Shall leave on the beach the long galley and oar,
And track to his covert the captive on shore.

6.

I ask not the pleasures that riches supply,
My sabre shall win what the feeble must buy;
Shall win the young bride with her long-flowing hair,
And many a maid from her mother shall tear.

7.

I love the fair face of the maid in her youth,
Her caresses shall lull me, her music shall soothe;
Let her bring from the chamber her many-toned lyre,
And sing us a song on the fall of her sire.

[1] Drummer.

8.

Remember the moment when Previsa fell,[32]
The shrieks of the conquer'd, the conquerors' yell;
The roofs that we fired, and the plunder we shared,
The wealthy we slaughter'd, the lovely we spared.

9.

I talk not of mercy, I talk not of fear;
He neither must know who would serve the vizier:
Since the days of our prophet the crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pashaw.

10.

Dark Muchtar his son to the Danube is sped,
Let the yellow-hair'd[1] Giaours[2] view his horse-tail[3] with dread;
When his Delhis[4] come dashing in blood o'er the banks,
How few shall escape from the Muscovite ranks!

11.

Selictar![5] unsheathe then our chief's scimitar:
Tambourgi! thy 'larum gives promise of war.
Ye mountains, that see us descend to the shore,
Shall view us as victors, or view us no more!

LXXIII.

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth![33]
Immortal, though no more; though fallen, great!
Who now shall lead thy scatter'd children forth,
And long accustom'd bondage uncreate?
Not such thy sons who whilome did await,
The hopeless warriors of a willing doom,
In bleak Thermopylæ's sepulchral strait—
Oh! who that gallant spirit shall resume,
Leap from Eurota's banks, and call thee from the tomb?

LXXIV.

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow[34]
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train,
Couldst thou forebode the dismal hour which now
Dims the green beauties of thine Attic plain?
Not thirty tyrants now enforce the chain,
But every carle can lord it o'er thy land;
Nor rise thy sons, but idly rail in vain,
Trembling beneath the scourge of Turkish hand,
From birth till death enslav'd; in word, in deed unmann'd.

LXXV.

In all, save form alone, how changed! and who
That marks the fire still sparkling in each eye,
Who but would deem their bosoms burn'd anew
With thy unquenched beam, lost liberty!
And many dream withal the hour is nigh
That gives them back their father's heritage:
For foreign arms and aid they fondly sigh,
Nor solely dare encounter hostile rage,
Or tear their name defiled from slavery's mournful page.

[1] Yellow is the epithet given to the Russians
[2] Infidel.
[3] Horse-tails are the insignia of a Pacha
[4] Horsemen, answering to our forlorn hope.
[5] Sword-bearer.

LXXVI.

Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free themselves must strike the blow?
By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress ye? no!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will freedom's altars flame.
Shades of the Helots! triumph o'er your foe!
Greece! change thy lords, thy state is still the same;
Thy glorious day is o'er, but not thine years of shame.

LXXVII.

The city won for Allah from the Giaour,
The Giaour from Othman's race again may wrest;
And the Serai's impenetrable tower
Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest;[35]
Or Wahab's rebel brood who dared divest
The[36] prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil,
May wind their path of blood along the West;
But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

LXXVIII.

Yet mark their mirth—ere lenten days begin,
That penance which their holy rites prepare
To shrive from man his weight of mortal sin,
By daily abstinence and nightly prayer;
But ere his sackcloth garb repentance wear,
Some days of joyaunce are decreed to all,
To take of pleasaunce each his secret share,
In motley robe to dance at masking ball,
And join the mimic train of merry Carnival.

LXXIX.

And whose more rife with merriment than thine,
Oh Stamboul! once the empress of their reign?
Though turbans now pollute Sophia's shrine,
And Greece her very altars eyes in vain:
(Alas! her woes will still pervade my strain!)
Gay were her minstrels once, for free her throng,
All felt the common joy they now must feign,
Nor oft I've seen such sight nor heard such song,
As woo'd the eye, and thrill'd the Bosphorus along.

LXXX.

Loud was the lightsome tumult of the shore,
Oft music changed, but never ceased her tone,
And timely echoed back the measured oar,
And rippling waters made a pleasant moan:
The queen of tides on high consenting shone,
And when a transient breeze swept o'er the wave,
'T was, as if darting from her heavenly throne,
A brighter glance her form reflected gave,
Till sparkling billows seem'd to light the banks they lave.

LXXXI.

Glanced many a light caïque along the foam,
Danced on the shore the daughters of the land,
Ne thought had man or maid of rest or home,
While many a languid eye and thrilling hand
Exchanged the look few bosoms may withstand,
Or gently prest, return'd the pressure still:
Oh love! young love! bound in thy rosy band,
Let sage or cynic prattle as he will,
These hours, and only these, redeem life's years of ill!

LXXXII.

But, midst the throng in merry masquerade,
Lurk there no hearts that throb with secret pain,
Even through the closest searment half betray'd?
To such the gentle murmurs of the main
Seem to re-echo all they mourn in vain;
To such the gladness of the gamesome crowd
Is source of wayward thought and stern disdain:
How do they loathe the laughter idly loud,
And long to change the robe of revel for the shroud?

LXXXIII.

This must he feel, the true-born son of Greece,
If Greece one true-born patriot still can boast:
Not such as prate of war, but skulk in peace,
The bondsman's peace, who sighs for all he lost,
Yet with smooth smile his tyrant can accost,
And wield the slavish sickle, not the sword:
Ah! Greece! they love thee least who owe thee most;
Their birth, their blood, and that sublime record
Of hero sires, who shame thy now degenerate horde!

LXXXIV.

When riseth Lacedemon's hardihood,
When Thebes Epaminondas rears again,
When Athens' children are with hearts endued,
When Grecian mothers shall give birth to men,
Then may'st thou be restored; but not till then.
A thousand years scarce serve to form a state;
An hour may lay it in the dust; and when
Can man its shatter'd splendour renovate,
Recall its virtues back, and vanquish time and fate?

LXXXV.

And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
Land of lost gods and godlike men, art thou!
Thy vales of ever-green, thy hills of snow[37]
Proclaim thee nature's varied favourite now:
Thy fanes, thy temples to thy surface bow,
Commingling slowly with heroic earth,
Broke by the share of every rustic plough:
So perish monuments of mortal birth,
So perish all in turn, save well-recorded worth;

LXXXVI.

Save where some solitary column mourns
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave;[38]
Save where Tritonia's airy shrine adorns
Colonna's cliff, and gleams along the wave;
Save o'er some warrior's half-forgotten grave,
Where the grey stones and unmolested grass
Ages, but not oblivion, feebly brave,
While strangers only not regardless pass,
Lingering like me, perchance, to gaze, and sigh «Alas!»

LXXXVII.

Yet are thy skies as blue, thy crags as wild;
Sweet are thy groves, and verdant are thy fields,
Thine olive ripe as when Minerva smiled,
And still his honied wealth Hymettus yields;
There the blithe bee his fragrant fortress builds,
The freeborn wanderer of thy mountain-air;
Apollo still thy long, long summer gilds,
Still in his beam Mendeli's marbles glare;
Art, glory, freedom fail, but nature still is fair.

LXXXVIII.

Where'er we tread 't is haunted, holy ground;
No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
And all the muse's tales seem truly told,
Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon:
Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone:
Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

LXXXIX.

The sun, the soil, but not the slave, the same;
Unchanged in all except its foreign lord—
Preserves alike its bounds and boundless fame
The battle-field, where Persia's victim horde
First bow'd beneath the brunt of Hellas' sword,
As on the morn to distant glory dear,
When Marathon became a magic word;[39]
Which utter'd, to the hearer's eye appear
The camp, the host, the fight, the conqueror's career,

XC.

The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow;
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above, earth's, ocean's plain below;
Death in the front, destruction in the rear!
Such was the scene—what now remaineth here?
What sacred trophy marks the hallow'd ground,
Recording freedom's smile and Asia's tear?
The rifled urn, the violated mound,
The dust thy courser's hoof, rude stranger! spurns around.

XCI.

Yet to the remnants of thy splendour past
Shall pilgrims, pensive, but unwearied, throng;
Long shall the voyager, with th' Ionian blast,
Hail the bright clime of battle and of song;
Long shall thine annals and immortal tongue
Fill with thy fame the youth of many a shore;
Boast of the aged! lesson of the young!
Which sages venerate and bards adore,
As Pallas and the muse unveil their awful lore.

XCII.

The parted bosom clings to wonted home,
If aught that 's kindred cheer the welcome hearth;
He that is lonely hither let him roam,
And gaze complacent on congenial earth.
Greece is no lightsome land of social mirth;
But he whom sadness sootheth may abide,
And scarce regret the region of his birth,
When wandering slow by Delphi's sacred side,
Or gazing o'er the plains where Greek and Persian died.

XCIII.

Let such approach this consecrated land,
And pass in peace along the magic waste:
But spare its relics—let no busy hand
Deface the scenes, already how defaced!
Not for such purpose were these altars placed:
Revere the remnants nations once revered:
So may our country's name be undisgraced,
So may'st thou prosper where thy youth was rear'd,
By every honest joy of love and life endear'd!

XCIV.

For thee, who thus in too protracted song
Hast soothed thine idlesse with inglorious lays,
Soon shall thy voice be lost amid the throng
Of louder minstrels in these later days:
To such resign the strife for fading bays—
Ill may such contest now the spirit move
Which heeds nor keen reproach nor partial praise;
Since cold each kinder heart that might approve,
And none are left to please when none are left to love

XCV.

Thou too art gone, thou loved and lovely one!
Whom youth and youth's affection bound to me;
Who did for me what none beside have done,
Nor shrank from one albeit unworthy thee.
What is my being? thou hast ceased to be!
Nor staid to welcome here thy wanderer home,
Who mourns o'er hours which we no more shall see—
Would they had never been, or were to come!
Would he had ne'er return'd to find fresh cause to roam!

XCVI.

Oh! ever loving, lovely, and beloved!
How selfish sorrow ponders on the past,
And clings to thoughts now better far removed!
But time shall tear thy shadow from me last.
All thou could'st have of mine, stern Death! thou hast;
The parent, friend, and now the more than friend:
Ne'er yet for one thine arrows flew so fast,
And grief with grief continuing still to blend,
Hath snatch'd the little joy that life had yet to lend.

XCVII.

Then must I plunge again into the crowd,
And follow all that peace disdains to seek?
Where revel calls, and laughter, vainly loud,
False to the heart, distorts the hollow cheek,
To leave the flagging spirit doubly weak;
Still o'er the features, which perforce they cheer,
To feign the plesaure or conceal the pique;
Smiles form the channel of a future tear,
Or raise the writhing lip with ill-dissembled sneer.

XCVIII.

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth, as I am now.
Before the Chastener humbly let me bow,
O'er hearts divided and o'er hopes destroy'd:
Roll on, vain days! full reckless may ye flow,
Since time hath reft whate'er my soul enjoy'd,
And with the ills of Eld mine earlier years alloy'd.

CANTO III.

"Afin que cette application vous forçât de penser à autre chose, il n'y a en vérité de remède que celui-là et le temps."

Lettre du Roi de Prusse à Dalembert, Sep. 7, 1776.

I.

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child!
Ada! sole daughter of my house and heart?
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
And then we parted,—not as now we part,
But with a hope.—
Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me; and on high
The winds lift up their voices: I depart,
Whither I know not; but the hour 's gone by,
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

II.

Once more upon the waters! yet once more!
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome, to their roar!
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead!
Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on ocean's foam, to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

III.

In my youth's summer I did sing of one,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind;
Again I seize the theme then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards: in that tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

IV.

Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar: it may be, that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing.
Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme.

V.

He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits him; nor below
Can love, or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance: he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

VI.

'T is to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.
What am I? Nothing; but not so art thou,
Soul of my thought! with whom I traverse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crush'd feelings' dearth.

VII.

Yet must I think less wildly:—I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame:
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd. 'T is too late!
Yet am I changed; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what time can not abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing fate.

VIII.

Something too much of this:—but now 't is past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last;
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds, which kill not but ne'er heal;
Yet time, who changes all, had alter'd him
In soul and aspect as in age: years steal
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

IX.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood; but he fill'd again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deem'd its spring perpetual; but in vain!
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clank'd not; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step he took, through many a scene.

X.

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd
And sheathed with an invulnerable mind,
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind;
And he, as one, might midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation! such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and nature's hand.

XI.

But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor seek
To wear it? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old?
Who can contemplate fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb?
Harold, once more within the vortex roll'd
On with the giddy circle, chasing time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

XII.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with man; with whom he held
Little in common; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quell'd
In youth by his own thoughts; still uncompell'd
He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd;
Proud though in desolation; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

XIII.

Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For nature's pages, glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

XIV.

Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties, were forgotten quite:
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from yon heaven which woos us to its brink.

XV.

But in man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing,
To whom the boundless air alone were home:
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat
Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat.

XVI.

Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of hope left, but with less of gloom;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made despair a smilingness assume,
Which, though 't were wild,—as on the plunder'd wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doom
With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck,—
Did yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.

XVII.

Stop!—for thy tread is on an empire's dust!
An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below!
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show?
None, but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow!
And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,
Thou first and last of fields! king-making victory?

XVIII.

And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo!
How in an hour the power which gave annuls
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too!
In "pride of place"[1] here last the eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through;
Ambition's life and labours all were vain;
He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.

XIX.

Fit retribution! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters;—but is earth more free?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit;
Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty?
What! shall reviving thraldom again be
The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days?
Shall we, who struck the lion down, shall we
Pay the wolf homage? proffering lowly gaze
And servile knees to thrones? No; *prove* before ye praise!

XX.

If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more!
In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with hot tears
For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards; in vain years
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,
Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
Of roused-up millions: all that most endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes the sword
Such as Harmodius[2] drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

XXI.

There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;[3]
But hush! hark! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell!

XXII.

Did ye not hear it!—No; 't was but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn when youth and pleasure meet,
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet—
But, hark!—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! arm! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar!

XXIII.

Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with death's prophetic ear;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell:
He rush'd into the field, and, foremost fighting, fell.

XXIV.

Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blush'd at the praise of their own loveliness;
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon nights so sweet such awful morn could rise?

XXV.

And there was mounting in hot haste: the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—"The foe! They come! they come!"

XXVI.

And wild and high the "Cameron's gathering" rose!
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too, have her Saxon foes:—
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrills,
Savage and shrill! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's,[4] Donald's[5] fame rings in each clansman's ears!

XXVII.

And Ardennes[6] waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear-drops, as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas!
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour, rolling on the foe,
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

XXVIII.

Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array!
The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent,
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

XXIX.

Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine;
Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd
The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,
They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young, gallant Howard!

XXX.

There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing, had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live,
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the spring
Come forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not bring.[7]

XXXI.

I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The archangel's trump, not glory's, must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honour'd but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

XXXII.

They mourn, but smile at length; and, smiling, mourn:
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall
Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone;
The bars survive the captive they enthral,
The day drags through though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on:

XXXIII.

Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shatter'd guise, and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

XXXIV.

There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison,—a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches; for it were
As nothing did we die; but life will suit
Itself to sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the[8] Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste: did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life,—say, would he name three-score?

XXXV.

The Psalmist number'd out the years of man:
They are enough; and if thy tale be *true*,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo!
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say—
"Here, where the sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day!"
And this is much, and all which will not pass away.

XXXVI.

There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,
Whose spirit antithetically mixt
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixt,
Extreme in all things! hadst thou been betwixt,
Thy throne had still been thine, or never been;
For daring made thy rise as fall: thou seek'st
Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the thunderer of the scene!

XXXVII.

Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou!
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of fame,
Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert.

XXXVIII.

Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield;
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted fate will leave the loftiest star

XXXIX.

Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye;—
When fortune fled her spoil'd and favourite child,
He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him piled.

XL.

Sager than in thy fortunes; for in them
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn which could contemn
Men and their thoughts; 't was wise to feel, not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,
And spurn the instruments thou wert to use
Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow:
'T is but a worthless world to win or lose;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

XLI.

If, like a tower upon a headlong rock,
Thou hadst been made to stand or fall alone.
Such scorn of man had help'd to brave the shock;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,
Their admiration thy best weapon shone;
The part of Philip's son was thine, not then
(Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men;
For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

XLII.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane; there is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

XLIII.

This makes the madmen who have made men mad
By their contagion; conquerors and kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, bards, statesmen, all unquiet things,
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool;
Envied, yet how unenviable! what stings
Are theirs! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule:

XLIV.

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, so sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast
With sorrow and supineness, and so die;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

XLV.

He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

XLVI.

Away with these! true wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal nature! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, corn-field, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where ruin greenly dwells.

XLVII.

And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind,
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.
There was a day when they were young and proud,
Banners on high, and battles pass'd below,
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow.

XLVIII.

Beneath these battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions; in proud state
Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.
What want these outlaws [10] conquerors should have?
But history's purchased page to call them great?
A wider space, an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave.

XLIX.

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And love, which lent a blazon to their shields,
With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief won,
Saw the discolour'd Rhine beneath its ruin run.

L.

But thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever,
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like heaven; and to seem such to me
Even now what wants thy stream?—that it should Lethe be.

LI.

A thousand battles have assail'd thy banks,
But these and half their fame have pass'd away,
And slaughter heap'd on high his weltering ranks
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glass'd with its dancing light the sunny ray;
But o'er the blacken'd memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.

LII.

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,
Yet not insensibly to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile dear:
Though on his brow were graven lines austere,
And tranquil sternness which had ta'en the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'er it in such scenes would steal with transient trace.

LIII.

Nor was all love shut from him, though his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
Hath wean'd it from all worldlings: thus he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet trust
In one fond breast, to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

LIV.

And he had learn'd to love,—I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood,—
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know;
But thus it was; and though in solitude
Small power the nipp'd affections have to grow,
In him this glow'd when all beside had ceased to glow.

LV.

And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal; and, though unwed,
That love was pure, and, far above disguise,
Had stood the test of mortal enmities
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes;
But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour:

1.

The castled crag of Drachenfels [11]
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strew'd a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou* with me!

2.

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray,
And many a rock which steeply lours,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

3.

I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine!

4.

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round;
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

LVI.

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
Our enemy's,—but let not that forbid
Honour to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

LVII.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career,—
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstept
The charter to chastise which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.[12]

LVIII.

Here Ehrenbreitstein,[13] with her shatter'd wall,
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light;
A tower of victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the plain:
But peace destroy'd what war could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to summer's rain—
On which the iron shower for years had pour'd in vain.

LIX.

Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted
The stranger fain would linger on his way!
Thine is a scene alike where souls united
Or lonely contemplation thus might stray;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where nature, nor too sombre nor too gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow earth as autumn to the year.

LX.

Adieu to thee again! a vain adieu!
There can be no farewell to scene like thine;
The mind is colour'd by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!
'T is with the thankful glance of parting praise;
More mighty spots may rise—more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of old days,

LXI.

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,
The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been
In mockery of man's art; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though empires near them fall.

LXII.

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow!
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How earth may pierce to heaven, yet leave vain man below.

LXIII.

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be pass'd in vain,—
Morat! the proud, the patriot field! where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquer'd on that plain;
Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tombless host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument;—the Stygian coast
Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd each wandering ghost.[14]

LXIV.

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage vies,
Morat and Marathon twin names shall stand;
They were true glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,
All unbought champions in no princely cause
Of vice-entail'd corruption; they no land
Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making kings' rights divine, by some Draconic clause.

LXV.

By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days;
'T is the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild bewilder'd gaze
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness; and there it stands,
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Levell'd [15] Aventicum, hath strew'd her subject lands.

LXVI.

And there—oh! sweet and sacred be the name!—
Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave
Her youth to Heaven; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in; but the judge was just,
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.[16]

LXVII.

But these are deeds which should not pass away,
And names that must not wither, though the earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and birth;
The high, the mountain-majesty of worth
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,[17]
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

LXVIII.

Lake Leman woos me with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue:
There is too much of man here, to look through
With a fit mind the might which I behold;
But soon in me shall loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd me in their fold.

LXIX.

To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind;
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong,
'Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong.

LXX.

There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul, turn all our blood to tears,
And colour things to come with hues of night;
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness: on the sea,
The boldest steer but where their ports invite,
But there are wanderers o'er eternity,
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er shall be.

LXXI.

Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love earth only for its earthly sake?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,[18]
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake;—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd to inflict or bear?

LXXII.

I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture: I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be
A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

LXXIII.

And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life:
I look upon the peopled desert past
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous, as the blast
Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.

LXXIV.

And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought? the spirit of each spot?
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot.

LXXV.

Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?
Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion? should I not contemn
All objects, if compared with these? and stem
A tide of suffering, rather than forego
Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow?

LXXVI.

But this is not my theme; and I return
To that which is immediate, and require
Those who find contemplation in the urn,
To look on One, whose dust was once all fire,
A native of the land where I respire
The clear air for a while—a passing guest,
Where he became a being,—whose desire
Was to be glorious; 't was a foolish quest,
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

LXXVII.

Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

LXXVIII.

His love was passion's essence—as a tree
On fire by lightning; with ethereal flame
Kindled he was and blasted; for to be
Thus, and enamour'd, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty, which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

LXXIX.

This breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that 's wild and sweet;
This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss
Which every morn his fever'd lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;
But to that gentle touch, through brain and breast
Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring heat;
In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest,
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possest.[19]

LXXX.

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banish'd; for his mind
Had grown suspicion's sanctuary, and chose
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.
But he was phrenzied,—wherefore, who may know?
Since cause might be which skill could never find;
But he was phrenzied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

LXXXI.

For then he was inspired, and from him came,
As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
Those oracles which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more:
Did he not this for France? which lay before
Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years?
Broken and trembling, to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers,
Roused up to too much wrath which follows o'ergrown fears,

LXXXII.

They made themselves a fearful monument!
The wreck of old opinions—things which grew
Breathed from the birth of time: the veil they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall view.
But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour re-fill'd,
As heretofore, because ambition was self-will'd.

LXXXIII.

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
They might have used it better, but, allured
By their new vigour, sternly have they dealt
On one another; pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in oppression's darkness caved had dwelt,
They were not eagles, nourish'd with the day;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

LXXXIV.

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it; and they who war
With their own hopes, and have been vanquish'd, bear
Silence, but not submission: in his lair
Fix'd passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
It came, it cometh, and will come,—the power
To punish or forgive—in *one* we shall be slower.

LXXXV.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction; once I loved
Torn ocean's roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

LXXXVI.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep; and, drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more;

LXXXVII.

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill.
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into nature's breast the spirit of her hues.

LXXXVIII.

Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

LXXXIX.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep:—
All heaven and earth are still: from the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

XC.

Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self: it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

XCI.

Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains,[20] and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Upreard of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer!

XCII.

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh night,[21]
And storm, and darkness, ye are wond'rous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

XCIII.

And this is in the night:—most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 't is black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

XCIV.

Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:—
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

XCV.

Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around: of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

XCVI.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices is the knoll
Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
But where of ye, oh tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

XCVII.

Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,—could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

XCVIII.

The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,—
And glowing into day: we may resume
The march of our existence: and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman! may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much that may give us pause, if ponder'd fittingly.

XCIX.

Clarens! sweet Clarens, birth-place of deep love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;
Thy trees take root in love; the snows above
The very glaciers have his colours caught,
And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought[22]
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks.

C.

Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,—
Undying love's, who here ascends a throne
To which the steps are mountains; where the god
Is a pervading life and light,—so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone
In the still cave and forest; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

CI.

All things are here of *him;* from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bow'd waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

CII.

A populous solitude of bees and birds,
And fairy form'd and many-colour'd things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life: the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,
Mingling, and made by love, unto one mighty end.

CIII.

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,
And make his heart a spirit; he who knows
That tender mystery, will love the more,
For this is love's recess, where vain men's woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die;
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity!

CIV.

'T was not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,
Peopling it with affections; but he found
It was the scene which passion must allot
To the mind's purified beings; 't was the ground
Where early love his Psyche's zone unbound,
And hallow'd it with loveliness: 't is lone,
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,
And sense, and sight of sweetness; here the Rhone
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have rear'd a throne.

CV.

Lausanne! and Ferney! ye have been the abodes [23]
Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name;
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame:
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder and the flame
Of heaven, again assail'd, if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

CVI.

The one was fire and fickleness, a child,
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or wild,—
Historian, bard, philosopher combined;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents: but his own
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

CVII.

The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer;
The lord of irony,—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

CVIII.

Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid;
It is not ours to judge,—far less condemn;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all,—or hope and dread allay'd
By slumber, on one pillow,—in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decay'd;
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'T will be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

CIX.

But let me quit man's works, again to read
His Maker's spread around me, and suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region, where
The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

CX.

Italia! too, Italia! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages,
Who glorify thy consecrated pages;
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still,
The fount at which the panting mind assuages
Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

CXI.

Thus far I have proceeded in a theme
Renew'd with no kind auspices:—to feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be,—and to steel
The heart against itself; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught,—
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief or zeal,—
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought;
Is a stern task of soul:—No matter,—it is taught.

CXII.

And for these words, thus woven into song,
It may be that they are a harmless wile,—
The colouring of the scenes which fleet along,
Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.
Fame is the thirst of youth,—but I am not
So young as to regard men's frown or smile,
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot;
I stood and stand alone,—remember'd or forgot.

CXIII.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me;
I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd
To its idolatries a patient knee,—
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles,—nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such; I stood
Among them, but not of them; in a shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still could,
Had I not filed [24] my mind, which thus itself subdued.

CXIV.

I have not loved the world, nor the world me,—
But let us part fair foes; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things,—hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing: I would also deem
O'er others griefs that some sincerely grieve; [25]
That two, or one, are almost what they seem,—
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

CXV.

My daughter! with thy name this song begun—
My daughter! with thy name thus much shall end—
I see thee not,—I hear thee not,—but none
Can be so wrapt in thee; thou art the friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend:
Albeit my brow thou never should'st behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart,—when mine is cold,—
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.

CXVI.

To aid thy mind's developement,—to watch
Thy dawn of little joys,—to sit and see
Almost thy very growth,—to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to thee!
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,
And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss,—
This, it should seem, was not reserved for me;
Yet this was in my nature:—as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

CXVII.

Yet, though dull hate as duty should be taught,
I know that thou wilt love me; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation,—and a broken claim:
Though the grave closed between us,—'twere the same,
I know that thou wilt love me; though to drain
My blood from out thy being, were an aim,
And an attainment,—all would be in vain,—
Still thou would'st love me, still that more than life retain.

CXVIII.

The child of love,—though born in bitterness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
These were the elements,—and thine no less,
As yet such are around thee,—but thy fire
Shall be more temper'd, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers! O'er the sea,
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me!

CANTO IV.

Visto ho Toscana, Lombardia, Romagna,
Quel monte che divide, e quel che serra
Italia, e un mare e l' altro, che la bagna.

ARIOSTO, *Satira* iii.

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ. A.M. F.R.S.

etc. etc. etc.

MY DEAR HOBHOUSE,

AFTER an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of Childe Harold, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better,—to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages of an enlightened friendship, than—though not ungrateful—I can, or could be, to Childe Harold, for any public favour reflected through the poem on the poet,—to one, whom I have known long, and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril—to a friend often tried and never found wanting;—to yourself.

In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth, and in dedicating to you in its complete, or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship, and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my past existence, but which cannot poison my future, while I retain the resource of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable—Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy: and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and a feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, and I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly, if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's «Citizen of the World,» whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined, that I had drawn a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject, are *now* a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have touched upon the present state of Italian literature, and perhaps

of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality which would induce us,—though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode,—to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to *have* run, so high, that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language—«Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la più nobile ed insieme la più dolce, tutte tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinchè la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto l'antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima.» Italy has great names still—Canova, Monti, Ugo Foscolo, Pindemonti, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzofanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of art, science, and belles lettres; and in some the very highest;—Europe—the world—has but one Canova.

It has been somewhere said by Alfieri, that «La pianta-uomo nasce più robusta in Italia che in qualunque altra terra—e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova.» Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition, a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours, that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or, if such a word be admissable, their *capabilities*, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched «longing after immortality,»—the immortality of independence. And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers' chorus, «Roma! Roma! Roma! Roma non è più come era prima,» it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me,

> «Non morrò mai corda
> Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda.»

What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus; it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the South, «Verily they *will have* their reward,» and at no very distant period.

Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever

Your obliged
And affectionate friend,
BYRON.

Venice, January 2, 1818.

I.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;[1]
A palace and a prison on each hand:
I saw from out the wave her structures rise,
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand:
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles!

II.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,[2]
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers:
And such she was;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless east
Pour'd in her lap all gems in sparkling showers
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

III.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,[3]
And silent rows the songless gondolier;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear:
Those days are gone—but beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy!

IV.

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, can not be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch! though all were o'er,
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

V.

The beings of the mind are not of clay;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence: that which fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied
First exiles, then replaces what we hate;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

VI.

Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from hope, the last from vacancy;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye:
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse.

VII.

I saw or dream'd of such,—but let them go—
They came like truth, and disappear'd like dreams;
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so:
I could replace them if I would, still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found;
Let these too go—for waking reason deems
Such over-weening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

VIII.

I' ve taught me other tongues—and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger; to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with—ay, or without mankind;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,
Not without cause; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

IX.

Perhaps I loved it well: and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctuary. I twine
My hopes of being remember'd in my line
With my land's language; if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline,—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull oblivion bar

X.

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honour'd by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head!
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
« Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.» [4]
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted,—they have torn me,—and I bleed:
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed.

XI.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord;
And annual marriage now no more renew'd,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood!
St Mark yet sees his lion where he stood [5]
Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
Over the proud place where an emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower,

XII.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—[6]
An emperor tramples where an emperor knelt;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo! [7]
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

XIII.

Before St Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun;
But is not Doria's menace come to pass? [8]
Are they *not bridled*?—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose!
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun,
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

XIV.

In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre,
Her very by-word sprung from victory,
The « Planter of the Lion,» [9] which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia! Vouch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight!
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

XV.

Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead doges are declined to dust;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals, [10]
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

XVI.

When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse, [11]
Her voice their only ransom from afar:
See! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands—his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

XVII.

Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations,—most of all,
Albion! to thee: the ocean queen should not
Abandon ocean's children; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

XVIII.

I loved her from my boyhood—she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart;
And Otway, Ratcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art,[12]
Had stamp'd her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part,
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

XIX.

I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chasten'd down, enough;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought:
And of the happiest moments which were wrought
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice! have their colours caught:
There are some feelings time can not benumb,
Nor torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

XX.

But from their nature will the tannen grow[13]
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks
Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, grey granite, into life it came,
And grew a giant tree;—the mind may grow the same.

XXI.

Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms: mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd
In vain should such example be; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood,
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

XXII.

All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd,
Even by the sufferer; and in each event
Ends:—some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd,
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again; some bow'd and bent,
Wax grey and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant:
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good or crime,
According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb:

XXIII.

But ever and anon of grief subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever: it may be a sound—
A tone of music,—summer's eve—or spring,
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound;

XXIV.

And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,
The cold—the changed—perchance the dead—anew,
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many! yet how few!

XXV.

But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins; there to track
Fallen states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of nature's heavenly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave—the lords of earth and sea,

XXVI.

The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all art yields, and nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

XXVII.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be
Melted to one vast Iris of the west,
Where the day joins the past eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still[14]
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As day and night contending were, until
Nature reclaim'd her order:—gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows.

XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till—'t is gone—and all is gray.

XXX.

There is a tomb in Arqua;—rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus. repose
The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name [15]
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

XXXI.

They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died; [16]
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years; and 't is their pride—
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain
Than if a pyramid form'd his monumental fane.

XXXII.

And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain display'd,
For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

XXXIII.

Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, whereby,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'T is solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive:

XXXIV.

Or, it may be, with demons, who impair [17]
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

XXXV.

Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 't were a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impell'd, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

XXXVI.

And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earn'd Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scatter'd the clouds away, and on that name attend

XXXVII.

The tears and praises of all time; while thine
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing; but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn—
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou mad'st to mourn:

XXXVIII.

Thou! form'd to eat, and be despised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,
Which emanated then and dazzles now
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire;
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow [18]
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

XXXIX.

Peace to Torquato's injured shade? 't was his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aim'd with her poison'd arrows; but to miss.
Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine? though all in one
Condensed their scatter'd rays, they would not form a sun.

XL.

Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The bards of hell and chivalry: first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott, the minstrel who call'd forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the north,
Sang ladye-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

XLI.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust [19]
The iron crown of laurel's mimick'd leaves;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which glory weaves [20]
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly superstition grieves,
Know that the lightning sanctifies below [21]
Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now.

XLII.

Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast [22]
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow plough'd by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful, and couldst claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

XLIII.

Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nation'd spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

XLIV.

Wand'ring in youth, I traced the path of him,[23]
The Roman friend of Rome's least mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

XLV.

For time hath not rebuilt them, but upreared
Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scatter'd light,
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage.

XLVI.

That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation: all that *was*
Of then destruction *is;* and now, alas!
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,[24]
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm.

XLVII.

Yet, Italy! through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side;
Mother of arts! as once of arms; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;
Parent of our religion! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and see to be forgiven.

XLVIII.

But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern luxury of commerce born,
And buried learning rose, redeem'd to a new morn.

XLIX.

There, too, the goddess loves in stone, and fills[25]
The air around with beauty; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality; the veil
Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What mind can make, when nature's self would fail;
And to the fond idolaters of old
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

L.

We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart.
Away!—there need no words, nor terms precise,
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
Where pedantry gulls folly—we have eyes:
Blood—pulse—and breast, confirm the Dardan shepherd's prize.

LI.

Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?
Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquish'd lord of war?
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek![26] while thy lips are
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn?

LII.

Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love,
Their full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us;—let it go!
We can recal such visions, and create,
From what has been or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

LIII.

I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable:
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell;
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

LIV.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie[27]
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos:—here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,[28]
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.[29]

LV.

These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation:—Italy!
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin:—thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray;
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

LVI.

But where repose the all Etruscan three—
Dante, and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay
Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay
In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
And have their country's marbles nought to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth entrust?

LVII.

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,[30]
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore;[31]
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
Their children's children would in vain adore
With the remorse of ages; and the crown[32]
Which Petrarch's laureat brow supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

LVIII.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd[33]
His dust,—and lies it not her great among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb
Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom!*

LIX.

And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
Did but of Rome's best son remind her more:
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire! honour'd sleeps
The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead and weeps.

LX.

What is her pyramid of precious stones?[34]
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to encrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dews
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head.

LXI.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of art's most princely shrine,
Where sculpture with her rainbow sister vies;
There be more marvels yet—but not for mine;
For I have been accustom'd to entwine
My thoughts with nature rather in the fields,
Than art in galleries: though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

LXII.

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swoln to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legions scatter'd o'er,

LXIII.

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the phrenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away![35]
None felt stern nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding sheet;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet!

LXIV.

The earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to eternity; they saw
The ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel; nature's law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

LXV.

Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath ta'en—
A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

LXVI.

But thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave [36]
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters—
A mirror and a bath for beauty's youngest daughters!

LXVII.

And on thy happy shore a temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps:
While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales.

LXVIII.

Pass not unblest the genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 't is his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With nature's baptism,—'t is to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

LXIX.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture, while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

LXX.

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald:—how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent

LXXI.

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings, through the vale:—look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,[37]

LXXII.

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,[38]
Like hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dyes, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching madness with unalterable mien.

LXXIII.

Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd more;[39]
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont-Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

LXXIV.

Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 't were for fame,
For still they soar'd unutterably high:
I 've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seem things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid.

LXXV.

For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word [40]
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

LXXVI.

Aught that recals the daily drug which turn'd
My sickening memory; and, though time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

LXXVII.

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse,
Although no deeper moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor bard prescribe his art,
Nor livelier satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

LXXVIII.

Oh Rome! my country! city of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

LXXIX.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;[41]
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress!

LXXX.

The goth, the christian, time, war, flood, and fire,
Have dealt upon the seven-hill'd city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:—
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, «here was, or is,» where all is doubly night?

LXXXI.

The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,
And knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands and cry «Eureka!» it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

LXXXII.

Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
The trebly hundred triumphs?[42] and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

LXXXIII.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on fortune's wheel,[43]
Triumphant Sylla! thou, who didst subdue
Thy country's foes ere thou would pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices, for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

LXXXIV.

The dictatorial wreath,—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,
Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was almighty hail'd!

LXXXV.

Sylla was first of victors; but our own
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell; he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free
And famous through all ages! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and, happier, yield his breath.

LXXXVI.

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crown'd him, on the self-same day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.[44]
And show'd not fortune thus how fame and sway,
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb?
Were they but so in man's, how different were his doom!

LXXXVII.

And thou, dread statue! yet existent in[45]
The austerest form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldest, 'mid the assassins' din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene?

LXXXVIII.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome![46]
She-wolf! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest:—mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's etherial dart,
And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget?

LXXXIX.

Thou dost;—but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron; and the world hath rear'd
Cities from out their sepulchres: men bled
In imitation of the things they fear'd,
And fought and conquer'd, and the same course steer'd,
At apish distance; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave,
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave—

XC.

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal; for the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould,[47]
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold;
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
At Cleopatra's feet,—and now himself he beam'd,

XCI.

And came—and saw—and conquer'd! But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be
A listener to itself, was strangely framed;
With but one weakest weakness—vanity,
Coquettish in ambition—still he aim'd—
At what? can he avouch—or answer what he claim'd?

XCII.

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait
For the sure grave to level him; few years
Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread: for *this* the conqueror rears
The arch of triumph! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd,
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow!—Renew thy rainbow, God!

XCIII.

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,[48]
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light.

XCIV.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and, rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

XCV.

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allow'd,
Averr'd, and known,—and daily, hourly seen,—
The yoke that is upon us doubly bow'd,
And the intent of tyranny avow'd,
The edict of earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne;
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

XCVI.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourish'd in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest, 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

XCVII.

But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fall.

XCVIII.

Yet, freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopp'd by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the north;
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

XCIX.

There is a stern round tower of other days,[49]
Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown;—
What was this tower of strength? within its cave
What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid?—A woman's grave.

C.

But who was she, the lady of the dead,
Tomb'd in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
Worthy a king's—or more—a Roman's bed?
What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear?
What daughter of her beauties was the heir?
How lived—how loved—how died she? Was she not
So honour'd—and conspicuously there,
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot?

CI.

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
Who love the lords of others? such have been,
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs?—for such the affections are.

CII.

Perchance she died in youth: it may be, bow'd
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death; yet shed [50]
A sunset charm around her, and illume
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

CIII.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray
On her long tresses, which might yet recal,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome——But whither would conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife; behold his love or pride!

CIV.

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou tomb! and other days come back on me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
Forms from the floating wreck which ruin leaves behind;

CV.

And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,
Built me a little bark of hope, once more
To battle with the ocean and the shocks
Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
Which rushes on the solitary shore
Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear:
But could I gather from the wave-worn store
Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI.

Then let the winds howl on! their harmony
Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
The sound shall temper with the owlet's cry,
As I now hear them, in the fading light
Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
Answering each other on the Palatine,
With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
What are our petty griefs?—let me not number mine.

CVII.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wall-flower grown
Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd
In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,
Deeming it midnight:—temples, baths, or halls?
Pronounce who can; for all that learning reap'd
From her research hath been, that these are walls—
Behold the imperial mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls. [51]

CVIII.

There is the moral of all human tales; [52]
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First freedom, and then glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.
And history, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but *one* page,—'t is better written here,
Where gorgeous tyranny had thus amass'd
All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
Heart, soul, could seek, tongue ask——away with words! draw near,

CIX.

Admire, exult—despise—laugh, weep,—for here
There is such matter for all feeling:—man!
Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear,
Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
This mountain, whose obliterated plan
The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
Of glory's gewgaws shining in the van,
Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd!
Where are its golden roofs? where those who dared to build?

CX.

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
Thou nameless column with the buried base!
What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow?
Crown me with ivy from his dwelling-place.
Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
Titus or Trajan's? No—'t is that of time:
Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
Scoffing; and apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime, [53]

CXI.

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars: they had contain'd
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,
The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,
But yielded back his conquests:—he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd
With household blood and wine, serenely wore
His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore. [54]

CXII.

Where is the rock of triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes? where the steep
Tarpeian? fittest goal of treason's race,
The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
Their spoils here? Yes; and in yon field below,
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
The forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero!

CXIII.

The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;
But long before had freedom's face been veil'd,
And anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assail'd
Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

CXIV.

Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame—
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree[55]
Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The forum's champion, and the people's chief—
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas! too brief.

CXV.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart[56]
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art
Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green, wild margin now no more erase
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prison'd in marble; bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round, fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

CXVII.

Fantastically tangled; the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems colour'd by its skies.

CXVIII.

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover;
The purple midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befel?
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamour'd goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy love—the earliest oracle!

CXIX.

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transports? could thine art
Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys—
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which cloys?

CXX.

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

CXXI.

Oh love! no habitant of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd—wearied—wrung—and riven.

CXXII.

Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation:—where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone. Can nature show so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men—
The unreach'd paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

CXXIII.

Who loves, raves—'t is youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still; as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such, yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize,—wealthiest when most undone.

CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon—unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'t is the same,
Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXV.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved,
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong:
And circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns hope to dust,—the dust we all have trod.

CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature—'t is not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see—
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

CXXVII.

Yet let us ponder boldly—'t is a base[57]
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought—our last and only place
Of refuge; this, at least, shall still be mine:
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chain'd and tortured—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind.

CXXVIII.

Arches on arches! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome.
Her Coliseum stands; the moonbeams shine
As 't were its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here, to illume
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

CXXIX.

Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given
Unto the things of earth, which time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruined battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

CXXX.

Oh time! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled—
Time! the corrector where our judgments err,
The test of truth, love,—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists, from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

CXXXI.

Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years— though few, yet full of fate:—
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not: but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn?

CXXXII.

And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Lost the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis![58]
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
Thou, who didst call the furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart?—Awake! thou shalt, and must.

CXXXIII.

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
For my ancestral faults or mine the wound
I bleed withal, and, had it been conferr'd
With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound;
But now my blood shall not sink in the ground;
To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found,
Which if *I* have not taken for the sake ——
But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

CXXXIV.

And if my voice break forth, 't is not that now
I shrink from what is suffer'd: let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak;
But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse!

CXXXV.

That curse shall be forgiveness.—Have I not—
Hear me, my mother earth! behold it, Heaven!—
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot?
Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven?
Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart riven,
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, life's life lied away?
And only not to desperation driven,
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

CXXXVI.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy,
Have I not seen what human things could do?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

CXXXVII.

But I have lived, and have not lived in vain:
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain,
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and time, and breathe when I expire;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
In hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

CXXXVIII.

The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power!
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

CXXXIX.

And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.
And wherefore slaughter'd? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

CXL.

I see before me the gladiator lie:[59]
He leans upon his hand—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won.

CXLI.

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—[60]
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire,
And unavenged?—Arise! ye Goths, and glut your ire!

CXLII.

But here, where murder breathed her bloody steam;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,[61]
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

CXLIII.

A ruin—yet what ruin! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Alas! developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

CXLIV.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head;[62]
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot—'t is on their dust ye tread.

CXLV.

"While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;[63]
When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
And when Rome falls—the world." From our own land
Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all;
Rome and her ruin past redemption's skill,
The world, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

CXLVI.

Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and blest by time;[64]
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome!
Shalt thou not last? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome!

CXLVII.

Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts!
Despoil'd yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
A holiness appealing to all hearts—
To art a model; and to him who treads
Rome for the sake of ages, glory sheds
Her light through thy sole aperture; to those
Who worship, here are altars for their beads;
And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around them close.[65]

CXLVIII.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light[66]
What do I gaze on? Nothing. Look again!
Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight—
Two insulated phantoms of the brain:
It is not so; I see them full and plain—
An old man, and a female young and fair,
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
The blood is nectar:—but what doth she there,
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare?

CXLIX.

Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where *on* the heart and *from* the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nurture, when the wife,
Blest into mother, in the innocent look,
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
No pain and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—
What may the fruit be yet?—I know not—Cain was Eve's.

CL.

But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift:—it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great nature's Nile, whose deep stream rises higher
Than Egypt's river:—from that gentle side
Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm holds no such tide.

CLI.

The starry fable of the milky way
Has not thy story's purity; it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
Where sparkle distant worlds:—Oh, holiest nurse!
No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

CLII.

Turn to the mole which Adrian rear'd on high,[67]
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
Colossal copyist of deformity,
Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's
Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
To build for giants, and for his vain earth,
His shrunken ashes raise this dome: How smiles
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth!

CLIII.

But lo! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,[68]
To which Diana's marvel was a cell—
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb!
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle—
Its columns strew the wilderness; and dwell
The hyæna and the jackall in their shade:
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd;

CLIV.

But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—
Worthiest of God, the holy and the true,
Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook his former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,
Power, glory, strength, and beauty, all are aisled
In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.

CLV.

Enter: its grandeur overwhelms thee not;
And why? it is not lessen'd; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

CLVI.

Thou movest—but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance;
Vastness which grows—but grows to harmonize—
All musical in its immensities;
Rich marbles—richer painting—shrines where flame
The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
In air with earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground—and this the clouds must claim.

CLVII.

Thou seest not all; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole;
And as the ocean many bays will make,
That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

CLVIII.

Not by its fault—but thine: our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and, greatest of the great,
Defies at first our nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

CLIX.

Then pause, and be enlighten'd; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore
The worship of the place, or the mere praise
Of art and its great masters, who could raise
What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan;
The fountain of sublimity displays
Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

CLX.

Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending:—vain
The struggle; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench; the long envenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

CLXI.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
The God of life, and poesy, and light—
The sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might,
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the deity.

CLXII.

But in his delicate form—a dream of love,
Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
And madden'd in that vision—are exprest
All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
The mind with in its most unearthly mood,
When each conception was a heavenly guest—
A ray of immortality—and stood,
Starlike, around, until they gather'd to a god!

CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from heaven
The fire which we endure, it was repaid
By him to whom the energy was given
Which this poetic marble hath array'd
With an eternal glory—which, if made
By human hands, is not of human thought;
And time himself hath hallow'd it, nor laid
One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 't was wrought.

CLXIV.

But where is he, the pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the past?
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more—these breathings are his last;
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
And he himself as nothing:—if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
His shadow fades away into destruction's mass,

CLXV.

Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud
Between us sinks, and all which ever glow'd,
Till glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than saddest night, for they distract the gaze,

CLXVI.

And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolved to something less than this
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear,—but never more,
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

CLXVII.

Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground,
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

CLXVIII.

Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever: with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles, so full it seem'd to cloy.

CLXIX.

Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
O thou that wert so happy, so adored!
Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
And freedom's heart, grown heavy, cease to hoard
Her many griefs for ONE; for she had pour'd
Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed!
The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

CLXX.

Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
The fair-hair'd daughter of the isles is laid,
The love of millions! How we did entrust
Futurity to her! and, though it must
Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
Like stars to shepherds' eyes—'twas but a meteor beam'd.

CLXXI.

Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
The fickle wreath of popular breath, the tongue
Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate[69]
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

CLXXII.

These might have been her destiny; but no,
Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe;
But now a bride and mother—and now *there!*
How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is link'd the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

CLXXIII.

[70] Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from his foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And, calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake,

CLXXIV.

And near Albano's scarce divided waves,
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
"Arms and the man," whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire;—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome;—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight.[71]

CLXXV.

But I forget.—My pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

CLXXVI.

Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many, since have done
Their work on both; some suffering and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run,
We have had our reward—and it is here;
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

CLXXVII.

Oh! that the desert were my dwelling place,
With one fair spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less, but nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet can not all conceal.

CLXXIX.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore;—upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

CLXXX.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay

CLXXXI.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake;
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war;
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride, or spoils of Trafalgar.

CLXXXII.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wasted them while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou,
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

CLXXXIII.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving;—boundless, endless, and sublime—
The image of eternity—the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

CLXXXIV.

And I have loved thee, ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'t was a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

CLXXXV.

My task is done—my song hath ceased—my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream.
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ,—
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt, is fluttering, faint, and low.

CLXXXVI.

Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop-shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain.

NOTES.

CANTO I.

Note 1. Stanza i.

Yes! sigh'd o'er Delphi's long-deserted shrine.

The little village of Castri stands partly on the site of Delphi. Along the path of the mountain, from Chrysso, are the remains of sepulchres hewn in and from the rock: « One,» said the guide, « of a king who broke his neck hunting.» His Majesty had certainly chosen the fittest spot for such an achievement.

A little above Castri is a cave, supposed the Pythian, of immense depth; the upper part of it is paved, and now a cow-house.

On the other side of Castri stands a Greek monastery; some way above which is the cleft in the rock, with a range of caverns difficult of ascent, and apparently leading to the interior of the mountain: probably to the Corycian Cavern mentioned by Pausanias. From this part descend the fountain and the « Dews of Castalie.»

Note 2. Stanza xx.

And rest ye at « our Lady's house of woe.»

The Convent of «Our Lady of Punishment,» *Nossa Señora de Pena*,[1] on the summit of the rock. Below, at some distance, is the Cork Convent, where St Honorius dug his den, over which is his epitaph. From the hills, the sea adds to the beauty of the view.

Note 3. Stanza xxi.

Throughout this purple land, where law secures not life.

It is a well known fact, that, in the year 1809, the assassinations in the streets of Lisbon and its vicinity were not confined by the Portuguese to their countrymen; but that Englishmen were daily butchered: and so far from redress being obtained, we were requested not to interfere if we perceived any compatriot defending himself against his allies. I was once stopped in the way to the theatre at eight o'clock in the evening, when the streets were not more empty than they generally are at that hour, opposite to an open shop, and in a carriage with a friend; had we not fortunately been armed, I have not the least doubt that we should have adorned a tale instead of telling one. The crime of assassination is not confined to Portugal: in Sicily and Malta we are knocked on the head at a handsome average nightly, and not a Sicilian or Maltese is ever punished!

Note 4. Stanza xxiv.

Behold the hall where chiefs were late convened!

The Convention of Cintra was signed in the palace of the Marchese Marialva. The late exploits of Lord Wellington have effaced the follies of Cintra. He has, indeed, done wonders: he has perhaps changed the character of a nation, reconciled rival superstitions, and baffled an enemy who never retreated before his predecessors.

Note 5. Stanza xxix.

Yet Mafra shall one moment claim delay.

The extent of Mafra is prodigious; it contains a palace, convent, and most superb church. The six organs are the most beautiful I ever beheld in point of decoration; we did not hear them, but were told that their tones were correspondent to their splendour. Mafra is termed the Escurial of Portugal.

Note 6. Stanza xxxiii.

Well doth the Spanish hind the difference know
'Twixt him and Lusian slave, the lowest of the low.

As I found the Portuguese, so I have characterized them. That they are since improved, at least in courage, is evident.

Note 7. Stanza xxxv.

When Cava's traitor-sire first call'd the band
That dyed thy mountain streams with Gothic gore?

Count Julian's daughter, the Helen of Spain. Pelagius preserved his independence in the fastnesses of the Asturias, and the descendants of his followers, after some centuries, completed their struggle by the conquest of Grenada.

Note 8. Stanza xlviii.

No! as he speeds he chaunts, « Viva el Rey!»

« Viva el Rey Fernando!»—Long live King Ferdinand! is the chorus of most of the Spanish patriotic songs: they are chiefly in dispraise of the old king Charles, the Queen, and the Prince of Peace. I have heard many of them; some of the airs are beautiful. Godoy, the *Principe de la Paz*, was born at Badajoz, on the frontiers of Portugal, and was originally in the ranks of the Spanish Guards, till his person attracted the queen's eyes, and raised him to the dukedom of Alcudia, etc. etc. It is to this man that the Spaniards universally impute the ruin of their country.

Note 9. Stanza l.

Bears in his cap the badge of crimson hue,
Which tells you whom to shun and whom to greet.

The red cockade with « Fernando Septimo» in the centre.

Note 10. Stanza li.

The ball-piled pyramid, the ever-blazing match.

All who have seen a battery will recollect the pyramidal form in which shot and shells are piled. The Sierra Morena was fortified in every defile through which I passed in my way to Seville.

Note 11. Stanza lvi.

Foil'd by a woman's hand before a batter'd wall.

Such were the exploits of the Maid of Saragoza. When the author was at Seville she walked daily on the

[1] Since the publication of this poem, I have been informed of the misapprehension of the term *Nossa Senora de Pena*. It was owing to the want of the *tilde*, or mark over the *n*, which alters the signification of the word: with it, *Pena* signifies a rock: without it, *Pena* has the sense I adopted. I do not think it necessary to alter the passage, as, though the common acceptation affixed to it is « our Lady of the Rock,» I may well assume the other sense from the severities practised there.

Prado, decorated with medals and orders, by command of the Junta.

Note 12. Stanza lviii.

The seal love's dimpling finger hath impress'd
Denotes how soft that chin which bears his touch.
« Sigilla in mento impressa amoris digitulo
Vestigio demonstrant mollitudinem.»—Aul. Gel.

Note 13. Stanza lx.

Oh, thou Parnassus!

These stanzas were written in Castri (Delphos), at the foot of Parnassus, now called Λιακυρα—Liakura.

Note 14. Stanza lxv.

Fair is proud Seville; let her country boast
Her strength, her wealth, her site of ancient days.

Seville was the Hispalis of the Romans.

Note 15. Stanza lxx.

Ask ye, Bœotian shades! the reason why?

This was written at Thebes, and consequently in the best situation for asking and answering such a question; not as the birth-place of Pindar, but as the capital of Bœotia, where the first riddle was propounded and solved.

Note 16. Stanza lxxxii.

Some bitter o'er the flowers its bubbling venom flings.
« Medio de fonte leporum
Surgit amari aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angat.»—Luc.

Note 17. Stanza lxxxv.

A traitor only fell beneath the feud.

Alluding to the conduct and death of Solano, the Governor of Cadiz.

Note 18. Stanza lxxxvi.

« War even to the knife!»

« War to the knife,» Palafox's answer to the French General at the siege of Saragoza.

Note 19. Stanza xci.

And thou, my friend! etc.

The honourable I^r. W^**. of the Guards, who died of a fever at Coimbra. I had known him ten years, the better half of his life, and the happiest part of mine.

In the short space of one month I have lost *her* who gave me being, and most of those who had made that being tolerable. To me the lines of Young are no fiction:

« Insatiate archer! could not one suffice!
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain,
And thrice ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.»

I should have ventured a verse to the memory of the late Charles Skinner Matthews, Fellow of Downing College, Cambridge, were he not too much above all praise of mine. His powers of mind, shown in the attainment of greater honours, against the ablest candidates, than those of any graduate on record at Cambridge, have sufficiently established his fame on the spot where it was acquired, while his softer qualities live in the recollection of friends who loved him too well to envy his superiority.

CANTO II.

Note 1. Stanza i.

—Despite of war and wasting fire—

Part of the Acropolis was destroyed by the explosion of a magazine during the Venetian siege.

Note 2. Stanza i.

But worse than steel and flame, and ages slow,
Is the dread sceptre and dominion dire
Of men who never felt the sacred glow
That thoughts of thee and thine on polish'd breasts bestow.

We can all feel, or imagine, the regret with which the ruins of cities, once the capitals of empires, are beheld; the reflections suggested by such objects are too trite to require recapitulation. But never did the littleness of man, and the vanity of his very best virtues, of patriotism to exalt, and of valour to defend his country, appear more conspicuous than in the record of what Athens was, and the certainty of what she now is. This theatre of contention between mighty factions, of the struggles of orators, the exaltation and deposition of tyrants, the triumph and punishment of generals, is now become a scene of petty intrigue and perpetual disturbance, between the bickering agents of certain British nobility and gentry. «The wild foxes, the owls and serpents in the ruins of Babylon,» were surely less degrading than such inhabitants. The Turks have the plea of conquest for their tyranny, and the Greeks have only suffered the fortune of war, incidental to the bravest; but how are the mighty fallen, when two painters contest the privilege of plundering the Parthenon, and triumph in turn, according to the tenor of each succeeding firman! Sylla could but punish, Philip subdue, and Xerxes burn Athens; but it remained for the paltry antiquarian, and his despicable agents, to render her contemptible as himself and his pursuits.

The Parthenon, before its destruction in part, by fire during the Venetian siege, had been a temple, a church, and a mosque. In each point of view it is an object of regard: it changed its worshippers; but still it was a place of worship thrice sacred to devotion: its violation is a triple sacrilege. But

« Man, vain man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep.»

Note 3. Stanza v.

Far on the solitary shore he sleeps.

It was not always the custom of the Greeks to burn their dead; the greater Ajax in particular was interred entire. Almost all the chiefs became gods after their decease, and he was indeed neglected who had not annual games near his tomb, or festivals in honour of his memory by his countrymen, as Achilles, Brasidas, etc. and at last even Antinoüs, whose death was as heroic as his life was infamous.

Note 4. Stanza x.

Here, son of Saturn! was thy fav'rite throne.

The temple of Jupiter Olympius, of which sixteen columns entirely of marble yet survive: originally there were 150. These columns, however, are by many supposed to have belonged to the Pantheon.

Note 5. Stanza xi.

And bear these altars o'er the long-reluctant brine.

The ship was wrecked in the Archipelago.

Note 6. Stanza xii.

To rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time hath spared.

At this moment (January 3, 1809), besides what has been already deposited in London, an Hydriot vessel is in the Piræus to receive every portable relic. Thus, as I heard a young Greek observe in common with many of

his countrymen—for, lost as they are, they yet feel on this occasion—thus may Lord Elgin boast of having ruined Athens. An Italian painter of the first eminence, named Lusieri, is the agent of devastation; and like the Greek *finder* of Verres in Sicily, who followed the same profession, he has proved the able instrument of plunder. Between this artist and the French Consul Fauvel, who wishes to rescue the remains for his own government, there is now a violent dispute concerning a car employed in their conveyance, the wheel of which—I wish they were both broken upon it—has been locked up by the consul, and Lusieri has laid his complaint before the Waywode. Lord Elgin has been extremely happy in his choice of Signor Lusieri. During a residence of ten years in Athens, he never had the curiosity to proceed as far as Sunium,[1] till he accompanied us in our second excursion. However, his works, as far as they go, are most beautiful; but they are almost all unfinished. While he and his patrons confine themselves to tasting medals, appreciating cameos, sketching columns, and cheapening gems, their little absurdities are as harmless as insect or fox-hunting, maiden-speechifying, barouche-driving, or any such pastime: but when they carry away three or four ship-loads of the most valuable and massy relics that time and barbarism have left to the most injured and most celebrated of cities; when they destroy, in a vain attempt to tear down, those works which have been the admiration of ages, I know no motive which can excuse, no name which can designate, the perpetrators of this dastardly devastation. It was not the least of the crimes laid to the charge of Verres, that he had plundered Sicily, in the manner since imitated at Athens. The most unblushing impudence could hardly go farther than to affix the name of its plunderer to the walls of the Acropolis; while the wanton and useless defacement of the whole range of the basso-relievos, in one compartment of the temple, will never permit that name to be pronounced by an observer without execration.

[1] Now Cape Colonna. In all Attica, if we except Athens itself and Marathon, there is no scene more interesting than Cape Colonna. To the antiquary and artist sixteen columns are an inexhaustible source of observation and design; to the philosopher, the supposed scene of some of Plato's conversations will not be unwelcome; and the traveller will be struck with the beauty of the prospect over «*Isles that crown the Ægean deep*»: but for an Englishman, Colonna has yet an additional interest, as the actual spot of Falconer's Shipwreck. Pallas and Plato are forgotten in the recollection of Falconer and Campbell:

«Here in the dead of night by Lonna's steep,
The seaman's cry was heard along the deep.»

This temple of Minerva may be seen at sea from a great distance. In two journeys which I made, and one voyage to Cape Colonna, the view from either side, by land, was less striking than the approach from the isles. In our second land excursion, we had a narrow escape from a party of Mainotes, concealed in the caverns beneath. We were told afterwards, by one of their prisoners subsequently ransomed, that they were deterred from attacking us by the appearance of my two Albanians, conjecturing very sagaciously, but falsely, that we had a complete guard of these Arnaouts at hand, they remained stationary, and thus saved our party, which was too small to have opposed any effectual resistance.

Colonna is no less a resort of painters than of pirates; there

«The hireling artist plants his paltry desk,
And makes degraded nature picturesque.»
(See Hodgson's Lady Jane Grey, etc.)

But there nature, with the aid of art, has done that for herself. I was fortunate enough to engage a very superior German artist; and hope to renew my acquaintance with this and many other Levantine scenes by the arrival of his performances.

On this occasion I speak impartially: I am not a collector or admirer of collections, consequently no rival; but I have some early prepossession in favour of Greece, and do not think the honour of England advanced by plunder, whether of India or Attica.

Another noble Lord has done better, because he has done less: but some others, more or less noble, yet «all honourable men,» have done *best*, because, after a deal of excavation and execration, bribery to the Waywode, mining and countermining, they have done nothing at all. We had such ink-shed, and wine-shed, which almost ended in bloodshed! Lord E.'s «prig,»—see Jonathan Wylde for the definition of «priggism,»—quarrelled with another, *Gropius*[1] by name (a very good name too for his business), and muttered something about satisfaction, in a verbal answer to a note of the poor Prussian: this was stated at table to Gropius, who laughed, but could eat no dinner afterwards. The rivals were not reconciled when I left Greece. I have reason to remember their squabble, for they wanted to make me their arbitrator.

Note 7. Stanza xii.

Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains.

I cannot resist availing myself of the permission of my friend Dr Clarke, whose name requires no comment with the public, but whose sanction will add tenfold weight to my testimony, to insert the following extract from a very obliging letter of his to me, as a note to the above lines:

«When the last of the Metopes was taken from the Parthenon, and, in moving of it, great part of the superstructure with one of the triglyphs was thrown down by the workmen whom Lord Elgin employed, the Disdar, who beheld the mischief done to the building, took his pipe from his mouth, dropped a tear, and, in a supplicating tone of voice, said to Lusieri: Τέλος!—I was present.»

The Disdar alluded to was the father of the present Disdar.

Note 8. Stanza xiv.

Where was thine ægis, Pallas! that appall'd
Stern Alaric and Havoc on their way?

According to Zozimus, Minerva and Achilles frightened Alaric from the Acropolis; but others relate that the Gothic king was nearly as mischievous as the Scottish peer.—See CHANDLER.

Note 9. Stanza xviii.

———The netted canopy.

The netting to prevent blocks or splinters from falling on deck during action.

Note 10. Stanza xxix.

But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,

Goza is said to have been the island of Calypso.

[1] This Sr Gropius was employed by a noble Lord for the sole purpose of sketching, in which he excels; but I am sorry to say that he has, through the abused sanction of that most respectable name, been treading at humble distance in the steps of Sr Lusieri. A shipful of his trophies was detained, and, I believe, confiscated at Constantinople in 1810. I am most happy to be now enabled to state, that «this was not in his bond;» that he was employed solely as a painter, and that his noble patron disavows all connexion with him, except as an artist. If the error in the first and second edition of this poem has given the noble lord a moment's pain, I am very sorry for it; Sr Gropius has assumed for years the name of his agent; and though I cannot much condemn myself for sharing in the mistake of so many, I am happy in being one of the first to be undeceived: indeed, I have as much pleasure in contradicting this as I felt regret in stating it.

Note 11. Stanza xxxviii.

Land of Albania! let me bend mine eyes
On thee, thou rugged nurse of savage men!

Albania comprises part of Macedonia, Illyria, Chaonia, and Epirus. Iskander is the Turkish word for Alexander; and the celebrated Scanderbeg (Lord Alexander) is alluded to in the third and fourth lines of the thirty-eighth stanza. I do not know whether I am correct in making Scanderbeg the countryman of Alexander, who who born at Pella in Macedon, but Mr Gibbon terms him so, and adds Pyrrhus to the list, in speaking of his exploits.

Of Albania Gibbon remarks, that a country « within sight of Italy is less known than the interior of America.» Circumstances, of little consequence to mention, led Mr Hobhouse and myself into that country before we visited any other part of the Ottoman dominions; and with the exception of Major Leake, then officially resident at Joannina, no other Englishmen have ever advanced beyond the capital into the interior, as that gentleman very lately assured me. Ali Pacha was at that time (October, 1809) carrying on war against Ibrahim Pacha, whom he had driven to Berat, a strong fortress which he was then besieging: on our arrival at Joannina we were invited to Tepaleni, his Highness's birth-place, and favourite Serai, only one day's distance from Berat; at this juncture the vizier had made it his head-quarters.

After some stay in the capital, we accordingly followed; but though furnished with every accommodation and escorted by one of the vizier's secretaries, we were nine days (on account of the rains) in accomplishing a journey which, on our return, barely occupied four.

On our route we passed two cities, Argyrocastro and Libochabo, apparently little inferior to Yanina in size; and no pencil or pen can ever do justice to the scenery in the vicinity of Zitza and Delvinachi, the frontier village of Epirus and Albania proper.

On Albania and its inhabitants I am unwilling to descant, because this will be done so much better by my fellow traveller, in a work which may probably precede this in publication, that I as little wish to follow as I would to anticipate him. But some few observations are necessary to the text.

The Arnaouts or Albanese, struck me forcibly by their resemblance to the Highlanders of Scotland, in dress, figure, and manner of living. Their very mountains seemed Caledonian, with a kinder climate. The kilt, though white; the spare, active form; their dialect, Celtic in its sound, and their hardy habits, all carried me back to Morven. No nation are so detested and dreaded by their neighbours as the Albanese: the Greeks hardly regard them as Christians, or the Turks as Moslems; and in fact they are a mixture of both, and sometimes neither. Their habits are predatory: all are armed; and the red-shawled Arnaouts, the Montenegrins, Chimariots, and Gegdes, are treacherous; the others differ somewhat in garb, and essentially in character. As far as my own experience goes, I can speak favourably. I was attended by two, an Infidel and a Mussulman, to Constantinople and every other part of Turkey which came within my observation; and more faithful in peril, or indefatigable in service, are rarely to be found. The Infidel was named Basilius, the Moslem, Dervish Tahiri; the former a man of middle age, and the latter about my own. Basili was strictly charged by Ali Pacha in person to attend us; and Dervish was one of fifty who accompanied us through the forests of Acarnania to the banks of Acheloüs, and onward to Messalunghi in Ætolia. There I took him into my own service, and never had occasion to repent it till the moment of my departure.

When in 1810, after the departure of my friend Mr H. for England, I was seized with a severe fever in the Morea, these men saved my life by frightening away my physician, whose throat they threatened to cut if I was not cured within a given time. To this consolatory assurance of posthumous retribution, and a resolute refusal of Dr Romanelli's prescriptions, I attributed my recovery. I had left my last remaining English servant at Athens; my dragoman was as ill as myself, and my poor Arnaouts nursed me with an attention which would have done honour to civilization.

They had a variety of adventures; for the Moslem Dervish, being a remarkably handsome man, was always squabbling with the husbands of Athens; insomuch that four of the principal Turks paid me a visit of remonstrance at the Convent, on the subject of his having taken a woman from the bath—whom he had lawfully bought however—a thing quite contrary to etiquette.

Basili also was extremely gallant amongst his own persuasion, and had the greatest veneration for the church, mixed with the highest contempt of churchmen, whom he cuffed upon occasion in a most heterodox manner. Yet he never passed a church without crossing himself; and I remember the risk he ran in entering St Sophia, in Stambol, because it had once been a place of his worship. On remonstrating with him on his inconsistent proceedings, he invariably answered, «our church is holy, our priests are thieves;» and then he crossed himself as usual, and boxed the ears of the first « papas » who refused to assist in any required operation, as was always found to be necessary where a priest had any influence with the Cogia Bashi of his village. Indeed a more abandoned race of miscreants cannot exist than the lower orders of the Greek clergy.

When preparations were made for my return, my Albanians were summoned to receive their pay. Basili took his with an awkward shew of regret at my intended departure, and marched away to his quarters with his bag of piastres. I sent for Dervish, but for some time he was not to be found; at last he entered, just as Signor Logotheti, father to the ci-devant Anglo-consul of Athens, and some other of my Greek acquaintances, paid me a visit. Dervish took the money, but on a sudden dashed it to the ground; and clasping his hands, which he raised to his forehead, rushed out of the room weeping bitterly. From that moment to the hour of my embarkation, he continued his lamentations, and all our efforts to console him only produced this answer, « Μὰ φεύγει, » « He leaves me.» Signor Logotheti, who never wept before for any thing less than the loss of a para,[1] melted; the padre of the convent, my attendants, my visitors—and I verily believe that even « Sterne's foolish fat scullion,» would have left her « fish-kettle, » to sympathize with the unaffected and unexpected sorrow of this barbarian.

[1] Para, about the fourth of a farthing.

For my own part, when I remembered that, a short time before my departure from England, a noble and most intimate associate had excused himself from taking leave of me because he had to attend a relation «to a milliner's,» I felt no less surprised than humiliated by the present occurrence and the past recollection.

That Dervish would leave me with some regret was to be expected: when master and man have been scrambling over the mountains of a dozen provinces together, they are unwilling to separate; but his present feelings, contrasted with his native ferocity, improved my opinion of the human heart. I believe this almost feudal fidelity is frequent amongst them. One day, on our journey over Parnassus, an Englishman in my service gave him a push in some dispute about the baggage, which he unluckily mistook for a blow; he spoke not, but sat down, leaning his head upon his hands. Foreseeing the consequences, we endeavoured to explain away the affront, which produced the following answer:—«I *have been* a robber, I *am* a soldier; no captain ever struck me; *you* are my master, I have eaten your bread; but by *that* bread! (a usual oath) had it been otherwise, I would have stabbed the dog your servant, and gone to the mountains.» So the affair ended, but from that day forward he never thoroughly forgave the thoughtless fellow who insulted him.

Dervish excelled in the dance of his country, conjectured to be a remnant of the ancient Pyrrhic: be that as it may, it is manly, and requires wonderful agility. It is very distinct from the stupid Romaika, the dull roundabout of the Greeks, of which our Athenian party had so many specimens.

The Albanians in general (I do not mean the cultivators of the earth in the provinces, who have also that appellation, but the mountaineers) have a fine cast of countenance; and the most beautiful women I ever beheld, in stature and in features, we saw *levelling* the *road* broken down by the torrents between Delvinachi and Libochabo. Their manner of walking is truly theatrical; but this strut is probably the effect of the capote, or cloak, depending from one shoulder. Their long hair reminds you of the Spartans, and their courage in desultory warfare is unquestionable. Though they have some cavalry amongst the Gegdes, I never saw a good Arnaout horseman: my own preferred the English saddles, which, however, they could never keep. But on foot they are not to be subdued by fatigue.

Note 12. Stanza xxxix.

————And pass'd the barren spot,
Where sad Penelope o'erlook'd the wave.

Ithaca.

Note 13. Stanza xl.

Actium, Lepanto, fatal Trafalgar.

Actium and Trafalgar need no further mention. The battle of Lepanto, equally bloody and considerable, but less known, was fought in the gulf of Patras; here the author of Don Quixote lost his left hand.

Note 14. Stanza xli.

And hail'd the last resort of fruitless love.

Leucadia, now Santa Maura. From the promontory (the Lover's Leap) Sappho is said to have thrown herself.

Note 15. Stanza xlv.

——Many a Roman chief and Asian king.

It is said, that on the day previous to the battle of Actium, Anthony had thirteen kings at his levee.

Note 16. Stanza xlv.

Look where the second Cæsar's trophies rose!

Nicopolis, whose ruins are most extensive, is at some distance from Actium, where the wall of the Hippodrome survives in a few fragments.

Note 17. Stanza xlvii.

————Acherusia's lake.

According to Pouqueville the Lake of Yanina; but Pouqueville is always out.

Note 18. Stanza xlvii.

To greet Albania's chief.

The celebrated Ali Pacha. Of this extraordinary man there is an incorrect account in Pouqueville's Travels.

Note 19. Stanza xlvii.

Yet here and there some daring mountain band
Disdain his power, and from their rocky hold
Hurl their defiance far, nor yield unless to gold.

Five thousand Suliotes, among the rocks and in the castle of Suli, withstood 30,000 Albanians for eighteen years: the castle at last was taken by bribery. In this contest there were several acts performed not unworthy of the better days of Greece.

Note 20. Stanza xlviii.

Monastic Zitza! etc.

The convent and village of Zitza are four hours journey from Joannina, or Yanina, the capital of the Pachalick. In the valley the river Kalamas (once the Acheron) flows, and not far from Zitza forms a fine cataract. The situation is perhaps the finest in Greece, though the approach to Delvinachi and parts of Acarnania and Ætolia may contest the palm. Delphi, Parnassus, and, in Attica, even Cape Colonna and Port Raphti, are very inferior; as also every scene in Ionia or the Troad: I am almost inclined to add the approach to Constantinople; but from the different features of the last, a comparison can hardly be made.

Note 21. Stanza xlix.

Here dwells the caloyer.

The Greek monks are so called.

Note 22. Stanza li.

Nature's volcanic amphitheatre.

The Chimariot mountains appear to have been volcanic.

Note 23. Stanza li.

————Behold black Acheron!

Now called Kalamas.

Note 24. Stanza lii.

————In his white capote—

Albanese cloak.

Note 25. Stanza lv.

The sun had sunk behind vast Tomerit.

Anciently Mount Tomarus.

Note 26. Stanza lv.

And Laos wide and fierce came roaring by.

The river Laos was full at the time the author passed it; and, immediately above Tepaleen, was to the eye as

wide as the Thames at Westminster; at least in the opinion of the author and his fellow-traveller, Mr Hobhouse. In the summer it must be much narrower. It certainly is the finest river in the Levant; neither Acheloüs, Alpheus, Acheron, Scamander, nor Cayster, approached it in breadth or beauty.

Note 27. Stanza lxvi.

And fellow-countrymen have stood aloof.

Alluding to the wreckers of Cornwall.

Note 28. Stanza lxxi.

———The red wine circling fast.

The Albanian Mussulmans do not abstain from wine, and indeed very few of the others.

Note 29. Stanza lxxi.

Each Palikar his sabre from him cast.

Palikar, shortened when addressed to a single person, from Παλικαρι, a general name for a soldier amongst the Greeks and Albanese who speak Romaic—it means properly « a lad.»

Note 30. Stanza lxxii.

While thus in concert, etc.

As a specimen of the Albanian or Arnaout dialect of the Illyric, I here insert two of their most popular choral songs, which are generally chanted in dancing by men or women indiscriminately. The first words are merely a kind of chorus, without meaning, like some in our own and all other languages.

Bo, Bo, Bo, Bo, Bo, Bo, Naciarura, popuso.	Lo, Lo, I come, I come; be thou silent.
Naciarura na civin Ha pen derini ti hin.	I come, I run; open the door that I may enter.
Ha pe uderi escrotini Ti vin ti mar servetini.	Open the door by halves, that I may take my turban.
Caliriote me surme Ea ha pe pse dua tive.	Caliriotes[1] with the dark eyes, open the gate that I may enter.
Buo, Bo, Bo, Bo, Bo, Gi egem spirta esimiro.	Lo, lo, I hear thee, my soul.
Caliriote vu le funde Ede vete tunde tunde.	An Arnaout girl, in costly garb, walks with graceful pride.
Caliriote me surme Ti mi put e poi mi le.	Caliriot maid of the dark eyes, give me a kiss.
Se ti puta citi mora Si mi ri ni veti udo gia.	If I have kissed thee, what hast thou gained? My soul is consumed with fire.
Va le ni il che cadale Celo more, more celo.	Dance lightly, more gently, and gently still.
Plu hari ti tirete Plu huron cia pra seti.	Make not so much dust to destroy your embroidered hose.

The last stanza would puzzle a commentator: the men have certainly buskins of the most beautiful texture, but the ladies (to whom the above is supposed to be addressed) have nothing under their little yellow boots and slippers but a well-turned and sometimes very white ancle. The Arnaout girls are much handsomer than the Greeks, and their dress is far more picturesque. They preserve their shape much longer also, from being always in the open air. It is to be observed that the Arnaout is not a *written* language; the words of this song, therefore, as well as the one which follows, are spelt according to their pronunciation. They are copied by one who speaks and understands the dialect perfectly, and who is a native of Athens.

[1] The Albanese, particularly the women, are frequently termed « Caliriotes;» for what reason I enquired in vain.

Ndi sefda tinde ulavossa Vettimi upri vi lofsa.	I am wounded by thy love, and have loved but to scorch myself.
Ah vaisisso mi privi lofse Si mi rini mi la vosse.	Thou hast consumed me! Ah, maid! thou hast struck me to the heart.
Uti tasa roba stua Sitti eve tulati dua.	I have said I wish no dowry, but thine eyes and eye-lashes.
Roba stinori ssidua Qu mi sini vetti dua.	The accursed dowry I want not, but thee only.
Qurmini dua civileni Roba ti siarmi tildi eni.	Give me thy charms, and let the portion feed the flames.
Utara pisa vaisisso me simi rin ti haptí Eti mi bire a piste si gui dendroi tiltatí.	I have loved thee, maid, with a sincere soul, but thou hast left me like a withered tree.
Udi vura udorini udiri cicova cilti mora Udorini talti hollna u ede caimoni mora.	If I have placed my hand on thy bosom, what have I gained! my hand is withdrawn, but retains the flame.

I believe the two last stanzas, as they are in a different measure, ought to belong to another ballad. An idea something similar to the thought in the last lines was expressed by Socrates, whose arm having come in contact with one of his « ὑποκολπιοι, » Critobulus or Cleobulus, the philosopher, complained of a shooting pain as far as his shoulder for some days after, and therefore very properly resolved to teach his disciples in future without touching them.

Note 31. Song, stanza i.

Tambourgi! Tambourgi! thy 'larum afar, etc.

These stanzas are partly taken from different Albanese songs, as far as I was able to make them out by the exposition of the Albanese in Romaic and Italian.

Note 32. Song, stanza viii.

Remember the moment when Previsa fell.

It was taken by storm from the French.

Note 33. Stanza lxxiii.

Fair Greece! sad relic of departed worth, etc.

Some thoughts on this subject will be found in the subjoined papers.

Note 34. Stanza lxxiv.

Spirit of freedom! when on Phyle's brow
Thou sat'st with Thrasybulus and his train.

Phyle, which commands a beautiful view of Athens, has still considerable remains; it was seized by Thrasybulus previous to the expulsion of the Thirty.

Note 35. Stanza lxxvii

Receive the fiery Frank, her former guest.

When taken by the Latins, and retained for several years.—See GIBBON.

Note 36. Stanza lxxvii.

The prophet's tomb of all its pious spoil.

Mecca and Medina were taken some time ago by the Wahabees, a sect yearly increasing.

Note 37. Stanza lxxxv.

Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow—

On many of the mountains, particularly Liakura, the snow never is entirely melted, notwithstanding the intense heat of the summer; but I never saw it lie on the plains even in winter.

Note 38. Stanza lxxxvi.

Save where some solitary column mourns
Above its prostrate brethren of the cave.

Of Mount Pentelicus, from whence the marble was dug that constructed the public edifices of Athens. The modern name is Mount Mendeli. An immense cave formed by the quarries still remains, and will till the end of time.

Note 39. Stanza lxxxix.

When Marathon became a magic word—

«Siste, viator—heroa calcas!» was the epitaph on the famous Count Merci;—what then must be our feelings when standing on the tumulus of the two hundred (Greeks) who fell on Marathon? The principal barrow has recently been opened by Fauvel; few or no relics, as vases, etc. were found by the excavator. The plain of Marathon was offered to me for sale at the sum of sixteen thousand piastres, about nine hundred pounds! Alas!—«Expende—quot *libras* in duce summo—invenies!»—was the dust of Miltiades worth no more? it could scarcely have fetched less if sold by *weight*.

PAPERS REFERRED TO BY NOTE 33.

I.

Before I say any thing about a city of which every body, traveller or not, has thought it necessary to say something, I will request Miss Owenson, when she next borrows an Athenian heroine for her four volumes, to have the goodness to marry her to somebody more of a gentleman than a «Disdar Aga» (who by the by is not an Aga), the most impolite of petty officers, the greatest patron of larceny Athens ever saw (except Lord E.), and the unworthy occupant of the Acropolis, on a handsome annual stipend of 150 piastres (eight pounds sterling), out of which he has only to pay his garrison, the most ill-regulated corps in the ill-regulated Ottoman Empire. I speak it tenderly, seeing I was once the cause of the husband of «Ida of Athens» nearly suffering the bastinado: and because the said «Disdar» is a turbulent husband, and beats his wife, so that I exhort and beseech Miss Owenson to sue for a separate maintenance in behalf of «Ida.» Having premised thus much, on a matter of such import to the readers of romances, I may now leave Ida, to mention her birth-place.

Setting aside the magic of the name, and all those associations which it would be pedantic and superfluous to recapitulate, the very situation of Athens would render it the favourite of all who have eyes for art or nature. The climate, to me at least, appeared a perpetual spring; during eight months I never passed a day without being as many hours on horseback: rain is extremely rare, snow never lies in the plains, and a cloudy day is an agreeable rarity. In Spain, Portugal, and every part of the East which I visited, except Ionia and Attica, I perceived no such superiority of climate to our own; and at Constantinople, where I passed May, June, and part of July (1810), you might «damn the climate, and complain of spleen,» five days out of seven.

The air of the Morea is heavy and unwholesome, but the moment you pass the isthmus in the direction of Megara the change is strikingly perceptible. But I fear Hesiod will still be found correct in his description of a Bœotian winter.

We found at Livadia an «esprit fort» in a Greek bishop, of all free-thinkers! This worthy hypocrite rallied his own religion with great intrepidity (but not before his flock), and talked of a mass as a «Coglioneria.» It was impossible to think better of him for this: but, for a Bœotian, he was brisk with all his absurdity. This phenomenon (with the exception indeed of Thebes, the remains of Chæronea, the plain of Platea, Orchomenus, Livadia, and its nominal cave of Trophonius), was the only remarkable thing we saw before we passed Mount Cithæron.

The fountain of Dirce turns a mill: at least, my companion (who, resolving to be at once cleanly and classical, bathed in it) pronounced it to be the fountain of Dirce, and any body who thinks it worth while may contradict him. At Castri we drank of half a dozen streamlets, some not of the purest, before we decided to our satisfaction which was the true Castalian, and even that had a villanous twang, probably from the snow, though it did not throw us into an epic fever like poor Dr Chandler.

From Fort Phyle, of which large remains still exist, the Plain of Athens, Pentelicus, Hymettus, the Ægean, and the Acropolis, burst upon the eye at once; in my opinion, a more glorious prospect than even Cintra or Istambol. Not the view from the Troad, with Ida, the Hellespont, and the more distant Mount Athos, can equal it, though so superior in extent.

I heard much of the beauty of Arcadia, but excepting the view from the monastery of Megaspelion (which is inferior to Zitza in a command of country), and the descent from the mountains on the way from Tripolitza to Argos, Arcadia has little to recommend it beyond the name.

«Sternitur, et *dulces* moriens reminiscitur Argos.»

Virgil could have put this into the mouth of none but an Argive; and (with reverence be it spoken) it does not deserve the epithet. And if the Polynices of Statius, «In mediis audit duo litora campis,» did actually hear both shores in crossing the isthmus of Corinth, he had better ears than have ever been worn in such a journey since.

«Athens, says a celebrated topographer, «is still the most polished city of Greece.» Perhaps it may of *Greece*, but not of the *Greeks*; for Joannina in Epirus is universally allowed, amongst themselves, to be superior in the wealth, refinement, learning, and dialect of its inhabitants. The Athenians are remarkable for

their cunning; and the lower orders are not improperly characterized in that proverb, which classes them with « the Jews of Salonica, and the Turks of the Negropont.»

Among the various foreigners resident in Athens, French, Italians, Germans, Ragusans, etc. there was never a difference of opinion in their estimate of the Greek character, though on all other topics they disputed with great acrimony.

Mr Fauvel, the French consul, who has passed thirty years principally at Athens, and to whose talents as an artist and manners as a gentleman none who have known him can refuse their testimony, has frequently declared in my hearing, that the Greeks do not deserve to be emancipated; reasoning on the grounds of their « national and individual depravity,» while he forgot that such depravity is to be attributed to causes which can only be removed by the measure he reprobates.

Mr Roque, a French merchant of respectability long settled in Athens, asserted with the most amusing gravity: « Sir, they are the same *canaille* that existed *in the days of Themistocles!*» an alarming remark to the «Laudator temporis acti.» The ancients banished Themistocles; the moderns cheat Monsieur Roque: thus great men have ever been treated!

In short, all the Franks who are fixtures, and most of the Englishmen, Germans, Danes, etc. of passage, came over by degrees to their opinion, on much the same grounds that a Turk in England would condemn the nation by wholesale, because he was wronged by his lacquey, and overcharged by his washerwoman.

Certainly it was not a little staggering when the Sieurs Fauvel and Lusieri, the two greatest demagogues of the day, who divide between them the power of Pericles and the popularity of Cleon, and puzzle the poor Waywode with perpetual differences, agreed in the utter condemnation, « nulla virtute redemptum,» of the Greeks in general, and of the Athenians in particular.

For my own humble opinion, I am loth to hazard it, knowing, as I do, that there be now in MS. no less than five tours of the first magnitude and of the most threatening aspect, all in typographical array, by persons of wit, and honour, and regular common-place books: but, if I may say this without offence, it seems to me rather hard to declare so positively and pertinaciously, as almost every body has declared, that the Greeks, because they are very bad, will never be better.

Eton and Sonnini have led us astray by their panegyrics and projects; but, on the other hand, De Pauw and Thornton have debased the Greeks beyond their demerits.

The Greeks will never be independent; they will never be sovereigns as heretofore, and God forbid they ever should! but they may be subjects without being slaves. Our colonies are not independent, but they are free and industrious, and such may Greece be hereafter.

At present, like the Catholics of Ireland and the Jews throughout the world, and such other cudgelled and heterodox people, they suffer all the moral and physical ills that can afflict humanity. Their life is a struggle against truth; they are vicious in their own defence. They are so unused to kindness, that when they occasionally meet with it they look upon it with suspicion, as a dog often beaten snaps at your fingers if you attempt to caress him. «They are ungrateful, notoriously, abominably ungrateful!»—this is the general cry. Now, in the name of Nemesis! for what are they to be grateful? Where is the human being that ever conferred a benefit on Greek or Greeks? They are to be grateful to the Turks for their fetters, and to the Franks for their broken promises and lying counsels. They are to be grateful to the artist who engraves their ruins, and to the antiquary who carries them away: to the traveller whose janissary flogs them, and to the scribbler whose journal abuses them! This is the amount of their obligations to foreigners.

II.

Franciscan Convent, Athens, January 23, 1811.

Amongst the remnants of the barbarous policy of the earlier ages, are the traces of bondage which yet exist in different countries; whose inhabitants, however divided in religion and manners, almost all agree in oppression.

The English have at last compassionated their negroes, and, under a less bigoted government, may probably one day release their Catholic brethren: but the interposition of foreigners alone can emancipate the Greeks, who, otherwise, appear to have as small a chance of redemption from the Turks, as the Jews have from mankind in general.

Of the ancient Greeks we know more than enough; at least the younger men of Europe devote much of their time to the study of the Greek writers and history, which would be more usefully spent in mastering their own. Of the moderns, we are perhaps more neglectful than they deserve; and while every man of any pretensions to learning is tiring out his youth, and often his age, in the study of the language and of the harangues of the Athenian demagogues in favour of freedom, the real or supposed descendants of these sturdy republicans are left to the actual tyranny of their masters, although a very slight effort is required to strike off their chains.

To talk, as the Greeks themselves do, of their rising again to their pristine superiority, would be ridiculous; as the rest of the world must resume its barbarism, after re-asserting the sovereignty of Greece: but there seems to be no very great obstacle, except in the apathy of the Franks, to their becoming an useful dependency, or even a free state with a proper guarantee;—under correction, however, be it spoken, for many and well-informed men doubt the practicability even of this.

The Greeks have never lost their hope, though they are now more divided in opinion on the subject of their probable deliverers. Religion recommends the Russians; but they have twice been deceived and abandoned by that power, and the dreadful lesson they received after the Muscovite desertion in the Morea has never been forgotten. The French they dislike; although the subjugation of the rest of Europe will, probably, be attended by the deliverence of continental Greece. The islanders look to the English for succour, as they have very lately possessed themselves of the Ionian republic, Corfu excepted. But whoever appear with arms in their hands will be welcome; and when that day arrives, Heaven have mercy on the Ottomans; they cannot expect it from the Giaours.

But instead of considering what they have been, and

speculating on what they may be, let us look at them as they are.

And here it is impossible to reconcile the contrariety of opinions: some, particularly the merchants, decrying the Greeks in the strongest language; others, generally travellers, turning periods in their eulogy, and publishing very curious speculations grafted on their former state, which can have no more effect on their present lot, than the existence of the Incas on the future fortunes of Peru.

One very ingenious person terms them the « natural allies» of Englishmen; another, no less ingenious, will not allow them to be the allies of any body, and denies their very descent from the ancients; a third, more ingenious than either, builds a Greek empire on a Russian foundation, and realizes (on paper) all the chimeras of Catherine II. As to the question of their descent, what can it import whether the Mainotes are the lineal Laconians or not? or the present Athenians as indigenous as the bees of Hymettus, or as the grasshoppers, to which they once likened themselves? What Englishman cares if he be of a Danish, Saxon, Norman, or Trojan blood? or who, except a Welchman, is afflicted with a desire of being descended from Caractacus?

The poor Greeks do not so much abound in the good things of this world, as to render even their claims to antiquity an object of envy; it is very cruel then in Mr Thornton, to disturb them in the possession of all that time has left them; viz. their pedigree, of which they are the more tenacious, as it is all they can call their own. It would be worth while to publish together, and compare, the works of Messrs Thornton and De Pauw, Eton and Sonnini; paradox on one side, and prejudice on the other. Mr Thornton conceives himself to have claims to public confidence from a fourteen years' residence at Pera; perhaps he may on the subject of the Turks, but this can give him no more insight into the real state of Greece and her inhabitants, than as many years spent in Wapping, into that of the Western Highlands.

The Greeks of Constantinople live in Fanal; and if Mr Thornton did not oftener cross the Golden Horn than his brother merchants are accustomed to do, I should place no great reliance on his information. I actually heard one of these gentlemen boast of their little general intercouse with the city, and assert of himself with an air of triumph, that he had been but four times at Constantinople in as many years.

As to Mr Thornton's voyages in the Black Sea with Greek vessels, they gave him the same idea of Greece as a cruise to Berwick in a Scotch smack would of Johnny Grot's house. Upon what grounds then does he arrogate the right of condemning by wholesale a body of men, of whom he can know little? It is rather a curious circumstance that Mr Thornton, who so lavishly dispraises Pouqueville on every occasion of mentioning the Turks, has yet recourse to him as authority on the Greeks, and terms him an impartial observer. Now Dr Pouqueville is as little entitled to that appellation, as Mr Thornton to confer it on him.

The fact is, we are deplorably in want of information on the subject of the Greeks, and in particular their literature, nor is their any probability of our being better acquainted, till our intercourse becomes more intimate or their independence confirmed: the relations of passing travellers are as little to be depended on as the invectives of angry factors; but till something more can be attained, we must be content with the little to be acquired from similar sources.[1]

However defective these may be, they are preferable to the paradoxes of men who have read superficially of the ancients, and seen nothing of the moderns, such as De Pauw; who, when he asserts that the British breed of horses is ruined by Newmarket, and that the Spartans were cowards in the field, betrays an equal knowledge of English horses and Spartan men. His « philosophical observations» have a much better claim to the title of « poetical.» It could not be expected that he who so liberally condemns some of the most celebrated institutions of the ancient, should have mercy on the modern Greeks: and it fortunately happens, that the absurdity of his hypothesis on their forefathers refutes his sentence on themselves.

Let us trust, then, that in spite of the prophecies of De Pauw, and the doubts of Mr Thornton, there is a reasonable hope of the redemption of a race of men, who, whatever may be the errors of their religion and policy, have been amply punished by three centuries and a half of captivity.

III.

Athens, Franciscan Convent, March 17, 1811.

« I must have some talk with this learned Theban.»

Some time after my return from Constantinople to this city I received the thirty-first number of the Edinburgh Review as a great favour, and certainly at this distance an acceptable one, from the Captain of an English frigate off Salamis. In that number, Art. 3. containing the review of a French translation of Strabo, there are introduced some remarks on the modern Greeks and their literature, with a short account of Coray, a co-translator in the French version. On those remarks I mean to ground a few observations, and the spot where I now write will, I hope, be sufficient excuse for introducing them in a work in some degree connected with the subject. Coray, the most celebrated of living Greeks, at least among the Franks, was born

[1] A word, *en passant*, with Mr Thornton and Dr Pouqueville, who who have been guilty between them of sadly clipping the Sultan's Turkish.

Dr Pouqueville tells a long story of a Moslem who swallowed corrosive sublimate in such quantities that he acquired the name of « *Suleyman Yeyen*,» i. e. quoth the doctor, « *Suleyman, the eater of corrosive sublimate*.» « Aha,» thinks Mr Thornton (angry with the doctor for the fiftieth time) « have I caught you?»—Then, in a note twice the thickness of the doctor's anecdote, he questions the doctor's proficiency in the Turkish tongue, and his veracity in his own.—« For,» observes Mr Thornton (after inflicting on us the tough participle of a Turkish verb), « it means nothing more than *Suleyman the eater*,» and quite cashiers the supplementary « *sublimate*.» Now both are right and both are wrong. If Mr Thornton, when he next resides « fourteen years in the factory,» will consult his Turkish dictionary, or ask any of his Stamboline acquaintance, he will discover that « *Suleyman yeyen*,» put together discreetly, mean the « *Swallower of sublimate*,» without any « *Suleyman*» in the case; « *Suleyman*» signifying « *corrosive sublimate*,» and not being a proper name on this occasion, although it be an orthodox name enough with the addition of ». After Mr Thornton's frequent hints of profound orientalism, he might have found this out before he sang such pæans over Dr Pouqueville.

After this, I think « Travellers *versus* Factors» shall be our motto, though the above Mr Thornton has condemned « hoc genus omne,» for mistake and misrepresentation. « Ne Sutor ultra crepidam.» « No merchant beyond his bales.» N. B. For the benefit of Mr Thornton, « Sutor» is not a proper name.

at Scio (in the Review Smyrna is stated, I have reason to think, incorrectly), and, besides the translation of Beccaria and other works mentioned by the reviewer, has published a lexicon in Romaic and French, if I may trust the assurance of some Danish travellers lately arrived from Paris; but the latest we have seen here in French and Greek is that of Gregory Zolikogloou.[1] Coray has recently been involved in an unpleasant controversy with M. Gail,[2] a Parisian commentator and editor of some translations from the Greek poets, in consequence of the Institute having awarded him the prize for his version of Hippocrates «Περὶ ὑδάτων,» etc. to the disparagement, and consequently displeasure, of the said Gail. To his exertions literary and patriotic great praise is undoubtedly due, but a part of that praise ought not to be withheld from the two brothers Zosimado (merchants settled in Leghorn) who sent him to Paris, and maintained him, for the express purpose of elucidating the ancient, and adding to the modern, researches of his countrymen. Coray, however, is not considered by his countrymen equal to some who lived in the two last centuries: more particularly Dorotheus of Mitylene, whose Hellenic writings are so much esteemed by the Greeks, that Miletius terms him, «Μέτα τὸν Θουκυδίδην καὶ Ξενοφώντα ἀρίστος Ελλήνων.» (P. 224. Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv.]

Panagiotes Kodrikas, the translator of Fontenelle, and Kamarases, who translated Ocellus Lucanus on the Universe into French, Christodoulus, and more particularly Psalida, whom I have conversed with in Joannina, are also in high repute among their literati. The last-mentioned has published in Romaic and Latin a work on «True Happiness,» dedicated to Catherine II. But Polyzois, who is stated by the reviewer to be the only modern except Coray who has distinguished himself by a knowledge of Hellenic, if he be the Polyzois Lampanitziotes of Yanina, who has published a number of editions in Romaic, was neither more nor less than an itinerant vender of books; with the contents of which he had no concern beyond his name on the title-page, placed there to secure his property in the publication, and he was, moreover, a man utterly destitute of scholastic acquirements. As the name, however, is not uncommon, some other Polyzois may have edited the Epistles of Aristænetus.

It is to be regretted that the system of continental blockade has closed the few channels through which the Greeks received their publications, particularly Venice and Trieste. Even the common grammars for children are become too dear for the lower orders. Amongst their original works the Geography of Meletius, Archbishop of Athens, and a multitude of theological quartos and poetical pamphlets, are to be met with: their grammars and lexicons of two, three, and four languages are numerous and excellent. Their poetry is in rhyme. The most singular piece I have lately seen is a satire in dialogue between a Russian, English, and French traveller, and the Waywode of Wallachia (or Blackbey, as they term him), an archbishop, a merchant, and Cogia Bachi (or primate), in succession; to all of whom under the Turks the writer attributes their present degeneracy. Their songs are sometimes pretty and pathetic, but their tunes generally unpleasing to the ear of a Frank: the best is the famous «Δεῦτε παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων,» by the unfortunate Riga. But from a catalogue of more than sixty authors, now before me, only fifteen can be found who have touched on any theme except theology.

I am entrusted with a commission by a Greek of Athens named Marmarotouri to make arrangements, if possible, for printing in London a translation of Barthelemi's Anacharsis in Romaic, as he has no other opportunity, unless he dispatches the MS. to Vienna by the Black Sea and Danube.

The reviewer mentions a school established at Hecatonesi, and suppressed at the instigation of Sebastiani: he means Cidonies, or, in Turkish, Haivali; a town on the continent where that institution for a hundred students and three professors still exists. It is true that this establishment was disturbed by the Porte, under the ridiculous pretext that the Greeks were constructing a fortress instead of a college; but on investigation, and the payment of some purses to the Divan, it has been permitted to continue. The principal professor, named Veniamin (i. e. Benjamin), is stated to be a man of talent, but a free-thinker. He was born in Lesbos, studied in Italy, and is master of Hellenic, Latin, and some Frank languages; besides a smattering of the sciences.

Though it is not my intention to enter farther on this topic than may allude to the article in question, I cannot but observe that the reviewer's lamentation over the fall of the Greeks appears singular, when he closes it with these words: «*the change is to be attributed to their misfortunes rather than to any physical degradation.*» It may be true that the Greeks are not physically degenerated, and that Constantinople contained, on the day when it changed masters, as many men of six feet and upwards as in the hour of prosperity; but ancient history and modern politics instruct us that something more than physical perfection is necessary to preserve a state in vigour and independence; and the Greeks, in particular, are a melancholy example of the near connexion between moral degradation and national decay.

The reviewer mentions a plan, «*we believe,*» by Potemkin for the purification of the Romaic, and I have endeavoured in vain to procure any tidings or traces of its existence. There was an academy in St Petersburg for the Greeks; but it was suppressed by Paul, and has not been revived by his successor.

There is a slip of the pen, and it can only be a slip of the pen, in p. 58, No. 31, of the Edinburgh Review, where these words occur:—«We are told that when the capital of the East yielded to *Solyman*»—It may be presumed that this last word will, in a future edition, be altered to Mahomet II.[1] The «ladies of Constantinople,»

[1] I have in my possession an excellent Lexicon «τριγλωσσον,» which I received in exchange from S. G—, Esq. for a small gem: my antiquarian friends have never forgotten it, or forgiven me.

[2] In Gail's pamphlet against Coray he talks of «throwing the insolent Helleniste out of the windows.» On this a French critic exclaims, «Ah, my God! throw an Helleniste out of the window! what sacrilege!» It certainly would be a serious business for those authors who dwell in the attics: but I have quoted the passage merely to prove the similarity of style among the controversialists of all polished countries; London or Edinburgh could hardly parallel this Parisian ebullition.

[1] In a former number of the Edinburgh Review, 1808, it is observed, «Lord Byron passed some of his early years in Scotland, where he might have learned that *pibroch* does not mean a *bagpipe*, any more than *duet* means a *fiddle*.» Query,—Was it in Scotland that the young gentlemen of the Edinburgh Review *learned* that

it seems, at that period spoke a dialect, «which would not have disgraced the lips of an Athenian.» I do not know how that might be, but am sorry to say the ladies in general, and the Athenians in particular, are much altered; being far from choice either in their dialect or expressions, as the whole Attic race are barbarous to a proverb:

«Ω Αθηνα προτη χωρα
Τι γαιδαρους τρεφεις τωρα.»

In Gibbon, vol. x. p. 161, is the following sentence:—«The vulgar dialect of the city was gross and barbarous, though the compositions of the church and palace sometimes affected to copy the purity of the Attic models.» Whatever may be asserted on the subject, it is difficult to conceive that the «ladies of Constantinople,» in the reign of the last Cæsar, spoke a purer dialect that Anna Comnena wrote three centuries before: and those royal pages are not esteemed the best models of composition, although the princess γλωτταν ειχεν ΑΚΡΙΒΩΣ Αττικιζουσαν. In the Fanal, and in Yanina, the best Greek is spoken: in the latter there is a flourishing school under the direction of Psalida.

There is now in Athens a pupil of Psalida's, who is making a tour of observation through Greece: he is intelligent, and better educated than a fellow-commoner of most colleges. I mention this as a proof that the spirit of inquiry is not dormant amongst the Greeks.

The reviewer mentions Mr Wright, the author of the beautiful poem «Horæ Ionicæ,» as qualified to give details of these nominal Romans and degenerate Greeks, and also of their language: but Mr Wright, though a good poet and an able man, has made a mistake where he states the Albanian dialect of the Romaic to approximate nearest to the Hellenic: for the Albanian's speak a Romaic as notoriously corrupt as the Scotch of Aberdeenshire, or the Italian of Naples. Yanina (where, next to the Fanal, the Greek is purest) although the capital of Ali Pacha's dominions, is not in Albania but Epirus: and beyond Delvinachi in Albania Proper up to Argyrocastro and Tepaleen (beyond which I did not advance) they speak worse Greek than even the Athenians. I was attended for a year and a half by two of these singular mountaineers, whose mother tongue is Illyric, and I never heard them or their countrymen (whom I have seen, not only at home, but to the amount of twenty thousand in the army of Veli Pacha) praised for their Greek, but often laughed at for their provincial barbarisms.

I have in my possession about twenty-five letters, amongst which some from the Bey of Corinth, written to me by Notaras, the Cogia Bachi, and others by the dragoman of the Caimacam of the Morea (which last governs in Veli Pacha's absence) are said to be favourable specimens of their epistolary style. I also received some at Constantinople from private persons, written in a most hyperbolical style, but in the true antique character.

The reviewer proceeds, after some remarks on the tongue in its past and present state, to a paradox (page 59) on the great mischief the knowledge of his own language has done to Coray, who, it seems, is less likely to understand the ancient Greek, because he is perfect master of the modern! This observation follows a paragraph, recommending, in explicit terms, the study of the Romaic, as «a powerful auxiliary,» not only to the traveller and foreign merchant, but also to the classical scholar; in short, to every body except the only person who can be thoroughly acquainted with its uses: and by a parity of reasoning, our old language is conjectured to be probably more attainable by «foreigners» than by ourselves! Now I am inclined to think, that a Dutch Tyro in our tongue (albeit himself of Saxon blood) would be sadly perplexed with «Sir Tristrem,» or any other given «Auchinlech MS.» with or without a grammar or glossary; and to most apprehensions it seems evident, that none but a native can acquire a competent, far less complete, knowledge of our obsolete idioms. We may give the critic credit for his ingenuity, but no more believe him than we do Smollett's Lismahago, who maintains that the purest English is spoken in Edinburgh. That Coray may err is very possible; but if he does, the fault is in the man rather than in his mother tongue, which is, as it ought to be, of the greatest aid to the native student.—Here the reviewer proceeds to business on Strabo's translators, and here I close my remarks.

Sir W. Drummond, Mr Hamilton, Lord Aberdeen, Dr Clarke, Captain Leake, Mr Gell, Mr Walpole, and many others now in England, have all the requisites to furnish details of this fallen people. The few observations I have offered I should have left where I made them, had not the article in question, and above all the spot where I read it, induced me to advert to those pages, which the advantage of my present situation enabled me to clear, or at least to make the attempt.

I have endeavoured to wave the personal feelings, which rise in despite of me in touching upon any part of the Edinburgh Review; not from a wish to conciliate the favour of its writers, or to cancel the remembrance of a syllable I have formerly published, but simply from a sense of the impropriety of mixing up private resentments with a disquisition of the present kind, and more particularly at this distance of time and place.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE TURKS.

The difficulties of travelling in Turkey have been much exaggerated, or rather have considerably diminished of late years. The Mussulmans have been beaten into a kind of sullen civility, very comfortable to voyagers.

It is hazardous to say much on the subject of Turks and Turkey; since it is possible to live amongst them twenty years without acquiring information, at least from themselves. As far as my own slight experience carried me I have no complaint to make; but am indebted for many civilities (I might almost say for friendship), and much hospitality, to Ali Pacha, his son Veli Pacha of the Morea, and several others of high rank in the provinces. Suleyman Aga, late Governor of

Solyman means *Mahomet II.* any more than *criticism* means *infallibility*?—but thus it is.

«Cædimus inque vicem præbemus crura sagittis.»

The mistake seemed so completely a lapse of the pen (from the great *similarity* of the two words, and the *total absence of error* from the former pages of the literary leviathan), that I should have passed it over as in the text, had I not perceived in the Edinburgh Review much facetious exultation on all such detections, particularly a recent one, where words and syllables are subjects of disquisition and transposition; and the above-mentioned parallel passage in my own case irresistibly propelled me to hint how much easier it is to be critical than correct. The *gentlemen*, having enjoyed many a *triumph* on such victories, will hardly begrudge me a slight *ovation* for the present.

Athens, and now of Thebes, was a *bon vivant,* and as social a being as ever sat cross-legged at a tray or a table. During the carnival, when our English party were masquerading, both himself and his successor were more happy to «receive masks» than any dowager in Grosvenor-square.

On one occasion of his supping at the convent, his friend and visitor, the Cadi of Thebes, was carried from table perfectly qualified for any club in Christendom, while the worthy Waywode himself triumphed in his fall.

In all money transactions with the Moslems, I ever found the strictest honour, the highest disinterestedness. In transacting business with them, there are none of those dirty peculations, under the name of interest, difference of exchange, commission, etc. etc. uniformly found in applying to a Greek consul to cash bills, even on the first houses in Pera.

With regard to presents, an established custom in the East, you will rarely find yourself a loser; as one worth acceptance is generally returned by another of similar value—a horse, or a shawl.

In the capital and at court the citizens and courtiers are formed in the same school with those of Christianity; but there does not exist a more honourable, friendly, and high-spirited character than the true Turkish provincial Aga, or Moslem country-gentleman. It is not meant here to designate the governors of towns, but those Agas who, by a kind of feudal tenure, possess lands and houses, of more or less extent, in Greece and Asia Minor.

The lower orders are in as tolerable discipline as the rabble in countries with greater pretensions to civilization. A Moslem, in walking the streets of our country-towns, would be more incommoded in England than a Frank in a similar situation in Turkey. Regimentals are the best travelling dress.

The best accounts of the religion, and different sects of Islamism, may be found in D'Olisson's French; of their manners, etc. perhaps in Thornton's English. The Ottomans, with all their defects, are not a people to be despised. Equal, at least, to the Spaniards, they are superior to the Portuguese. If it be difficult to pronounce what they are, we can at least say what they are *not:* they are *not* treacherous, they are *not* cowardly, they do *not* burn heretics, they are *not* assassins, nor has an enemy advanced to *their* capital. They are faithful to their sultan till he becomes unfit to govern, and devout to their God without an inquisition. Were they driven from St Sophia to-morrow, and the French or Russians enthroned in their stead, it would become a question, whether Europe would gain by the exchange? England would certainly be the loser.

With regard to that ignorance of which they are so generally, and sometimes justly, accused, it may be doubted, always excepting France and England, in what useful points of knowledge they are excelled by other nations. Is it in the common arts of life? In their manufactures? Is a Turkish sabre inferior to a Toledo! or is a Turk worse clothed or lodged, or fed and taught, than a Spaniard? Are their Pachas worse educated than a Grandee? or an Effendi than a Knight of St Jago? I think not.

I remember Mahmout, the grandson of Ali Pacha, asking whether my fellow-traveller and myself were in the upper or lower House of Parliament. Now this question from a boy of ten years old proved that his education had not been neglected. It may be doubted if an English boy at that age knows the difference of the Divan from a College of Dervises; but I am very sure a Spaniard does not. How little Mahmout, surrounded, as he had been, entirely by his Turkish tutors, had learned that there was such a thing as a parliament it were useless to conjecture, unless we suppose that his instructors did not confine his studies to the Koran.

In all the mosques there are schools established which are very regularly attended; and the poor are taught without the church of Turkey being put into peril. I believe the system is not yet printed (though there is such a thing as a Turkish press, and books printed on the late military institution of the Nizam Gedidd); nor have I heard whether the Mufti and the Mollas have subscribed, or the Caimacam and the Tefterdar taken the alarm, for fear the ingenuous youth of the turban should be taught not to «pray to God their way.» The Greeks also—a kind of Eastern Irish papists—have a college of their own at Maynooth—no, at Haivali; where the heterodox receive much the same kind of countenance from the Ottoman as the Catholic college from the English legislature. Who shall then affirm, that the Turks are ignorant bigots, when they thus evince the exact proportion of Christian charity which is tolerated in the most prosperous and orthodox of all possible kingdoms? But, though they allow all this, they will not suffer the Greeks to participate in their privileges: no, let them fight their battles, and pay their haratch (taxes), be drubbed in this world, and damned in the next. And shall we then emancipate our Irish Helots? Mahomet forbid! We should then be bad Mussulmans, and worse Christians; at present we unite the best of both—jesuitical faith, and something not much inferior to Turkish toleration.

APPENDIX.

Amongst an enslaved people, obliged to have recourse to foreign presses even for their books of religion, it is less to be wondered at that we find so few publications on general subjects than that we find any at all. The whole number of the Greeks, scattered up and down the Turkish empire and elsewhere, may amount, at most, to three millions; and yet, for so scanty a number, it is impossible to discover any nation with so great a proportion of books and their authors, as the Greeks of the present century. «Ay,» but say the generous advocates of oppression, who, while they assert the ignorance of the Greeks, wish to prevent them from dispelling it, «ay, but these are mostly, if not all, ecclesiastical tracts, and consequently good for nothing.» Well! and pray what else can they write about? It is pleasant enough to hear a Frank, particularly an Englishman, who may abuse the government of his own country; or a Frenchman, who may abuse every government except his own, and who may range at will over every philosophical, religious, scientific, sceptical, or moral subject, sneering at the Greek legends. A Greek must not write on politics, and cannot touch on science for want of instruction; if he

doubts, he is excommunicated and damned; therefore his countrymen are not poisoned with modern philosophy; and as to morals, thanks to the Turks! there are no such things. What then is left him, if he has a turn for scribbling? Religion and holy biography: and it is natural enough that those who have so little in this life should look to the next. It is no great wonder then that in a catalogue now before me of fifty-five Greek writers, many of whom were lately living, not above fifteen should have touched on any thing but religion. The catalogue alluded to is contained in the twenty-sixth chapter of the fourth volume of Meletius's Ecclesiastical History. From this I subjoin an extract of those who have written on general subjects; which will be followed by some specimens of the Romaic.

LIST OF ROMAIC AUTHORS.[1]

Neophitus, Diakonos (the deacon) of the Morea, has published an extensive grammar, and also some political regulations, which last were left unfinished at his death.

Prokopius, of Moscopolis (a town in Epirus), has written and published a catalogue of the learned Greeks.

Seraphin, of Pericles, is the author of many works in the Turkish language, but Greek character; for the Christians of Caramania who do not speak Romaic, but read the character.

Eustathius Psalidas, of Bucharest, a physician, made the tour of England for the purpose of study (*χάριν μαθήσεως*): but though his name is enumerated, it is not stated that he has written any thing.

Kallinikus Torgeraus, Patriarch of Constantinople; many poems of his are extant, and also prose tracts, and a catalogue of patriarchs since the last taking of Constantinople.

Anastasius Macedon, of Naxos, member of the royal academy of Warsaw. A church biographer.

Demetrius Pamperes, a Moscopolite, has written many works, particularly « A Commentary on Hesiod's Shield of Hercules,» and two hundred tales (of what, is not specified), and has published his correspondence with the celebrated George of Trebizond, his contemporary.

Meletius, a celebrated geographer; and author of the book from whence these notices are taken.

Dorotheus, of Mitylene, an Aristotelian philosopher: his Hellenic works are in great repute, and he is esteemed by the moderns (I quote the words of Meletius) *μετὰ τὸν Θουκυδίδην καὶ Ξενοφῶντα ἄριστος Ἑλλήνων*. I add further, on the authority of a well-informed Greek, that he was so famous amongst his countrymen, that they were accustomed to say, if Thucydides and Xenophon were wanting, he was capable of repairing the loss.

Marinus Count Tharboures, of Cephalonia, professor of chemistry in the academy of Padua, and member of that academy, and those of Stockholm and Upsal. He has published, at Venice, an account of some marine animal, and a treatise on the properties of iron.

Marcus, brother to the former, famous in mechanics. He removed to St Petersburg the immense rock on which the statue of Peter the Great was fixed in 1769. See the dissertation which he published in Paris, 1777.

George Constantine has published a four-tongued lexicon.

George Ventote; a lexicon in French, Italian, and Romaic.

There exist several other dictionaries in Latin and Romaic, French, etc. besides grammars, in every modern language, except English.

Amongst the living authors the following are most celebrated:[1]—

Athanasius Parios has written a treatise on rhetoric in Hellenic.

Christodoulos, an Acarnanian, has published, in Vienna, some physical treatises in Hellenic.

Panagiotes Kodrikas, an Athenian, the Romaic translator of Fontenelle's « Plurality of Worlds» (a favourite work amongst the Greeks), is stated to be a teacher of the Hellenic and Arabic languages in Paris, in both of which he is an adept.

Athanasius, the Parian, author of a treatise on rhetoric.

Vicenzo Damodos, of Cephalonia, has written, « *εἰς τὸ μεσοβάρβαρον*, » on logic and physics.

John Kamarases, a Byzantine, has translated into French Ocellus on the Universe. He is said to be an excellent Hellenist, and Latin scholar.

Gregorio Demetrius published, in Vienna, a geographical work: he has also translated several Italian authors, and printed his versions at Venice.

Of Coray and Psalida some account has been already given.

GREEK WAR SONG.[2]

1.

ΔΕΥ'ΤΕ *παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων*
ὁ καῖρος τῆς δόξης ἦλθεν,
ἂς φανῶμεν ἄξιοι ἐκείνων
ποῦ μᾶς δῶσαν τὴν ἀρχήν
Ἂς πατήσομεν ἀνδρείως
τὸν ζυγὸν τῆς τυραννίδος.
Ἐκδικήσωμεν πατρίδος
καθε ὄνειδος αἰσχρόν.
Τὰ ὅπλα ἂς λάβωμεν
παῖδες Ἑλλήνων ἀγωμεν·
ποταμιδῶν ἐωθρῶν τὸ αἷμα
ἂς τρέξῃ ὑπὸ ποδῶν.

2.

Ὅθεν εἶσθε τῶν Ἑλλήνων
κόκκαλα ἀνδρειομένα
πνεύματα ἐσκορπισμένα
τώρα λάβετε πνοήν;
'στ' ην φωνην τῆς σαλπιγκός μου;
συναχθήτε ὅλα ὅμου.
τὴν ἐπτάλοφον ζητεῖτε
καὶ νιᾶτε πρὸ παντοῦ.
Τὰ ὅπλα ἂς λάβωμεν, etc.

[1] It is to be observed that the names given are not in chronological order, but consist of some selected at a venture from amongst those who flourished from the taking of Constantinople to the time of Meletius.

[1] These names are not taken from any publication.

[2] A translation of this song will be found among the smaller Poems.

3.

Σπάρτα, Σπάρτα, τί κοιμᾶσθε
ὕπνον λήθαργον βαθὺν
ξύπνησον κράξε Ἀθήνας
σύμμαχον παντοτεινήν
Ἐνθυμείθητε Λεονίδου
ἥρωος τοῦ ξακόστου
τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐπαινεμένου
φοβεροῦ καὶ τρομεροῦ.
Τὰ ὅπλα ἂς λάβωμεν, etc.

4.

Ὅπου εἰς τὰς Θερμοπύλας
πόλεμον αὐτὸς κροτεῖ
καὶ τοὺς Πέρσας ἀφανίζει
καὶ αὐτῶν κατὰ κρατεῖ
Μετριακοσίους ἄνδρας
εἰς τὸ κέντρον πρόχωρει
καὶ ὡς λέων θυμωμένος
εἰς τὸ αἷμα τῶν βουτεῖ.
Τὰ ὅπλα ἂς λάβωμεν, etc.

ROMAIC EXTRACTS.

Ῥώσσος, Ἄγκλος, καὶ Γάλλος κάμνοντες τὴν περιήγησιν τῆς Ἑλλάδος, καὶ βλέποντες τὴν ἀθλίαν τὴν κατάστασιν, εἰρώτησαν καταρχὰς ἕνα Γραικὸν φιλέλληνα διὰ νὰ μάθουν τὴν αἰτίαν, μετ' αὐτὸν ἕνα μητροπολίτην, εἶτα ἕνα βλάχμπειν, ἔπειτα ἕνα πραγματευτὴν καὶ ἕνα προεστῶτα.

Εἰπέ μας, ὦ φιλέλληνα, πῶς φέρεις τὴν σκλαβίαν
καὶ τὴν ἀπαριγόρητον τὴν Τούρκων τυραννίαν
πῶς ταῖς ξυλαῖς καὶ ὑβρισμοὺς καὶ σιδηροδεσμίαν
παιδων, παρθένων, γυναικῶν ἀνήκουστον φθορεῖαν
Δὲν εἴσθαι ἐσεῖς ἀπόγονοι ἐκείνων τῶν Ἑλλήνων·
τῶν ἐλευθέρων καὶ σοφῶν καὶ τῶν φιλοπατρίδων
καὶ πῶς ἐκεῖνοι ἀπέθνησκον γιὰ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν
καὶ τώρα ἐσεῖς ὑπούκεισθαι εἰς τέτοιαν τυραννίαν
καὶ ποῖον γένος ὡς ἐσεῖς ἐστάθη φωτισμένον
εἰς τὴν σοφίαν, δύναμιν, εἰς κ' ὅλα ζακουσμένον
πῶς νῦν ἐκαταστήσατε τὴν φωτινὴν Ἑλλάδα.
βαβά! ὡς ἕνα σκέλεθρον, ὡς σκοτεινὴν λαμπάδαν
Ὁμίλει, φίλτατε Γραικέ, εἰπέ μας τὴν αἰτίαν
μὴ κρύπτης τίποτης ἡμῶν, λύε τὴν ἀπορίαν.

Ὁ ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ.

Ῥωσσ-αγκλο-γαλλοι, Ἕλλὰς, καὶ ὄχι ἄλλοι,
ἦτον, ὡς λέτε, τόσον μεγάλη,
νῦν δὲ ἀθλια, καὶ ἀναξία
ἀφ' φοὺ ἄρχισεν ἡ ἀμαθία.
ὁστ' ἠμποροῦσαν νὰ τὴν ξυπνήσῃ
τοῦτ' εἰς τὸ χεῖρον τὴν ὁδηγοῦσι
αὐτὴ στενάζει τὰ τέκνα κράζει,
στόνα προκόπτουν ὅλα προστάζει
καὶ τότε ἐλπίζει ὅτι κερδίζει.
εὑρεῖν, ὁποῦ 'χει νῦν τὴν φλογίζει
Μά· ὅστις τολμήσῃ νὰ τὴν ξυπνήσῃ
πάγει στὸν ἅδην χωρὶς τινα κρίσιν

The above is the commencement of a long dramatic satire on the Greek priesthood, princes, and gentry; it is contemptible as a composition, but perhaps curious as a specimen of their rhyme; I have the whole in MS. but this extract will be found sufficient. The Romaic in this composition is so easy as to render a version an insult to a scholar; but those who do not understand the original will excuse the following bad translation of what is in itself indifferent.

TRANSLATION.

A Russian, Englishman, and Frenchman, making the tour of Greece, and observing the miserable state of the country, interrogate, in turn, a Greek Patriot, to learn the cause; afterwards an Archbishop, then a Vlackbey,[1] a Merchant, and Cogia Bachi or Primate.

Thou friend of thy country! to strangers record
Why bear ye the yoke of the Ottoman lord?
Why bear ye these fetters thus tamely display'd,
The wrongs of the matron, the stripling, and maid!
The descendants of Hellas's race are not ye!
The patriot sons of the sage and the free,
Thus sprung from the blood of the noble and brave,
To vilely exist as the Mussulman slave!
Not such were the fathers your annals can boast,
Who conquer'd and died for the freedom you lost!
Not such was your land in her earlier hour,
The day-star of nations in wisdom and power!
And still will you thus unresisting increase,
Oh shameful dishonour! the darkness of Greece!
Then tell us, beloved Achæan! reveal
The cause of the woes which you cannot conceal.

The reply of the Philellenist I have not translated, as it is no better than the question of the travelling triumvirate; and the above will sufficiently show with what kind of composition the Greeks are now satisfied. I trust I have not much injured the original in the few lines given as faithfully, and as near the «Oh, Miss Bailey! unfortunate Miss Bailey!» measure of the Romaic, as I could make them. Almost all their pieces, above a song, which aspire to the name of poetry, contain exactly the quantity of feet of

«A captain bold of Halifax who lived in country quarters,»

which is in fact the present heroic couplet of the Romaic.

SCENE FROM 'Ο ΚΑΦΕΝΕΣ.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF GOLDONI BY SPERIDION VLANTI.

ΣΚΗΝΗ ΚΙ'.

ΠΑΑΤΖΙΔΑ εἰς τὴν πόρταν τοῦ χανιοῦ, καὶ οἱ ἄνωθεν.

ΠΑΑ. Ὦ Θεέ! ἀπὸ τὸ παραθύρι μοῦ ἐφάνη νὰ ἀκούσω τὴν φωνὴν τοῦ ἀνδρός μου· ἂν αὐτὸς εἶναι ἐδῶ, ἔφθασα σὲ καιρὸν νὰ τὸν ξεντροπιάσω. [Εὐγαίνει ἕνας δοῦλος ἀπὸ τὸ ἐργαστήρι.] Παλικάρι πές μου σὲ παρακαλῶ ποιὸς εἶναι ἐκεῖ εἰς ἐκείνους τοὺς ὀντάδες;

ΔΟΥΛ. Τρεῖς χρήσιμοι ἄνδρες. Ἕνας ὁ κὺρ Εὐγένιος, ὁ ἄλλος ὁ κὺρ Μάρτιος Ναπολιτάνος, καὶ ὁ τρίτος ὁ Κὺρ Κόντε Λεάνδρος Ἀρδέντης.

ΠΑΑ. (Ἀνάμεσα εἰς αὐτοὺς δὲν εἶναι ὁ Φλαμίνιος, ἂν ὅμως δὲν ἄλλαξεν ὄνομα.)

ΑΕΑ. Νὰ ζῇ ἡ καλὴ τύχη τοῦ κὺρ Εὐγενίου. [Πίνωντας.]

ΟΛΟΙ. Νὰ ζῇ, νὰ ζῇ.

ΠΑΑ. (Αὐτὸς εἶναι ὁ ἄνδρας μου χωρὶς ἄλλο.) Καλὲ ἄνθρωπε κάμε μου τὴν χαρὶν νὰ μὲ συντρο-

[1] Vlackbey, Prince of Wallachia.

φεύσης ἀπάνω εἰς αὐτοὺς τοὺς ἀφεντάδες, ὁποῦ θέλω νὰ τοὺς παίξω μίαν. [Πρὸς τὸν δοῦλον.]

ΔΟΥ. Ὁρισμός σας· (συνηθισμένον ὁρρίκιον τῶν δουλευτῶν.) [Τὴν ἐμπάζει ἀπὸ τὸ ἐργαστήρι τοῦ παιγνιδιοῦ.]

ΡΙΑ. Καρδιὰ, καρδιὰ, κάμετε καλὴν καρδιὰν, δὲν εἶναι τίποτες. [Πρὸς τὴν Βιττόριαν.]

ΒΙΤ. Ἐγὼ αἰσθάνομαι πῶς ἀπεθαίνω. [Συνέρχεται εἰς τὸν ἑαυτόν της.]

Ἀπὸ τὰ παράθυρα τῶν ὀντάδων φαίνονται ὅλοι, ὁποῦ σηκόνωνται ἀπὸ τὸ τραπέζι συγχισμένοι, διὰ τὸν ξαφνισμὸν τοῦ Λεάνδρου βλέποντας τὴν Πλάτζιδα, καὶ διατὶ αὐτὸς δείχνει πῶς θέλει νὰ τὴν φονεύσῃ.]

ΕΥΓ. Ὄχι, σταθῆτε.

ΜΑΡ. Μὴν κάμνετε...

ΛΕΑ. Σίκω, φύγε ἀπ' ἐδῶ.

ΠΛΑ. Βοήθεια, βοήθεια [Φεύγει ἀπὸ τὴν σκάλαν, ὁ Λεάνδρος θέλει νὰ τὴν ἀκολουθήσῃ μὲ τὸ σπαθὶ, καὶ ὁ Εὐγ. τὸν Βαστᾶ.]

ΤΡΑ. [Μὲ ἕνα πιάτο μὲ φαγὶ εἰς μίαν πετζέτα πηδᾷ ἀπὸ τὸ παραθύρι, καὶ φεύγει εἰς τὸν καρενέ.]

ΠΛΑ. [Εὐγαίνει ἀπὸ τὸ ἐργαστήρι τοῦ παιγνιδιοῦ τρέχωντας, καὶ φεύγει εἰς τὸ χάνι.]

ΕΥΓ. [Μὲ ἅρματα εἰς τὸ χέρι πρὸς διαφέντευσιν τῆς Πλάτζιδας, ἐναντίον τοῦ Λεάνδρου, ὁπῶ τὴν κατατρέχει.]

ΜΑΡ. [Εὐγαίνει καὶ αὐτὸς σιγὰ σιγὰ ἀπὸ τὸ ἐργαστήρι, καὶ φεύγει λέγωντας.] Rumores fuge. [Ρουμόρες φεύγε] [1]

Οἱ Δοῦλοι [Ἀπὸ τὸ ἐργαστήρι ἀπερνοῦν εἰς τὸ χάνι, καὶ κλειοῦν τὴν πόρταν.]

ΒΙΤ. [Μένει εἰς τὸν καρενέ βοηθημένη ἀπὸ τὸν Ρισόλφον.]

ΛΕΑ. Δόσετε τόπον· Θέλω νὰ ἔμβω νὰ ἔμβω εἰς ἐκεῖνο τὸ χάνι. [Μὲ τὸ σπαθὶ εἰς το χέρι ἐναντίον τοῦ Εὐγενίου.]

ΕΥΓ. Ὄχι, μὴ γένοιτο ποτέ· εἶσαι ἕνας ἀληρόκαρδος ἐναντίον τῆς γυναικός σου, καὶ ἐγὼ θέλει τὴν διαφεντεύσω ὡς εἰς τὸ ὕστερον αἷμα.

ΛΕΑ. Σοῦ κάμνω ὅρκον πῶς θέλει τὸ μετανοιώσῃς. [Κινηχᾷ τὸν Εὐγένιον μὲ τὸ σπαθί.]

ΕΥΓ. Δὲν σὲ φοβοῦμαι. [Κατατρέχει τὸν Λεάνδρον, καὶ τὸν βιώζει νὰ συρθῇ ὀπίσω τόσον, ὁποῦ εὑρίσκωντας ἀνοικτὸν τὸ σπῆτι τῆς χορεύτριας, ἐμβαίνει εἰς αὐτὸ, καὶ σώνεται.]

TRANSLATION.

Platzida from the Door of the Hotel, and the Others.

Pla. Oh God! from the window it seemed that I heard my husband's voice. If he is here, I have arrived in time to make him ashamed. (*A Servant enters from the Shop.*) Boy, tell me, pray, who are in those chambers.

Serv. Three Gentlemen: one Signor Eugenio; the other Signor Martio, the Neapolitan; and the third, my Lord, the Count Leander Ardenti.

Pla. Flaminio is not amongst these, unless he has changed his name.

[1] Λόγος λατινικὸς, ὁποῦ θέλει να εἰπῇ· φεύγε ταῖς σύγχισες.

Leander. [*Within, drinking.*] Long live the good fortune of Signor Eugenio.

[*The whole Company.*] Long live, etc. (Literally, Νὰ ζῇ, νὰ ζῇ, May he live.)

Pla. Without doubt that is my husband. [*To the Serv.*] My good man, do me the favour to accompany me above to those Gentlemen: I have some business.

Serv. At your commands. [*Aside.*] The old office of us waiters. [*He goes out of the Gaming-House.*]

Ridolpho. [*To* Victoria *on another part of the stage.*] Courage, courage, be of good cheer, it is nothing.

Victoria. I feel as if about to die. [*Leaning on him as if fainting.*]

[*From the windows above all within are seen rising from table in confusion:* Leander *starts at the sight of* Platzida, *and appears by his gestures to threaten her life.*]

Eugenio. No, stop ——

Martio. Don't attempt ——

Leander. Away, fly from hence!

Pla. Help! help! [*Flies down the stairs,* Leander *attempting to follow with his sword,* Eugenio *hinders him.*]

[Trappola *with a plate of meat leaps over the balcony from the window, and runs into the Coffee-House.*]

[Platzida *runs out of the Gaming-house, and takes shelter in the Hotel.*]

Martio *steals softly out of the Gaming-house, and goes off exclaiming,* «Rumores fuge.» *The Servants from the Gaming-house enter the Hotel, and shut the door.*]

[Victoria *remains in the Coffee-house assisted by* Ridolpho.]

Leander *sword in hand opposite* Eugenio *exclaims,* Give way—I will enter that hotel.]

Eugenio. No, that shall never be. You are a scoundrel to your wife, and I will defend her to the last drop of my blood.

Leander. I will give you cause to repent this. [*Menacing with his sword.*]

Eugenio. I fear you not. [*He attacks* Leander *and makes him give back so much that finding the door of the dancing girl's house open,* Leander *escapes through, and so finishes.*] [1]

ΔΙΑΛΟΓΟΙ ΟΙΚΙΑΚΟΙ.	FAMILIAR DIALOGUES.
Διὰ νὰ ζητήσῃς ἕνα πρᾶγμα.	*To ask for any thing.*
Σᾶς παρακαλῶ, ὅσετέ με ἂν ὁρίζετε.	I pray you, give me if you please.
Φέρετέ με.	Bring me.
Δανείσετέ με.	Lend me.
Πηγαίνετε νὰ ζητήσετε.	Go to seek.

[1] Σώνεται—«finishes»—awkwardly enough, but it is the literal translation of the Romaic. The original of this comedy of Goldoni's I never read, but it does not appear one of his best. «Il Bugiardo» is one of the most lively; but I do not think it has been translated into Romaic. It is much more amusing than our own «Liar,» by Foote. The character of Lelio is better drawn than Young Wilding. Goldoni's comedies amount to fifty; some perhaps the best in Europe, and others the worst. His life is also one of the best specimens of autobiography, and, as Gibbon has observed, «more dramatic than any of his plays.» The above scene was selected as containing some of the most familiar Romaic idioms, not for any wit which it displays, since there is more done than said, the greater part consisting of stage directions. The original is one of the few comedies by Goldoni which is without the buffoonery of the speaking Harlequin.

Τώρα εὐθὺς.	Now directly.
Ω ἀκριβέ μου Κύριε, κάμετέ με αὐτὴν τὴν χάριν.	My dear Sir, do me this favour.
Ἐγὼ σᾶς παρακαλῶ.	I entreat you.
Ἐγὼ σᾶς ἐξορκίζω.	I conjure you.
Ἐγὼ σᾶς τὸ ζητῶ διὰ χάριν.	I ask it of you as a favour.
Ὑποχρεώσετέ με εἰς τόσαν.	Oblige me so much.
Λόγια ἐρωτικὰ, ἢ ἀγάπης.	*Affectionate Expressions.*
Ζωή μου.	My life.
Ἀκριβή μου ψυχή.	My dear soul.
Ἀγαπητέ μου, ἀκριβέ μου.	My dear.
Καρδίτζα μου.	My heart.
Ἀγάπη μου.	My love.
Διὰ νὰ εὐχαριστήσης, νὰ κάμης περιποίησες, καὶ φιλικαῖς δεξίωσες.	*To thank, pay compliments, and testify regard.*
Ἐγὼ σᾶς εὐχαριστῶ.	I thank you.
Σᾶς γνωρίζω χάριν.	I return you thanks.
Σᾶς εἶμαι ὑπόχρεος κατὰ πολλὰ.	I am much obliged to you.
Ἐγὼ θέλω τὸ κάμει μετὰ χαρᾶς.	I will do it with pleasure.
Μὲ ὁλήν μου τὴν καρδίαν.	With all my heart.
Μὲ καλήν μου καρδίαν.	Most cordially.
Σὰς εἶμαι ὑπόχρεος.	I am obliged to you.
Εἶμαι ὅλος ἐδικός σας.	I am wholly yours.
Εἶμαι δοῦλος σας.	I am your servant.
Ταπεινότατος δοῦλός.	Your most humble servant
Εἶστε κατὰπολλὰ εὐγενικὸς.	You are too obliging.
Πολλὰ πειράζεσθε.	You take too much trouble
Τὸ ἔχω διὰ χαράν μου να τὰς δαλεύσω.	I have a pleasure in serving you.
Εἶστε εὐγενικὸς καὶ εὐπροσήγορος.	You are obliging and kind.
Αὐτὸ εἶναι πρέπον.	That is right.
Τί θέλετε; τί ὁρίζετε;	What is your pleasure? What are your commands?
Σᾶς παρακαλῶ νὰ μὲ μεταχειρίζεσθε ἐλεύθερα.	I beg you will treat me freely.
Χωρὶς περιποίησες.	Without ceremony.
Σᾶς ἀγαπῶ ἐξ ὅλης μου καρδίας.	I love you with all my heart.
Καὶ ἐγὼ ὁμοίως.	And I the same.
Τιμήσετε μὲ ταῖς προστα γαῖς σας.	Honour me with your commands.
Ἔχετε τίποτες νὰ με προστάξετε;	Have you any commands for me?
Προστάξετε τὸν δοῦλόν σας.	Command your servant.
Προσμένω τὰς προσαγὰς σας.	I wait your commands.
Μὲ κάμνετε μεγάλην τιμὴν.	You do me great honour.
Φθάνουν ἡ περιποίησες σᾶς παρακαλῶ.	Not so much ceremony, I beg.
Προσκυνήσετε ἐκμέρους μοῦ τὸν ἄρχοντα, ἢ τὸν κύριον.	Present my respects to the gentleman, or his lordship.
Βεβαιώσετέ τον πῶς τὸν ἐνθυμοῦμαι.	Assure him of my remembrance.
Βεβαιώσετέ τον πῶς τὸν ἀγαπῶ.	Assure him of my friendship.
Δὲν θέλω λείψει νὰ τοῦ τὸ εἰπῶ.	I will not fail to tell him of it.
Προσκυνήματα εἰς τὴν ἀρχόντισσαν.	My compliments to her ladyship.
Πηγαίνετε ἐμπροσθὰ καὶ σᾶς ἀκολουθῶ.	Go before and I will follow you.
Ἠξεύρω καλὰ τὸ χρέος μου.	I well know my duty.
Ἠξεύρω τὸ εἶναι μου.	I know my situation.
Μὲ κάμνετε νὰ ἐντρέπωμαι μὲ ταῖς τόσαις φιλοφροσύναις σας.	You confound me with so much civility.
Θέλετε λοιπὸν νὰ κάμω μίαν ἀχρειότητα;	Would you have me then be guilty of an incivility?
Ὑπάγω ἐμπροσθὰ διὰ νὰ σᾶς ὑπακούσω.	I go before to obey you.
Διὰ νὰ κάμω τὴν προσταγήν σας.	To comply with your command.
Δὲν ἀγαπῶ τόσαις περιποίησες.	I do not like so much ceremony.
Δὲν εἶμαι στελείως περιποίητικος.	I am not at all ceremonious.
Αὐτὸ εἶναι τὸ καλίτερον.	This is better.
Τόσον τὸ καλίτερον.	So much the better.
Ἔχετε λόγον, ἔχετε δίκαιον.	You are in the right.
Διὰ νὰ βεβαιώσης, νὰ ἀρνηθῆς, νὰ συγκατανεύσης, καὶ τξ.	*To affirm, deny, consent, etc.*
Εἶναι ἀληθινὸν, εἶναι ἀληθέστατον.	It is true, it is very true.
Διὰ νὰ σᾶς εἴπω τὴν ἀλήθειαν.	To tell you the truth.
Ὄντως, ἔτζη εἶναι.	Really it is so.
Ποῖος ἀμφιβάλλει;	Who doubts it?
Δὲν εἶναι ποσῶς ἀμφιβολία.	There is no doubt.
Τὸ πιστεύω, δὲν τὸ πιστεύω.	I believe it, I do not believe it.
Λέγω τὸ ναὶ.	I say yes.
Λέγω τὸ ὄχι.	I say no.
Βάλλω στίχημα ὅτι εἶναι.	I wager it is.
Βάλλω στίχημα ὅτι δὲν εἶναι ἔτζη.	I wager it is not so.
Ναὶ, μὰ τὴν πίστιν μου.	Yes, by my faith.
Εἰς τὴν συνείδησιν μου.	In conscience.
Μὰ τὴν ζωήν μου.	By my life.
Ναὶ, σᾶς ὁμνύω.	Yes, I swear it to you.
Σᾶς ὁμνύω ὡσὰν τεμημένος ἄνθρωπος.	I swear to you as an honest man.
Σᾶς ὁμνύω ἐπάνω εἰς τὴν τιμήν μου.	I swear to you on my honour.
Πιστεύσετε με.	Believe me.
Ἠμπορῶ νὰ σᾶς τὸ βεβαιώσω.	I can assure you of it.
Ἤ θέλα βάλῃ στίχημα ὅ, τι θέλετε διὰ τοῦτο.	I would lay what bet you please on this.
Μὴ τύχῃ καὶ ἀστείζεσθε (χορατεύετε);	You jest by chance?
Ὁμιλεῖτε μὲ τὰ ὅλα σας;	Do you speak seriously?
Ἐγὼ σᾶς ὁμιλῶ μὲ τὰ ὅλα μου, καὶ σᾶς λέγω τὴν ἀλήθειαν.	I speak seriously to you, and tell you the truth.
Ἐγὼ σᾶς τὸ βεβαιώνω.	I assure you of it.

Τὸ ἐπροφητεύσετε	You have guessed it.
Τὸ ἐπιτεύχετε.	You have hit upon it.
Σᾶς πιστεύω.	I believe you.
Πρέπει νὰ σᾶς πιστεύσω.	I must believe you.
Αὐτὸ δὲν εἶναι ἀδύνατον.	This is not impossible.
Τὸ λοιπὸν ἂς εἶναι με καλὴν ὥραν.	Then it is very well.
Καλὰ, καλὰ.	Well, well.
Δὲν εἶναι ἀληθινὸν.	It is not true.
Εἶναι ψευδὲς.	It is false.
Δὲν εἶναι τίποτες ἀπὸ αὐτὸ.	There is nothing of this.
Εἶναι ἕνα ψεῦδος μία ἀπάτη	It is a falsehood, an imposture.
Ἐγὼ ἀστείζομουν (ἐχοράτευα.)	I was in joke.
Ἐγὼ τὸ εἶπα διὰ νὰ γελάσω.	I said it to laugh.
Τῇ ἀληθείᾳ.	Indeed.
Μὲ ἀρέσει κατὰ πολλὰ.	It pleases me much.
Συγκατανεύω εἰς τοῦτο.	I agree with you.
Δίδω την ψῆφον μου.	I give my assent.
Δὲν ἀντιστίκομαι εἰς τοῦτο.	I do not oppose this.
Εἶμαι σύμφωνος, ἐκ συμφώνου.	I agree.
Ἐγὼ δὲν θέλω.	I will not.
Ἐγὼ ἐναντιώνομαι εἰς τοῦτο	I object to this.
Διὰ νὰ συμβουλευθῇς, νὰ στοχασθῇς, ἢ νὰ ἀποφασίσῃς.	*To consult, consider, or resolve.*
Τί πρέπει νὰ κάμωμεν;	What ought we to do?
Τί Θὰ κάμωμεν;	What shall we do?
Τί μὲ συμβουλεύετε νὰ κάμω;	What do you advise me to do?
Ὁποῖον τρόπον Θέλομεν μεταχειρισθῇ ἡμεῖς;	What part shall we take?
Ἂς κάμωμεν ἔτζη.	Let us do this.
Εἶναι καλίτερον ἐγὼ νὰ—	It is better that I——
Σταθῆτε ὀλίγον.	Wait a little.
Δὲν ἤθελεν εἶναι καλίτερον νὰ——;	Would it not be better that ——?
Ἐγὼ ἀγαποῦτα καλίτερα.	I wish it were better.
Θέλετε κάμει καλίτερα ἂν—	You will do better if ——
Ἀφήσετέ με.	Let me go.
Ἂν ἤμουν εἰς τὸν τόπον σας ἐγὼ——	If I were in your place, I——
Εἶναι τὸ ἴδιον.	It is the same.

The reader by the specimens below will be enabled to compare the modern with the ancient tongue.

PARALLEL PASSAGES FROM ST JOHN'S GOSPEL.

Νέον.	Αὐθεντικὸν.
Κεφάλ. ά.	Κεφάλ. ά.
1. ΕΙΣ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἦτον ὁ λόγος· καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦτον μετὰ Θεοῦ· καὶ Θεὸς ἦτον ὁ λόγος.	1. ΕΝ ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν, καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.
2. Ἐτοῦτος ἦτον εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν μετὰ Θεοῦ.	2. Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν.
3. Ὅλα [τὰ πράγματα] διὰ μέσου τοῦ [λόγου] ἐγίνησαν, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτὸν δὲν ἔγινε κανένα εἴτι ἔγινε.	3. Πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο· δὲ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν, ὃ γέγονεν.
4. Εἰς αὐτὸν ἦτον ζωὴ· καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦτον τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.	4. Ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.
5. Καὶ τὸ φῶς εἰς τὴν σκοτείαν φέγγει, καὶ ἡ σκοτεία δὲν τὸ κατέλαβε.	5. Καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, οὲ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.
6. Ἔγινεν ἕνας ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος ἀπὸ τὸν Θεὸν, τὸ ὄνομά του Ἰωάννης.	6. Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος παρὰ Θεοῦ, ὄνομα αὐτῷ Ἰωάννης.

THE INSCRIPTIONS AT ORCHOMENUS FROM MELETIUS.

ΟΡΧΟΜΕΝΟΣ, κοινῶς Σκριποῦ, Πόλις ποτὲ πλουσιωτάτη καὶ ἰσχυροτάτη, πρότερον καλουμένη Βοιωτικαὶ Ἀθῆναι, εἰς την ὁποίαν ἦτον ὁ Ναὸς τῶν Χαρίτων, εἰς τὸν ὁποῖον ἐπλήρωνον τέλη οἱ Θουβαῖοι, οὗτινος τὸ ἔδαφος ἀνεσκάφθε ποτὲ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀσπαλάγκων. Ἐπανηγύριζον εἰς αὐτὴν τὴν Πόλιν τὰ Χαριτήσια, τοῦ ὁποίου Ἀγῶνος εὗρον ἐπιγραφὰς ἐν στήλαις ἔνδον τοῦ κτισθέντος Ναοῦ ἐπ' ὀνόματι πῆς Θεοτόκου, ὑπὸ τοῦ Πρωτοσπαθαρίου Λέοντος, ἐπὶ τῶν Βασιλέων Βασιλείου, Λέοντος, καὶ Κωνσταντίνου, ἐχούσας οὕτως. Ἐν μὲν τῇ μιᾷ κοινῶς.

« Οἵδε ἐνίκων τὸν ἀγῶνα τῶν χαριτησίων.

Σαλπιστὴς.

Μῆνις Ἀπολλωνίου Ἀντιοχεὺς ἀπὸ Μαιάνδρου.

Κήρυξ.

Ζώϊλος Ζωΐλου Πάφιος.

Ῥαψῳδὸς.

Νουμήνιος Νουμηνίου Ἀθηναῖος.

Ποιητὴς ἐπῶν.

Ἀμηνίας Δημοκλέους Θηβαῖος.

Αὐλητὴς.

Ἀπολλόδοτος Ἀπολλοδότου Κρὴς.

Αὐλῳδὸς.

Ῥόδιππος Ῥοδίππου Ἀργῆος.

Κιθαριστὴς.

Φανίας Ἀπολλοδότου τοῦ Φανίου Αἰολεὺς ἀπὸ Κύμης.

Κιθαρῳδὸς.

Δημήτριος Παρμενίσκου Καλχηδόνιος.

Τραγῳδὸς.

Ἱπποκράτης Ἀριστομένους Ῥόδιος.

Κωμῳδὸς.

Καλλίστρατος Ἐξαλέστου Θηβαῖος.

Ποιητὴς Σατύρων.

Ἀμηνίας Δημοκλέους Θηβαῖος.

Ὑποκριτὴς.

Δωρόθεος Δωροθέου Ταραντινὸς.

Ποιητὴς Τραγῳδιῶν.

Σοφοκλῆς Σοφοκλέους Αθηναῖος.

Ὑποκριτὴς.

Καβίριχος Θεοδώρου Θηβαῖος.

Ποιητὴς Κωμῳδιῶν.

Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀρίστωνος Ἀθηναῖος.

Ὑποκριτὴς.

Ἄτταλος Ἀττάλου Ἀθηναῖος.

Οἵδε ἐνίκων τὸν νήμητον ἀγῶνα τῶν ὁμοδώων.
Παῖδας αὐλητάς.
Διοκλῆς Καλλιμήδου Θηβαῖος.
Παῖδας ἡγεμόνας.
Στρατῖνος εὐνίκου Θηβαῖος.
Ἄνδρας Αὐλητάς.
Διοκλῆς Καλλιμήδου Θηβαῖος.
Ἄνδρας ἡγεμόνας.
Ῥόδιππος Ῥοδίππου Ἀργεῖος.
Τραγῳδούς.
Ἱπποκράτης Ἀριστομένους Ῥόδιος.
Κωμῳδούς.
Καλλίστρατος Ἐξακέστου Θηβαῖος.
Τὰ ἐπινίκια.
Κωμῳδιῶν Ποιητὴς.
Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀριστίωνος Ἀθηναῖος.

Ἐν δὲ τῇ ἑτερᾷ δωρικῶς.

Μνασίνῳ ἄρχοντος ἀγωνοθετίοντος τὸν Χαριτείσιον, εὐαριόστω πάντων ὃς τυδε ἐνικώσαν τὰ χαριτείτια.

Σαλπιγκτὰς.
Φίλινος Φιλίνω Ἀθάνειος.
Κάρουξ.
Ειρώδας Σωκράτιος Θείβειος.
Ποειτὰς.
Μήστωρ Μήστορος Φωκαιεὺς.
Ῥαψευδούς.
Κράτων Κλίωνος Θείβειος.
Αὐλειτὰς.
Περιγενεὶς Ἡρακλείδαο Κουζικηνὸς.
Αὐλαευδούς.
Δαμήνετος Γλαύκω Ἄργιος.
Κιθαριστὰς.
Δάματρος Ἀμαλώω Αἰολεὺς ἀπὸ Μουρίνας.
Τραγαευδούς.
Ἀσκλαπιόδωρος Πουθεάο Ταραντινὸς.
Κωμαευδούς.
Νικόστρατος Φιλοστράτω Θείβειος.
Τὰ ἐπινίκεια Κωμαευδούς.
Εὔαρχος Ἡροδότω Κορωνεὺς.»

Ἐν ἄλλῳ Λίθῳ.

«Μύριχος Πολυκράτους Ἰαρώνυμος διογίτωνος ἀνδρεσσι χοραγείσαντες νικάσαντες διονύσου ἀνέθηκαν τίμωνος ἄρχοντος αὐλίοντος κλέος ἀόοντος ἀλκισθένιος.»

Ἐν ἑτέρῳ Λίθῳ.

«Θυνάρχω ἄρχοντος, μεινὸς Θειλουθίω, ἀρχι.....ὡς Εὔβωλι ἀρχεδάμω φωκεῖα.....ὃς ἀπέδωκα ἀπὸ τὰς σουγγραφῶ πέδα τῶν πολεμάρχων, κὴ τῶν κατοπτάων, ἀνελόμενος τὰς σουγγραφὼς τὰς κιμένας πὰρ εὐῤῥόνα, κὴ φιδίαν κὴ πασικλεῖν..... κη τιμόμειδον φωκείας, κη δαμοτελεῖν λυσιδάμω, κὴ διονυσον καφισοδώω χηρωνεῖα κάτ τὸ ψάφισμα τῶ δάμω.

ΔΠΝΕΗΕΓΕΔΔΙΙΙΟΗ

Θυνάρχω ἄρχοντος, μεινὸς ἀλαλκομενίω F ἀρνῶν, πολύκλειος ταμίας ἀπέδωκε εὐβωλυ ἀρχεδάμω φωκεῖϊ ἀπὸ τὰς σουγγραφῶ τὸ καταλύπον κάτ τὸ ψάφισμα τῶ δάμω, ἀνελόμενος τὰς σουγγραφὼς τὰς κίμενας πὰρ σώφιλον, κὴ εὔῤῥονα φωκέας. Κὴ πὰρ διωνύσιον καφισοδώρω χηρωνέα, κὴ λυσίδαμον δαμοτέλιος πέδα τῶν πολεμάρχων, κὴ τῶν κατοπτάων.

ΜΗΝΕΤΟΜ

«Ἄρχοντος ἐν ἐρχομενὸ Θυνάρχω, μενὸς Ἀλαλκομενίω, ἐν δὲ F ἐλατίη Μενοίταο Ἀρχελάω μεινὸς πράτω. Ὁμολογᾶ Εὔβωλυ F ἐλατίη, ο κὴ τῇ πόλι ἐρχομενίων. Ἐπειδὴ κεκομίστη Εὔβωλος πὰρ τῆς πόλιος τὸ ἀνειον ἄπαν κάτ τὰς ὁμολογίας τὰς τεθίσας Θυνάρχω ἄρχοντος, μεινὸς Θειλουθίω, κὴ οὐτ ὀφειλέτη αὐτὼ ἔτι οὐθὲν πὰρ τὰν πόλιν, ἀλλ' ἀπέχι πάντα περὶ παντὸς, κὴ ἀποδεδόανθι τῇ πόλι τὸ ἔχοντες τὰς ὁμολογίας, εἰ μὲν ποτὶ δεδομένον χρόνον Εὔβωλυ ἐπὶ νομίας F ἔτι ἀπέτταρα βούεσσι σοὺν ἵππυς διὰ κατίης Fι κατι προβάτυς σοὺν ἤγυς χειλίης ἀρχὶ τῶ χρόνω ὁ ἐνιαυτὸς ὁ μετὰ θύναρχον ἄρχοντα ἐρχομενίος ἀπογραρέσθη δὲ Εὔβωλον κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν ἕκαστον πὰρ τὸν ταμίαν κὴ τὰν νόμων ἄν τάτε καῦματα τῶν προβάτων, κὴ τῶν ἠγῶν, κὴ τῶν βουῶν, κὴ τῶν ἵππων, κὴ κάτινα ἀσαμαίων θίκη τὸ πλεῖθος μεὶ ἀπογράφεσο ὧδε πλίονα τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐν τῇ σουγχωρείσι η δεκατις.....
.....η τὸ ἐννόμιον Εὔβωλον ὀφείλει.....λις τῶν ἐρχομενίων ἀργουρίω.....τετταράκοντα Εὔβωλυ καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν, κὴ τόκον φερέτω δραχμὰς.....τας μνᾶς ἑκάστας κατὰ μεῖνα.....
.....τὸν κὴ ἔμπρακτος ἔστω τὸν ἐρχομένιον.....
.....καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς.»

Ἐν ἄλλοις Λίθοις.

«Ἀνοδῶρα σύνφορον χαῖρε» ΝΟΚΥΕΣ. «Καλλίπιτον ἀμφάριχος, καὶ ἄλλαι.» Ἐν οὐδὲ μία Ἐπιγραφῇ ἴδον τόνον, ἢ πνεῦμα, ἃ δὲ ἡμεῖς ὑπογράφομεν, οἱ παλαιοὶ προσέγραφον. Καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς.

The following is the prospectus of a translation of Anacharsis into Romaic, by my Romaic master, Marmarotouri, who wished to publish it in England.

ΕΙΔΗΣΙΣ ΤΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΙΚΗ.

Πρὸς τοὺς ἐν φιλογενεῖς καὶ φιλέλληνας.

ΟΣΟΙ εἰς βιβλία παντοδαπὰ ἐντρυφῶσιν, ἠξεύρουν πόσον εἶναι τὸ χρήσιμον τῆς Ἱστορίας, δι' αὐτῆς γὰρ ἐξευρίσκεται ἡ πλέον μεμακρυσμένη παλαιότης, καὶ θεωροῦνται ὡς ἐν κατόπτρῳ ἤθη, πράξεις καὶ διοικήσεις πολλῶν καὶ διαφόρων Ἐθνῶν καὶ Γενῶν ὧν τὴν μνήμην διεσώσατο καὶ διασώσει ἡ Ἱστορικὴ Διήγησις εἰς αἰῶνα τὸν ἅπαντα.

Μία τετοια Ἐπιστήμη εἶναι εὐαπόκτητος, καὶ ἐν ταὐτῷ ὠφέλιμη, ἢ κρεῖττον εἰπεῖν ἀναγκαία· διατὶ λοιπὸν ἡμεῖς μόνοι νὰ τὴν ὑστερούμεθα, μὴ ἠξεύροντες οὔτε τὰς ἀρχὰς τῶν Προγόνων μας, ποθεν πότε καὶ πῶς εὑρέθησαν εἰς τὰς πατρίδας μας, οὔτε τὰ ἤθη, τὰ κατορθώματα καὶ τὴν διοίκησίν των; Ἂν ἐρωτήσωμεν τοὺς Ἀλλογενεῖς, ἠξεύρουν νὰ μᾶς δώσουν ὄχι μόνον ἱστορικῶς τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὴν πρόοδον τῶν προγόνων μας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοπογραφικῶς μᾶς δείχνουν τὰς Θέσεις τῶν Πατρίδων μας, καὶ οἱονεὶ χειραγωγοὶ γινόμενοι μὲ τοὺς γεωγραφικοὺς των Πίνακας, μᾶς λέγουν, ἐδῶ εἶναι αἱ Ἀθῆναι, ἐδῶ ἡ Σπάρτη, ἐκεῖ αἱ Θῆβαι, τόσα

στάδια ἡ μίλια ἀπέχει ἡ μία Ἐπαρχία ἀπὸ τὴν ἄλλην. Τοῦτος ᾠκοδόμησε τὴν μίαν πόλιν, ἐκεῖνος τὴν ἄλλην καὶ τξ. Προσέτι ἂν ἐρωτήσωμεν αὐτοὺς τοὺς μὴ Ἑλλήνας, χειραγωγοὺς μας, πόθεν ἐπαρακινήθησαν νὰ ἐξερευνήσουν ἀρχὰς τόσον παλαιὰς, ἀνυποστόλως μᾶς ἀποκρίνονται μὲ αὐτοὺς τοὺς λόγους. «Καθὼς ὁ ἐκ Σκυθίας Ἀνάχαρσις, ἂν δὲν ἐπεριείρχετο τὰ πανευρόσυνα ἐκεῖνα Κλίματα τῆς Ἑλλάδος, ἂν δὲν ἐμφορεῖτο τὰ ἀξιώματα, τὰ ἤθη καὶ τοὺς Νόμους τῶν Ἑλλήνων, ἤθελε μείνη Σκύθης καὶ τὸ ὄνομα καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα· οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος Ἰατρὸς, ἂν δὲν ἐμάνθανε τὰ τοῦ Ἱπποκράτους, δὲν ἐδύνατο νὰ προχωρήσῃ εἰς τὴν τέχνην τοῦ. Ἂν ὁ ἐν ἡμῖν Νομοθέτης δὲν ἐξέταζε τὰ τοῦ Σόλωνος, Λυκούργου, καὶ Πιττακοῦ, δὲν ἐδύνατο νὰ ῥυθμίσῃ καὶ νὰ καλιεργήσῃ τὰ ἤθη τῶν Ὁμογενῶν τοῦ· ἂν ὁ Ῥήτωρ δὲν ἀπηνθίζετο τὰς εὐρραδείας καὶ τοὺς χαριεντισμοὺς τοῦ Δημοσθένους, δὲν ἐνεργοῦσεν εἰς τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἀκροατῶν τοῦ· Ἂν ὁ Νέος Ἀνάχαρσις, ὁ Κύριος Ἀββᾶς Βαρθολομαῖος δὲν ἀνεγίνωσκε μὲ μεγάλην ἐπιμονὴν καὶ σκέψιν τοὺς πλέον ἐγκρίτους Συγγραφεῖς τῶν Ἑλλήνων, ἐξερευνῶν αὐτοὺς κατὰ βάθος ἐπὶ τριάκοντα ὅλα ἔτη, δὲν ἤθελεν ἐξυφάνῃ τοὐτην τὴν περὶ Ἑλλήνων Ἱστορίαν τοῦ, ἥτις Περιήγησις τοῦ Νέου Ἀναχάρσεως παρ' αὐτοῦ προσωνομάσθη, καὶ εἰς ὅλας τὰς Εὐρωπαϊκὰς Διαλέκτους μετεγλωττίσθη.» Καὶ ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ, οἱ Νεώτεροι, ἂν δὲν ἔπερναν δία ὁδηγοὺς τοὺς Προγόνους μας, ἤθελαν ἴσως περιφέρωνται ματαίως μέχρι τοῦ νῦν. Αὐτὰ δὲν εἶναι Λόγια ἐνθουσιασμένου διὰ τὸ φιλογενὲς Γραικοῦ, εἶναι δὲ φιλαλήθους Γερμανοῦ, ὅστις ἐμετάφρασε τὸν Νέον Ἀνάχαρσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ Γαλλικοῦ εἰς τὸ Γερμανικὸν.

Ἂν λοιπὸν καὶ ἡμεῖς Θέλωμεν νὰ μεθέξωμεν τῆς γνώσεως τῶν λαμπρῶν κατορθωμάτων ὁποῦ ἔκαμαν οἱ Θαυμαστοὶ ἐκεῖνοι Προπάτορες ἡμῶν, ἂν ἐπιθυμῶμεν νὰ μάθωμεν τὴν πρόοδον καὶ αὔξησιν των εἰς τὰς Τέχνας καὶ Ἐπιστήμας καὶ εἰς κάθε ἄλλο εἶδος μαθήσεως, ἂν ἔχωμεν περιέργειαν νὰ γνωρίσωμεν πόθεν καταγόμεθα, καὶ ὁποίους Θαυμαστοὺς καὶ μεγάλους ἄνδρας, εἰ καὶ προγόνους ἡμῶν, φεῦ, ἡμεῖς δὲν γνωρίζομεν, εἰς καιρὸν ὁποῦ οἱ Ἀλλογενεῖς Θαυμάζουσιν αὐτοὺς, καὶ ὡς πατέρας παντοιασοῦν μαθήσεως σέβονται, ἂς συνδράμωμεν ἅπαντες προθύμως εἰς τὴν ἔκδοσιν τοῦ Θαυμασίου τούτου συγγράμματος τοῦ Νέου Ἀναχάρσεως.

Ἡμεῖς οὖν οἱ ὑπογεγραμμένοι Θέλομεν ἐκτελέσει προθύμως τὴν μετάφρασιν τοῦ Βιβλίου μὲ τὴν κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἡμῖν καλὴν φράσιν τῆς νῦν καθ' ἡμᾶς ὁμιλίας, καὶ ἐκδόντες τοῦτο εἰς τύπον, Θέλομεν τὸ καλλωπίσει μὲ τοὺς Γεωγραφικοὺς Πίνακας μὲ ἁπλᾶς Ῥωμαϊκὰς λέξεις ἐγκεχαραγμένους εἰς ἐδικάμας γράμματα, προστιθέντες δ, τι ἄλλο χρήσιμον καὶ ἁρμόδιον εἰς τὴν Ἱστορίαν.

Ὅλον τὸ σύγγραμμα Θέλει γένει εἰς Τόμους δώδεκα κατὰ μίμησιν τῆς Ἰταλικῆς ἐκδόσεως. Ἡ τιμὴ ὅλου τοῦ Συγγράμματος εἶναι φιορίνια δυσαίξη τῆς Βιέννης διὰ τὴν προσθήκην τῶν γεωγραφικῶν πινάκων. Ὁ φιλογενὴς ὗν Συνδρομητὴς πρέπει να πληρώσῃ εἰς κάθε Τόμον φιορίνι ἕνα καὶ Καραντανία εἴκοσι τῆς Βιέννης, καὶ τοῦτο χωρὶς καμμίαν πρόδοσιν, ἀλλ' εὐθὺς ὁποῦ Θέλει τῷ παραδοθῇ ὁ Τόμος τυπωμένος καὶ δεμένος.

Ἐῤῥωμένοι καὶ εὐδαίμονες διαβιώσοιτε Ἑλλήνων παῖδες. Τῆς ὑμετέρας ἀγάπης ἐξηρτημένοι.

Ἰωάννης Μαρμαροτούρης.
Δημήτριος Βενιέρης.
Σπυρίδων Πρεβέτος.

Ἐν Τριεστίῳ, τῇ πρώτῃ Ὀκτωβρίου, 1799.

THE LORD'S PRAYER IN ROMAIC.

Ω ΠΑΤΕΡΑΜΑΣ ὁ ποῦ εἶσαι εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, ἂς ἁγιασθῇ τὸ ὄνομά σου. Ἂς ἔλθῃ ἡ βασιλεία σου. Ἂς γένῃ τὸ Θέλημά σου. Καθὼς εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, ἔτζη καὶ εἰς τὴν γῆν. Τὸ ψωμίμας τὸ καθημερινὸν, δὸς μας τὸ σήμερον. Καὶ συγχώρησε μας τὰ χρέημας, καθὼς καὶ ἐμεῖς συγχωροῦμεν τοὺς χρεοφειλέτας μας. Καὶ μὴν μᾶς φέρεις εἰς πειρασμὸν, ἀλλὰ ἐλευθέρωσέ μας ἀπὸ τὸν πονηρὸν· Ὅτι δικήσου εἶναι ἡ βασιλεία δὲ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμὴν.

IN GREEK.

ΠΑΤΕΡ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομα σου. Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου· γενηθήτω τὸ Θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ, καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον. Καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν. Καὶ μη εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμὸν, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ. Ὅτι σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία, καὶ ἡ δύναμις, καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμὴν.

CANTO III.

Note 1. Stanza xviii.

In a pride of place here last the eagle flew.

«PRIDE of place» is a term of falconry, and means the highest pitch of flight.—See Macbeth, etc.

«An eagle towering in his pride of place
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Note 2. Stanza xx.

Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

See the famous Song on Harmodius and Aristogiton.—The best English translation is in Bland's Anthology, by Mr Denman.

«With myrtle my sword will I wreathe,» etc.

Note 3. Stanza xxi.

And all went merry as a marriage-bell.

On the night previous to the action, it is said that a ball was given at Brussels.

Notes 4 and 5. Stanza xxvi.

And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears.

Sir Evan Cameron, and his descendant Donald, the «gentle Lochiel» of the «forty-five.»

Note 6. Stanza xxvii.

And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves.

The wood of Soignies is supposed to be a remnant of the «forest of Ardennes,» famous in Boiardo's Orlando, and immortal in Shakspeare's «As you like it.» It is also celebrated in Tacitus as being the spot of successful defence by the Germans against the Roman encroach-

ments.—I have ventured to adopt the name connected with nobler associations than those of mere slaughter.

Note 7. Stanza xxx.

I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not bring.

My guide from Mont St Jean over the field seemed intelligent and accurate. The place where Major Howard fell was not far from two tall and solitary trees (there was a third cut down, or shivered in the battle) which stand a few yards from each other at a pathway's side.—Beneath these he died and was buried. The body has since been removed to England. A small hollow for the present marks where it lay; but will probably soon be effaced; the plough has been upon it, and the grain is.

After pointing out the different spots where Picton and other gallant men had perished, the guide said, « here Major Howard lay; I was near him when wounded.» I told him my relationship, and he seemed then still more anxious to point out the particular spot and circumstances. The place is one of the most marked in the field from the peculiarity of the two trees abovementioned.

I went on horseback twice over the field, comparing it with my recollection of similar scenes. As a plain, Waterloo seems marked out for the scene of some great action, though this may be mere imagination: I have viewed with attention those of Platea, Troy, Mantinea, Leuctra, Chæronea, and Marathon; and the field around Mont St Jean and Hougoumont appears to want little but a better cause, and that undefinable but impressive halo which the lapse of ages throws around a celebrated spot, to vie in interest with any or all of these, except perhaps the last mentioned.

Note 8. Stanza xxxiv.

Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore.

The (fabled) apples on the brink of the lake Asphaltes were said to be fair without, and within ashes.—Vide Tacitus, Histor. l. 5. 7.

Note 9. Stanza xli.

For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

The great error of Napoleon, « if we have writ our annals true,» was a continued obtrusion on mankind of his want of all community of feeling for or with them; perhaps more offensive to human vanity than the active cruelty of more trembling and suspicious tyranny.

Such were his speeches to public assemblies as well as individuals: and the single expression which he is said to have used on returning to Paris after the Russian winter had destroyed his army, rubbing his hands over a fire, « This is pleasanter than Moscow,» would probably alienate more favour from his cause than the destruction and reverses which led to the remark.

Note 10. Stanza xlviii.

What want these outlaws conquerors should have?
« What wants that knave
That a king should have?»

was King James's question on meeting Johnny Armstrong and his followers in full accoutrements—See the Ballad.

Note 11. Song, stanza i.

The castled crag of Drachenfels.

The castle of Drachenfels stands on the highest summit of « the Seven Mountains,» over the Rhine banks; it is in ruins, and connected with some singular traditions: it is the first in view on the road from Bonn, but on the opposite side of the river; on this bank, nearly facing it, are the remains of another called the Jew's castle, and a large cross commemorative of the murder of a chief by his brother. The number of castles and cities along the course of the Rhine on both sides is very great, and their situations remarkably beautiful.

Note 12. Stanza lvii.

The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

The monument of the young and lamented General Marceau (killed by a rifle-ball at Alterkirchen on the last day of the fourth year of the French republic) still remains as described.

The inscriptions on his monument are rather too long, and not required: his name was enough; France adored, and her enemies admired: both wept over him.—His funeral was attended by the generals and detachments from both armies. In the same grave General Hoche is interred, a gallant man also in every sense of the word; but though he distinguished himself greatly in battle, *he* had not the good fortune to die there; his death was attended by suspicions of poison.

A separate monument (not over his body, which is buried by Marceau's) is raised for him near Andernach, opposite to which one of his most memorable exploits was performed, in throwing a bridge to an island on the Rhine. The shape and style are different from that of Marceau's, and the inscription more simple and pleasing.

« The Army of the Sambre and Meuse
to its Commander-in-chief,
HOCHE.»

This is all, and as it should be. Hoche was esteemed among the first of France's earlier generals before Buonaparte monopolized her triumphs.—He was the destined commander of the invading army of Ireland.

Note 13. Stanza lviii.

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd wall.

Ehrenbreitstein, i. e. « the broad Stone of Honour,» one of the strongest fortresses in Europe, was dismantled and blown up by the French at the truce of Leoben.—It had been and could only be reduced by famine or treachery. It yielded to the former, aided by surprise. After having seen the fortifications of Gibraltar and Malta, it did not much strike by comparison, but the situation is commanding. General Marceau besieged it in vain for some time, and I slept in a room where I was shown a window at which he is said to have been standing observing the progress of the siege by moonlight, when a ball struck immediately below it.

Note 14. Stanza lxiii.

Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd each wandering ghost.

The chapel is destroyed and the pyramid of bones diminished to a small number by the Burgundian legion in the service of France, who anxiously effaced this record of their ancestors' less successful invasions. A few still remain, notwithstanding the pains taken by the Burgundians for ages (all who passed that way removing a bone to their own country), and the less justifiable larcenies of the Swiss postilions, who carried them off to sell for knife-handles, a purpose for which the whiteness imbibed by the bleaching of years had rendered them in great request. Of these relics I ventured to bring away as much

as may have made the quarter of a hero, for which the sole excuse is, that if I had not, the next passer by might have perverted them to worse uses than the careful preservation which I intend for them.

Note 15. Stanza lxv.

Levell'd Aventicum hath strew'd her subject lands.

Aventicum (near Morat) was the Roman capital of Helvetia, where Avenches now stands.

Note 16. Stanza lxvi.

And held within their urn one mind, one heart, one dust.

Julia Alpinula, a young Aventian priestess, died soon after a vain endeavour to save her father, condemned to death as a traitor by Aulus Cæcina. Her epitaph was discovered many years ago;—it is thus—

Julia Alpinula
Hic jaceo.
Infelicis patris infelix proles,
Deæ Aventiæ sacerdos.
Exorare patris necem non potui;
Male mori in fatis ille erat.
Vixi annos XXIII.

I know of no human composition so affecting as this, nor a history of deeper interest. These are the names and actions which ought not to perish, and to which we turn with a true and healthy tenderness, from the wretched and glittering detail of a confused mass of conquests and battles, with which the mind is roused for a time to a false and feverish sympathy, from whence it recurs at length with all the nausea consequent on such intoxication.

Note 17. Stanza lxvii.

In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow.

This is written in the eye of Mont Blanc (June 3d, 1816) which even at this distance dazzles mine.

(July 20th.) I this day observed for some time the distinct reflection of Mont Blanc and Mont Argentière in the calm of the lake, which I was crossing in my boat; the distance of these mountains from their mirror is sixty miles.

Note 18. Stanza lxxi.

By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone.

The colour of the Rhone at Geneva is *blue*, to a depth of tint which I have never seen equalled in water, salt or fresh, except in the Mediterranean and Archipelago.

Note 19. Stanza lxxix.

Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possess.

This refers to the account in his « Confessions » of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot (the mistress of St Lambert and his long walk every morning for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance.—Rousseau's description of his feelings on this occasion may be considered as the most passionate, yet not impure description and expression of love that ever kindled into words; which after all must be felt, from their very force, to be inadequate to the delineation: a painting can give no sufficient idea of the ocean.

Note 20. Stanza xci.

Of earth-o'ergazing mountains.

It is to be recollected, that the most beautiful and impressive doctrines of the divine Founder of Christianity were delivered, not in the *Temple*, but on the *Mount*.

To wave the question of devotion, and turn to human eloquence, the most effectual and splendid specimens were not pronounced within walls. Demosthenes addressed the public and popular assemblies. Cicero spoke in the forum. That this added to their effect on the mind of both orator and hearers, may be conceived from the difference between what we read of the emotions then and there produced, and those we ourselves experience in the perusal in the closet. It is one thing to read the Iliad at Sigæum and on the tumuli, or by the springs with mount Ida above, and the plain and rivers and Archipelago around you; and another to trim your taper over it in a snug library—*this* I know.

Were the early and rapid progress of what is called Methodism to be attributed to any cause beyond the enthusiasm excited by its vehement faith and doctrines (the truth or error of which I presume neither to canvass nor to question), I should venture to ascribe it to the practice of preaching in the *fields*, and the unstudied and extemporaneous effusions of its teachers.

The Mussulmans, whose erroneous devotion (at least in the lower orders) is most sincere, and therefore impressive, are accustomed to repeat their prescribed orisons and prayers wherever they may be at the stated hours—of course frequently in the open air, kneeling upon a light mat (which they carry for the purpose of a bed or cushion as required); the ceremony lasts some minutes, during which they are totally absorbed, and only living in their supplication; nothing can disturb them. On me the simple and entire sincerity of these men, and the spirit which appeared to be within and upon them, made a far greater impression than any general rite which was ever performed in places of worship, of which I have seen those of almost every persuasion under the sun: including most of our own sectaries, and the Greek, the Catholic, the Armenian, the Lutheran, the Jewish, and the Mahometan. Many of the negroes, of whom there are numbers in the Turkish empire, are idolaters, and have free exercise of their belief and its rites: some of these I had a distant view of at Patras, and from what I could make out of them, they appeared to be of a truly Pagan description, and not very agreeable to a spectator.

Note 21. Stanza xcii.

The sky is changed!—and such a change! Oh night,

The thunder-storms to which these lines refer occurred on the 13th of June, 1816, at midnight. I have seen among the Acroceraunian mountains of Chimari several more terrible, but none more beautiful.

Note 22. Stanza xcix.

And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought.

Rousseau's *Héloïse*, Letter 17, part 4, note.—« Ces montagnes sont si hautes, qu'une demi-heure après le soleil couché leurs sommets sont encore éclairés de ses rayons, dont le rouge forme sur ces cimes blanches *une belle couleur de rose* qu'on aperçoit de fort loin.» This applies more particularly to the heights over Meillerie.

« J'allai à Vevay loger à la Clef, et pendant deux jours que j'y restai sans voir personne, je pris pour cette ville un amour qui m'a suivi dans tous mes voyages, et qui m'y a fait établir enfin les héros de mon roman. Je dirois volontiers à ceux qui ont du goût et qui sont sensibles: Allez à Vevay—visitez le pays, examinez les sites, promenez-vous sur le lac, et dites si la nature n'a pas fait ce beau pays pour une Julie, pour une

Claire et pour un Saint-Preux; mais ne les y cherchez pas.» *Les Confessions, livre* IV. *page* 306. *Lyon*, 1796.

In July, 1816, I made a voyage round the lake of Geneva; and as far as my own observations have led me in a not uninterested nor inattentive survey of all the scenes most celebrated by Rousseau in his «Héloïse,» I can safely say, that in this there is no exaggeration. It would be difficult to see Clarens (with the scenes around it, Vevay, Chillon, Bôveret, St Gingo, Meillerie, Erian, and the entrances of the Rhone), without being forcibly struck with its peculiar adaptation to the persons and events with which it has been peopled. But this is not all; the feeling with which all around Clarens, and the opposite rocks of Meillerie, is invested, is of a still higher and more comprehensive order than the mere sympathy with individual passion; it is a sense of the existence of love in its most extended and sublime capacity, and of our own participation of its good and of its glory: it is the great principle of the universe, which is there more condensed, but not less manifested; and of which, though knowing ourselves a part, we lose our individuality, and mingle in the beauty of the whole.

If Rousseau had never written, nor lived, the same associations would not less have belonged to such scenes. He has added to the interest of his works by their adoption; he has shown his sense of their beauty by the selection; but they have done that for him which no human being could do for them.

I had the fortune (good or evil as it might be) to sail from Meillerie (where we landed for some time) to St Gingo during a lake storm, which added to the magnificence of all around, although occasionally accompanied by danger to the boat, which was small and overloaded. It was over this very part of the lake that Rousseau has driven the boat of St Preux and Madame Wolmar to Meillerie for shelter during a tempest.

On gaining the shore at St Gingo, I found that the wind had been sufficiently strong to blow down some fine old chesnut trees on the lower part of the mountains. On the opposite height is a seat called the Château de Clarens. The hills are covered with vineyards, and interspersed with some small but beautiful woods; one of these was named the «Bosquet de Julie,» and it is remarkable that, though long ago cut down by the brutal selfishness of the monks of St Bernard (to whom the land appertained), that the ground might be inclosed into a vineyard for the miserable drones of an execrable superstition, the inhabitants of Clarens still point out the spot where its trees stood, calling it by the name which consecrated and survived them.

Rousseau has not been particularly fortunate in the preservation of the «local habitations» he has given to «airy nothings.» The Prior of Great St Bernard has cut down some of his woods for the sake of a few casks of wine, and Buonaparte has levelled part of the rocks of Meillerie in improving the road to the Simplon. The road is an excellent one, but I cannot quite agree with a remark which I heard made, that «La route vaut mieux que les souvenirs.»

Note 23. Stanza cv.

Lausanne and Ferney! ye have been the abodes.

Voltaire and Gibbon.

Note 24. Stanza cxiii.

Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

——————— «If it be thus,
For Banquo's issue have I *filed* my mind.»
Macbeth.

Note 25. Stanza cxiv.

O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve.

It is said by Rochefoucault that «there is *always* something in the misfortunes of men's best friends not displeasing to them.»

CANTO IV.

Note 1. Stanza i.

I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs;
A palace and a prison on each hand.

The communication between the Ducal palace and the prisons of Venice is by a gloomy bridge, or covered gallery, high above the water, and divided by a stone wall into a passage and a cell. The state dungeons, called «pozzi,» or wells, were sunk in the thick walls of the palace; and the prisoner when taken out to die was conducted across the gallery to the other side, and being then led back into the other compartment, or cell, upon the bridge, was there strangled. The low portal through which the criminal was taken into this cell is now walled up; but the passage is still open, and is still known by the name of the Bridge of Sighs. The pozzi are under the flooring of the chamber at the foot of the bridge. They were formerly twelve, but on the first arrival of the French, the Venetians hastily blocked or broke up the deeper of these dungeons. You may still, however, descend by a trap-door, and crawl down through holes, half choked by rubbish, to the depth of two storeys below the first range. If you are in want of consolation for the extinction of patrician power, perhaps you may find it there; scarcely a ray of light glimmers into the narrow gallery which leads to the cells, and the places of confinement themselves are totally dark. A small hole in the wall admitted the damp air of the passages, and served for the introduction of the prisoner's food. A wooden pallet, raised a foot from the ground, was the only furniture. The conductors tell you that a light was not allowed. The cells are about five paces in length, two and a half in width, and seven feet in height. They are directly beneath one another, and respiration is somewhat difficult in the lower holes. Only one prisoner was found when the republicans descended into these hideous recesses, and he is said to have been confined sixteen years. But the inmates of the dungeons beneath had left traces of their repentance, or of their despair, which are still visible, and may perhaps owe something to recent ingenuity. Some of the detained appear to have offended against, and others to have belonged to, the sacred body, not only from their signatures, but from the churches and belfries which they have scratched upon the walls. The reader may not object to see a specimen of the records prompted by so terrific a solitude. As nearly as they could be copied by more than one pencil, three of them are as follows:

I.

NON TI FIDAR AD ALCUNO, PENSA E TACI
SE FUGGIR VUOI DI SPIONI INSIDIE E LACCI

IL PENTIRTI PENTIRTI NULLA GIOVA
MA BEN DI VALOR TUO LA VERA PROVA
1607. ADI 2. GENARO. FUI RE-
TENTO P' LA BESTIEMMA P' AVER DATO
DA MANZAR A UN MORTO
IACOMO. GRITTI. SCRISSE.

2.

UN PARLAR POCO et
NEGARE PRONTO et
UN PENSAR AL FINE PUO DARE LA VITA
A NOI ALTRI MESCHINI
1605.
EGO IOHN BAPTISTA AD
ECCLESIAM CORTELLARIUS.

3.

DI CHI MI FIDO GUARDAMI DIO
DI CHI NON MI FIDO MI GUARDERÒ IO

V^A. LA S^TA. C^R. K^A. R^NA.

The copyist has followed, not corrected the solecisms; some of which are however not quite so decided, since the letters were evidently scratched in the dark. It only need be observed, that *Bestemmia* and *Mangiar* may be read in the first inscription, which was probably written by a prisoner confined for some act of impiety committed at a funeral: that *Cortellarius* is the name of a parish on terra firma, near the sea: and that the last initials evidently are put for *Viva la Santa Chiesa Kattolica Romana.*

Note 2. Stanza ii.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean
Rising, with her tiara of proud towers.

An old writer, describing the appearance of Venice, has made use of the above image, which would not be poetical were it not true.

« *Quo fit ut qui superne urbem contempletur, turritam telluris imaginem medio oceano figuratam se putet inspicere.*»[1]

Note 3. Stanza iii.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more.

The well-known song of the gondoliers, of alternate stanzas, from Tasso's Jerusalem, has died with the independence of Venice. Editions of the poem, with the original on one column, and the Venetian variations on the other, as sung by the boatmen, were once common, and are still to be found. The following extract will serve to show the difference between the Tuscan epic and the « Canta alla Barcariola.»

ORIGINAL.

Canto l' armi pietose, e 'l capitano
Che 'l gran sepolcro liberò di Cristo.
Molto egli oprò col senno, e con la mano,
Molto soffrì nel glorioso acquisto;
E in van l' Inferno a lui s' oppose, e in vano
S' armò d' Asia, e di Libia il popol misto.
Chè il Ciel gli diè favore, e sotto a i santi
Segni ridusse i suoi compagni erranti.

VENETIAN.

L' arme pietose de cantar gho vogia,
E de Goffredo la immortal braura,
Che al fin l' ha libera co strassia, e dogia
Del nostro buon Gesu la sepoltura;
De mezo mondo unito, e de quel Bogia
Missier Pluton no l' ha bu mai paura.
Dio l' ha agiuta, e i compagni sparpagnai
Tutti 'l gh' i ha messi insieme i dì del Dai.

[1] Marci Antonii Sabelli de Venetæ Urbis situ narratio. edit. Taurin. 1527, lib. i. fol. 202.

Some of the elder gondoliers will, however, take up and continue a stanza of their once familiar bard.

On the 7th of last January, the author of Childe Harold, and another Englishman, the writer of this notice, rowed to the Lido with two singers, one of whom was a carpenter, and the other a gondolier. The former placed himself at the prow, the latter at the stern of the boat. A little after leaving the quay of the Piazetta, they began to sing, and continued their exercise until we arrived at the island. They gave us, amongst other essays, the death of Clorinda, and the palace of Armida; and did not sing the Venetian, but the Tuscan verses. The carpenter, however, who was the cleverer of the two, and was frequently obliged to prompt his companion, told us that he could *translate* the original. He added, that he could sing almost three hundred stanzas, but had not spirits (*morbin* was the word he used), to learn any more, or to sing what he already knew: a man must have idle time on his hands to acquire, or to repeat, and, said the poor fellow, « look at my clothes and at me, I am starving.» This speech was more affecting than his performance, which habit alone can make attractive. The recitative was shrill, screaming, and monotonous, and the gondolier behind assisted his voice by holding his hand to one side of his mouth. The carpenter used a quiet action, which he evidently endeavoured to restrain; but was too much interested in his subject altogether to repress. From these men we learnt that singing is not confined to the gondoliers, and that, although the chant is seldom, if ever, voluntary, there are still several amongst the lower classes who are acquainted with a few stanzas.

It does not appear that it is usual for the performers to row and sing at the same time. Although the verses of the Jerùsalem are no longer casually heard, there is yet much music upon the Venetian canals; and upon holidays, those strangers who are not near or informed enough to distinguish the words, may fancy that many of the gondolas still resound with the strains of Tasso. The writer of some remarks which appeared in the Curiosities of Literature must excuse his being twice quoted; for, with the exception of some phrases a little too ambitious and extravagant, he has furnished a very exact, as well as agreeable, description.

« In Venice the gondoliers know by heart long passages from Ariosto and Tasso, and often chant them with a peculiar melody. But this talent seems at present on the decline:—at least, after taking some pains, I could find no more than two persons who delivered to me in this way a passage from Tasso. I must add, that the late Mr Berry once chanted to me a passage in Tasso in the manner, as he assured me, of the gondoliers.

« There are always two concerned, who alternately sing the strophes. We know the melody eventually by Rousseau, to whose songs it is printed; it has properly no melodious movement; and is a sort of medium between the canto fermo and the canto figurato; it approaches to the former by recitativical declamation, and to the latter by passages and course, by which one syllable is detained and embellished.

« I entered a gondola by moonlight; one singer placed himself forwards, and the other aft, and thus proceeded to St Georgio. One began the song. when he had ended his strophe, the other took up the lay, and so continued the song alternately. Throughout the whole of it, the same notes invariably returned, but, according to the subject matter of the strophe, they laid a greater or a

smaller stress, sometimes on one, and sometimes on another note, and indeed changed the enunciation of the whole strophe as the object of the poem altered.

« On the whole, however, the sounds were hoarse and screaming: they seemed, in the manner of all rude uncivilized men, to make the excellency of their singing in the force of their voice: one seemed desirous of conquering the other by the strength of his lungs; and so far from receiving delight from this scene (shut up as I was in the box of the gondola), I found myself in a very unpleasant situation.

« My companion, to whom I communicated this circumstance, being very desirous to keep up the credit of his countrymen, assured me that this singing was very delightful when heard at a distance. Accordingly we got out upon the shore, leaving one of the singers in the gondola, while the other went to the distance of some hundred paces. They now began to sing against one another, and I kept walking up and down between them both, so as always to leave him who was to begin his part. I frequently stood still and hearkened to the one and to the other.

« Here the scene was properly introduced. The strong declamatory, and, as it were, shrieking sound, met the ear from far, and called forth the attention; the quickly succeeding transitions, which necessarily required to be sung in a lower tone, seemed like plaintive strains succeeding the vociferations of emotion or of pain. The other, who listened attentively, immediately began where the former left off, answering him in milder or more vehement notes, according as the purport of the strophe required. The sleepy canals, the lofty buildings, the splendour of the moon, the deep shadows of the few gondolas, that moved like spirits hither and thither, increased the striking peculiarity of the scene; and amidst all these circumstances it was easy to confess the character of this wonderful harmony.

« It suits perfectly well with an idle solitary mariner, lying at length in his vessel at rest on one of these canals, waiting for his company, or for a fare, the tiresomeness of which situation is somewhat alleviated by the songs and poetical stories he has in memory. He often raises his voice as loud as he can, which extends itself to a vast distance over the tranquil mirror, and as all is still around, he is, as it were, in a solitude in the midst of a large and populous town. Here is no rattling of carriages, no noise of foot passengers: a silent gondola glides now and then by him, of which the splashing of the oars are scarcely to be heard.

« At a distance he hears another, perhaps utterly unknown to him. Melody and verse immediately attach the two strangers; he becomes the responsive echo to the former, and exerts himself to be heard as he had heard the other. By a tacit convention they alternate verse for verse; though the song should last the whole night through, they entertain themselves without fatigue; the hearers, who are passing between the two, take part in the amusement.

« This vocal performance sounds best at a great distance, and is then inexpressibly charming, as it only fulfils its design in the sentiment of remoteness. It is plaintive, but not dismal in its sound, and at times it is scarcely possible to refrain from tears. My companion, who otherwise was not a very delicately organized person, said quite unexpectedly: « è singolare come quel canto intenerisce, e molto più quando lo cantano meglio.»

« I was told that the women of Libo, the long row of islands that divides the Adriatic from the Lagouns,[1] particularly the women of the extreme districts of Malamocca and Palestrina, sing in like manner the works of Tasso to these and similar tunes.

« They have the custom, when their husbands are fishing out at sea, to sit along the shore in the evenings and vociferate these songs, and continue to do so with great violence, till each of them can distinguish the responses of her own husband at a distance.»[2]

The love of music and of poetry distinguishes all classes of Venetians, even amongst the tuneful sons of Italy. The city itself can occasionally furnish respectable audiences for two and even three opera houses at a time; and there are few events in private life that do not call forth a printed and circulated sonnet. Does a physician or a lawyer take his degree, or a clergyman preach his maiden sermon, has a surgeon performed an operation, would a harlequin announce his departure or his benefit, are you to be congratulated on a marriage, or a birth, or a law-suit, the Muses are invoked to furnish the same number of syllables, and the individual triumphs blaze abroad in virgin white or party-coloured placards on half the corners of the capital. The last curtsy of a favourite « prima donna» brings down a shower of these poetical tributes from those upper regions, from which, in our theatres, nothing but cupids and snow storms are accustomed to descend. There is a poetry in the very life of a Venetian, which, in its common course, is varied with those surprises and changes so recommendable in fiction, but so different from the sober monotony of northern existence; amusements are raised into duties, duties are softened into amusements, and every object being considered as equally making a part of the business of life, is announced and performed with the same earnest indifference and gay assiduity. The Venetian gazette constantly closes its columns with the following triple advertisement.

Charàdè.

Exposition of the most Holy Sacrament in the church of St ———

Theatres.

St Moses, opera.
St Benedict, a comedy of characters.
St Luke, repose.

When it is recollected what the Catholics believe their consecrated wafer to be, we may perhaps think it worthy of a more respectable niche than between poetry and the playhouse.

Note 4. Stanza x.

Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.

The answer of the mother of Brasidas to the strangers who praised the memory of her son.

Note 5. Stanza xi.

St Mark yet sees his lion where he stood
Stand,—

The lion has lost nothing by his journey to the *Invalides*, but the gospel which supported the paw that is now on a level with the other foot. The horses also are returned to the ill-chosen spot whence they set out, and are, as before, half hidden under the porch window of St Mark's church.

[1] The writer meant *Lido*, which is not a long row of islands, but a long island—*littus*, the shore.

[2] [Curiosities of Literature, vol. ii. p. 156. edit. 1807; and Appendix xxix. to Black's Life of Tasso.]

Their history, after a desperate struggle, has been satisfactorily explored. The decisions and doubts of Erizzo and Zanetti, and lastly, of the Count Leopold Cicognara, would have given them a Roman extraction, and a pedigree not more ancient than the reign of Nero. But M. de Schlegel stepped in to teach the Venetians the value of their own treasures, and a Greek vindicated, at last and for ever, the pretension of his countrymen to this noble production.[1] Mr Mustoxidi has not been left without a reply; but, as yet, he has received no answer. It should seem that the horses are irrevocably Chian, and were transferred to Constantinople by Theodosius. Lapidary writing is a favourite play of the Italians, and has conferred reputation on more than one of their literary characters. One of the best specimens of Bodoni's typography is a respectable volume of inscriptions, all written by his friend Pacciaudi. Several were prepared for the recovered horses. It is to be hoped the best was not selected, when the following words were ranged in gold letters above the cathedral porch:

QUATUOR . EQUORUM . SIGNA . A . VENETIS . BYZANTIO . CAPTA . AD . TEMP . D . MAR . A . R . S . MCCIV . POSITA . QUÆ . HOSTILIS . CUPIDITAS . A . MDCCCIII . ABSTULERAT . FRANC . I . IMP . PACIS . ORBI . DATÆ . TROPHÆUM . A . MDCCCXV . VICTOR . REDUXIT.

Nothing shall be said of the Latin, but it may be permitted to observe, that the injustice of the Venetians in transporting the horses from Constantinople was at least equal to that of the French in carrying them to Paris, and that it would have been more prudent to have avoided all allusions to either robbery. An apostolic prince should, perhaps, have objected to affixing over the principal entrance of a metropolitan church, an inscription having a reference to any other triumphs than those of religion. Nothing less than the pacification of the world can excuse such a solecism.

Note 6. Stanza xii.

The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
An emperor tramples where an emperor knelt.

After many vain efforts on the part of the Italians entirely to throw off the yoke of Frederick Barbarossa, and as fruitless attempts of the emperor to make himself absolute master throughout the whole of his Cisalpine dominions, the bloody struggles of four and twenty years were happily brought to a close in the city of Venice. The articles of a treaty had been previously agreed upon between Pope Alexander III. and Barbarossa, and the former having received a safe-conduct, had already arrived at Venice from Ferrara, in company with the ambassadors of the king of Sicily and the consuls of the Lombard league. There still remained, however, many points to adjust, and for several days the peace was believed to be impracticable. At this juncture it was suddenly reported that the emperor had arrived at Chioza, a town fifteen miles from the capital. The Venetians rose tumultuously, and insisted upon immediately conducting him to the city. The Lombards took the alarm, and departed towards Treviso. The Pope himself was apprehensive of some disaster if Frederic should suddenly advance upon him, but was reassured by the prudence and address of Sebastian Ziani, the Doge. Several embassies passed between Chioza and the capital, until, at last, the emperor relaxing somewhat of his pretensions, «laid aside his leonine ferocity, and put on the mildness of the lamb.»[2]

On Saturday the 23d of July, in the year 1177, six Venetian galleys transferred Frederic, in great pomp, from Chioza to the island of Lido, a mile from Venice. Early the next morning the Pope, accompanied by the Sicilian ambassadors, and by the envoys of Lombardy, whom he had recalled from the main land, together with a great concourse of people, repaired from the patriarchal palace to Saint Mark's church, and solemnly absolved the emperor and his partisans from the excommunication pronounced against him. The chancellor of the empire, on the part of his master, renounced the anti-popes and their schismatic adherents. Immediately the doge, with a great suite both of the clergy and laity, got on board the galleys, and waiting on Frederic, rowed him in mighty state from the Lido to the capital. The emperor descended from the galley at the quay of the Piazzetta. The doge, the patriarch, his bishops and clergy, and the people of Venice, with their crosses and their standards, marched in solemn procession before him to the church of Saint Mark. Alexander was seated before the vestibule of the basilica, attended by his bishops and cardinals, by the patriarch of Aquileja, by the archbishops and bishops of Lombardy, all of them in state, and clothed in their church robes. Frederic approached—«moved by the Holy Spirit, venerating the Almighty in the person of Alexander, laying aside his imperial dignity, and throwing off his mantle, he prostrated himself at full length at the feet of the Pope. Alexander, with tears in his eyes, raised him benignantly from the ground, kissed him, blessed him; and immediately the Germans of the train sang, with a loud voice, 'We praise thee, O Lord.' The emperor then taking the Pope by the right hand, led him to the church, and having received his benediction, returned to the ducal palace.»[2] The ceremony of humiliation was repeated the next day. The Pope himself, at the request of Frederic, said mass at Saint Mark's. The emperor again laid aside his imperial mantle, and, taking a wand in his hand, officiated as *verger*, driving the laity from the choir, and preceding the pontiff to the altar. Alexander, after reciting the gospel, preached to the people. The emperor put himself close to the pulpit in the attitude of listening; and the pontiff, touched by this mark of his attention, for he knew that Frederic did not understand a word he said, commanded the patriarch of Aquileja to translate the Latin discourse into the German tongue. The creed was then chaunted. Frederic made his oblation, and kissed the Pope's feet, and, mass being over, led him by the hand to his white horse. He held the stirrup, and would have led the horse's rein to the water side, had not the Pope accepted of the inclination for the performance, and affectionately dismissed him with his benediction. Such is the substance of the account left by the archbishop of Salerno, who was present at the ceremony, and whose story is confirmed by every subsequent narration. It would be not worth so minute a record, were it not the triumph of liberty as well as

[1] Sui quattro cavalli della Basilica di S. Marco in Venezia. Lettera di Andrea Mustoxidi Corcirese. Padova per Bettoni e compagni. 1816.

[1] «Quibus auditis, imperator, operante eo, qui corda principum sicut vult et quando vult humiliter inclinat, leonina feritate deposita, ovinam mansuetudinem induit.» Romualdi Salernitani. Chronicon. apud Script. Rer. Ital. tom. VII. p. 229.

[2] Ibid. page 231.

of superstition. The states of Lombardy owed to it the confirmation of their privileges; and Alexander had reason to thank the Almighty, who had enabled an infirm, unarmed old man to subdue a terrible and potent sovereign.[1]

Note 7. Stanza xii.

Oh, for one hour of blind old Dandolo!
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe.

The reader will recollect the exclamation of the highlander, *Oh for one hour of Dundee!* Henry Dandolo, when elected doge, in 1192, was eighty-five years of age. When he commanded the Venetians at the taking of Constantinople, he was consequently ninety-seven years old. At this age he annexed the fourth and a half of the whole empire of Romania,[2] for so the Roman empire was then called, to the title and to the territories of the Venetian Doge. The three-eighths of this empire were preserved in the diplomas until the dukedom of Giovanni Dolfino, who made use of the above designation in the year 1357.[3]

Dandolo led the attack on Constantinople in person: two ships, the Paradise and the Pilgrim, were tied together, and a drawbridge or ladder let down from their higher yards to the walls. The doge was one of the first to rush into the city. Then was completed, said the Venetians, the prophecy of the Erythræan sybil, « A gathering together of the powerful shall be made amidst the waves of the Adriatic, under à blind leader: they shall beset the goat—they shall profane Byzantium—they shall blacken her buildings—her spoils shall be dispersed; a new goat shall bleat until they have measured out and run over fifty-four feet, nine inches, and a half.»[4]

Dandolo died on the first day of June, 1205, having reigned thirteen years, six months, and five days, and was buried in the church of St Sophia, at Constantinople. Strangely enough it must sound, that the name of the rebel apothecary who received the doge's sword, and annihilated the ancient government in 1796-7, was Dandolo.

Note 8. Stanza xiii.

But is not Doria's menace come to pass?
Are they not bridled?

After the loss of the battle of Pola, and the taking of Chioza on the 16th of August, 1379, by the united armament of the Genoese and Francesco da Carrara, Signor of Padua, the Venetians were reduced to the utmost despair. An embassy was sent to the conquerors with a blank sheet of paper, praying them to prescribe what terms they pleased, and leave to Venice only her independence. The Prince of Padua was inclined to listen to these proposals, but the Genoese, who, after the victory at Pola, had shouted, « to Venice, to Venice, and long live St George,» determined to annihilate their rival, and Peter Doria, their commander in chief, returned this answer to the suppliants: « On God's faith, gentlemen of Venice, ye shall have no peace from the Signor of Padua, nor from our commune of Genoa, until we have first put a rein upon those unbridled horses of yours, that are upon the porch of your evangelist St Mark. When we have bridled them, we shall keep you quiet. And this is the pleasure of us and of our commune. As for these my brothers of Genoa, that you have brought with you to give up to us, I will not have them: take them back; for, in a few days hence, I shall come and let them out of prison myself, both these and all the others.»[1] In fact, the Genoese did advance as far as Malamocco, within five miles of the capital; but their own danger and the pride of their enemies gave courage to the Venetians, who made prodigious efforts, and many individual sacrifices, all of them carefully recorded by their historians. Vettor Pisani was put at the head of thirty-four galleys. The Genoese broke up from Malamocco, and retired to Chioza in October; but they again threatened Venice, which was reduced to extremities. At this time, the 1st of January, 1380, arrived Carlo Zeno, who had been cruising on the Genoese coast with fourteen galleys. The Venetians were now strong enough to besiege the Genoese. Doria was killed on the 22d of January by a stone bullet a hundred and ninety-five pounds weight, discharged from a bombard called the Trevisan. Chioza was then closely invested; five thousand auxiliaries, amongst whom were some English Condottieri, commanded by one Captain Ceccho, joined the Venetians. The Genoese, in their turn, prayed for conditions, but none were granted, until, at last, they surrendered at discretion; and, on the 24th of June, 1380, the Doge Contarini made his triumphal entry into Chioza. Four thousand prisoners, nineteen galleys, many smaller vessels and barks, with all the ammunition and arms, and outfit of the expedition, fell into the hands of the conquerors, who, had it not been for the inexorable answer of Doria, would have gladly reduced their dominion to the city of Venice. An account of these transactions is found in a work called the War of Chioza, written by Daniel Chinazzo, who was in Venice at the time.[2]

Note 9. Stanza xiv.

The « Planter of the Lion.»

Plant the Lion—that is, the Lion of St Mark, the

[1] See the above cited Romuald of Salerno. In a second sermon which Alexander preached, on the first day of August, before the emperor, he compared Frederic to the prodigal son, and himself to the forgiving father.

[2] Mr Gibbon has omitted the important æ, and has written Romani instead of Romaniæ. Decline and Fall, cap. lxi, note 9. But the title acquired by Dandolo runs thus in the chronicle of his namesake, the Doge Andrew Dandolo. *Ducali titulo addidit.* « *Quartæ partis et dimidiæ totius imperii Romaniæ.* » And. Dand. Chronicon. cap. iii, pars xxxvii, ap. Script. Rer. Ital. tom. xii, page 331. And the Romaniæ is observed in the subsequent acts of the doges. Indeed the continental possessions of the Greek empire in Europe were then generally known by the name of Romania, and that appellation is still seen in the maps of Turkey as applied to Thrace.

[3] See the continuation of Dandolo's Chronicle, ibid. p. 498. Mr Gibbon appears not to include Dolfino, following Sanudo, who says, « *il qual titolo si usò fin al Doge Giovanni Dolfino.* » See Vite de' Duchi de Venezia, ap. Script. Rer. Ital. tom. xxii, 530, 641.

[4] « Fiet potentium in aquis Adriaticis congregatio, cæco præduce, Hircum ambigent, Byzantium prophanabunt, ædificia denigrabunt; spolia dispergéntur, Hircus novus balabit usque dum LIV pedes et IX pollices, et semis præmensurati discurrant.» [Chronicon. ibid. pars xxxiv.]

[1] « Alla fe di Dio, Signori Venetiani, non havarete mai pace dal Signore di Padoua, nè dal nostro comune di Genova, se primieramente non mettemo le briglie a quelli vostri cavalli sfrenati, che sono su la Reza del Vostro Evangelista S. Marco. Infrenati che gli havremo, vi faremo stare in buona pace. E questa è la intenzione nostra, e del nostro comune. Questi miei fratelli Genovesi che havete menati con voi per donarci, non li voglio; rimanetegli in dietro perche io intendo da quì a pochi giorni venirgli a riscuoter dalle vostre prigioni, e loro e gli altri.»

[2] « Chronica della guerra di Chioza,» etc. Script. Rer. Ital. tom. xv, pp. 699 to 804.

standard of the republic, which is the origin of the word Pantaloon—Pianta-leone, Pantaleon, Pantaloon.

Note 10. Stanza xv.

Thin streets and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what enthrals.

The population of Venice at the end of the seventeenth century amounted to nearly two hundred thousand souls. At the last census, taken two years ago, it was no more than about one hundred and three thousand, and it diminishes daily. The commerce and the official employments, which were to be the unexhausted source of Venetian grandeur, have both expired.[1] Most of the patrician mansions are deserted, and would gradually disappear, had not the government, alarmed by the demolition of seventy-two, during the last two years, expressly forbidden this sad resource of poverty. Many remnants of the Venetian nobility are now scattered and confounded with the wealthier Jews upon the banks of the Brenta, whose palladian palaces have sunk, or are sinking, in the general decay. Of the « gentil uomo Veneto,» the name is still known, and that is all. He is but the shadow of his former self, but he is polite and kind. It surely may be pardoned to him if he is querulous. Whatever may have been the vices of the republic, and although the natural term of its existence may be thought by foreigners to have arrived in the due course of mortality, only one sentiment can be expected from the Venetians themselves. At no time were the subjects of the republic so unanimous in their resolution to rally round the standard of St Mark, as when it was for the last time unfurled; and the cowardice and the treachery of the few patricians who recommended the fatal neutrality, were confined to the persons of the traitors themselves.

The present race cannot be thought to regret the loss of their aristocratical forms, and too despotic government; they think only on their vanished independence. They pine away at the remembrance, and on this subject suspend for a moment their gay good-humour. Venice may be said, in the words of the scripture, « to die daily; » and so general and so apparent is the decline, as to become painful to a stranger, not reconciled to the sight of a whole nation expiring as it were before his eyes. So artificial a creation, having lost that principle which called it into life and supported its existence, must fall to pieces at once, and sink more rapidly than it rose. The abhorrence of slavery which drove the Venetians to the sea has, since their disaster, forced them to the land, where they may be at least overlooked amongst the crowd of dependants, and not present the humiliating spectacle of a whole nation loaded with recent chains. Their liveliness, their affability, and that happy indifference which constitution alone can give, for philosophy aspires to it in vain, have not sunk under circumstances; but many peculiarities of costume and manner have by degrees been lost, and the nobles, with a pride common to all Italians who have been masters, have not been persuaded to parade their insignificance. That splendour which was a proof and a portion of their power, they would not degrade into the trappings of their subjection. They retired from the space which they had occupied in the eyes of their fellow-citizens; their continuance in which would have been a symptom of acquiescence, and an insult to those who suffered by the common misfortune. Those who remained in the degraded capital, might be said rather to haunt the scenes of their departed power, than to live in them. The reflection, « who and what enthrals,» will hardly bear a comment from one who is, nationally, the friend and the ally of the conqueror. It may, however, be allowed to say thus much, that, to those who wish to recover their independence, any masters must be an object of detestation; and it may be safely foretold that this unprofitable aversion will not have been corrected before Venice shall have sunk into the slime of her choked canals.

[1] « Nonnullorum è nobilitate immensæ sunt opes, adeo ut vix æstimari possint. id quod tribus è rebus oritur, parsimonia, commercio, atque iis emolumentis, quæ è repub. percipiunt, quæ hanc ob causam diuturna fore creditur.»—See De Principatibus Italiæ Tractatus, edit. 1631.

Note 11. Stanza xvi.

Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse.

The story is told in Plutarch's Life of Nicias.

Note 12. Stanza xviii.

And Otway, Ratcliffe, Schiller, Shakspeare's art.

Venice Preserved; Mysteries of Udolpho; the Ghost-seer, or Armenian; the Merchant of Venice; Othello.

Note 13. Stanza xx.

But from their nature will the tannen grow
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks.

Tannen is the plural of *tanne*, a species of fir peculiar to the Alps, which only thrives in very rocky parts, where scarcely soil sufficient for its nourishment can be found. On these spots it grows to a greater height than any other mountain tree.

Note 14. Stanza xxviii.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven.

The above description may seem fantastical or exaggerated to those who have never seen an oriental or an Italian sky; yet it is but a literal and hardly sufficient delineation of an August evening (the eighteenth), as contemplated in one of many rides along the banks of the Brenta near La Mira.

Note 15. Stanza xxx.

Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

Thanks to the critical acumen of a Scotchman, we now know as little of Laura as ever.[1] The discoveries of the Abbé de Sade, his triumphs, his sneers, can no longer instruct or amuse.[2] We must not, however, think that these memoirs are as much a romance as Belisarius or the Incas, although we are told so by Dr Beattie, a great name, but a little authority.[3] His « labours has not been in vain, notwithstanding his « love» has, like most other passions, made him ridiculous.[4] The hypothesis which overpowered the struggling Ita-

[1] See An historical and critical Essay on the Life and Character of Petrarch; and a Dissertation on an Historical Hypothesis of the Abbé de Sade: the first appeared about the year 1784; the other is inserted in the fourth volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and both have been incorporated into a work, published, under the first title, by Ballantyne in 1810.

[2] Mémoires pour la Vie de Pétrarque.

[3] Life of Beattie, by Sir W. Forbes, t. ii, p. 106.

[4] Mr Gibbon called his Memoirs « *a labour of love*,» (see Decline and Fall, cap. lxx, note 1,) and followed him with confidence and delight. The compiler of a very voluminous work must take much criticism upon trust. Mr Gibbon has done so, though not so readily as some other authors.

lians, and carried along less interested critics in its current, is run out. We have another proof that we can never be sure that the paradox, the most singular, and therefore having the most agreeable and authentic air, will not give place to the re-established ancient prejudice.

It seems then, first, that Laura was born, lived, died, and was buried, not in Avignon, but in the country. The fountains of the Sorga, the thickets of Cabrières, may resume their pretensions, and the exploded *de la Bastie* again be heard with complacency. The hypothesis of the abbé had no stronger props than the parchment sonnet and medal found on the skeleton of the wife of Hugo de Sade, and the manuscript note to the Virgil of Petrarch, now in the Ambrosian library. If these proofs were both incontestable, the poetry was written, the medal composed, cast, and deposited, within the space of twelve hours; and these deliberate duties were performed round the carcase of one who died of the plague, and was hurried to the grave on the day of her death. These documents, therefore, are too decisive: they prove, not the fact, but the forgery. Either the sonnet or the Virgilian note must be a falsification. The abbé cites both as incontestably true; the consequent deduction is inevitable—they are both evidently false.[1]

Secondly, Laura was never married, and was a haughty virgin rather than that *tender and prudent* wife who honoured Avignon by making that town the theatre of an honest French passion, and played off for one-and-twenty years her *little machinery* of alternate favours and refusals[2] upon the first poet of the age. It was, indeed, rather too unfair that a female should be made responsible for eleven children upon the faith of a misinterpreted abbreviation, and the decision of a librarian.[3] It is, however, satisfactory to think that the love of Petrarch was not platonic. The happiness which he prayed to possess but once and for a moment was surely not of the mind,[4] and something so very real as a marriage project, with one who has been idly called a shadowy nymph, may be, perhaps, detected in at least six places of his own sonnets.[5] The love of Petrarch was neither platonic nor poetical; and if in one passage of his works he calls it «amore veementeissimo ma unico ed onesto,» he confesses, in a letter to a friend, that it was guilty and perverse, that it absorbed him quite, and mastered his heart.[1]

In this case, however, he was perhaps alarmed for the culpability of his wishes; for the Abbé de Sade himself, who certainly would not have been scrupulously delicate, if he could have proved his descent from Petrarch as well as Laura, is forced into a stout defence of his virtuous grandmother. As far as relates to the poet, we have no security for the innocence, except perhaps in the constancy of his pursuit. He assures us in his epistle to posterity that, when arrived at his fortieth year, he not only had in horror, but had lost all recollection and image of any «irregularity.»[2] But the birth of his natural daughter cannot be assigned earlier than his thirty-ninth year; and either the memory or the morality of the poet must have failed him, when he forgot or was guilty of this *slip*.[3] The weakest argument for the purity of this love has been drawn from the permanence of effects, which survived the object of his passion. The reflexion of Mr de la Bastie, that virtue alone is capable of making impressions which death cannot efface, is one of those which every body applauds, and every body finds not to be true, the moment he examines his own breast or the records of human feeling.[4] Such apothegms can do nothing for Petrarch or for the cause of morality, except with the very weak and the very young. He that has made even a little progress beyond ignorance and pupilage, cannot be edified with any thing but truth. What is called vindicating the honour of an individual or a nation, is the most futile, tedious, and uninstructive of all writing; although it will always meet with more applause than that sober criticism, which is attributed to the malicious desire of reducing a great man to the common standard of humanity. It is, after all, not unlikely, that our historian was right in retaining his favorite hypothetic salvo, which secures the author, although it scarcely saves the honour of the still unknown mistress of Petrarch.[5]

Note 16. Stanza xxxi.

They keep his dust in Arquà, where he died.

Petrarch retired to Arquà immediately on his return from the unsuccessful attempt to visit Urban V. at Rome, in the year 1370, and, with the exception of his celebrated visit to Venice in company with Francesco Novello da Carrara, he appears to have passed the four last years of his life between that charming solitude and Padua. For four months previous to his death he was in a state of continual languor, and in the morning of July the 19th, in the year 1374, was found dead in his library chair with his head resting upon a book. The chair is still shown amongst the precious relics of Arquà, which, from the uninterrupted veneration that has been attached to every thing relative to this great man from

[1] The sonnet had before awakened the suspicions of Mr Horace Walpole. See his letter to Wharton in 1763.

[2] «Par ce petit manége, cette alternative de faveurs et de rigueurs bien ménagée, une femme tendre et sage amuse, pendant vingt-un ans, le plus grand poete de son siècle, sans faire la moindre brèche à son honneur.» Mém. pour la Vie de Pétrarque, Préface aux Français. The Italian editor of the London edition of Petrarch, who has translated Lord Woodhouselee, renders the «femme tendre et sage,» «*raffinata civetta*.» Riflessioni intorno a Madonna Laura, p. 234, vol. iii, ed. 1811.

[3] In a dialogue with St Augustin, Petrarch has described Laura as having a body exhausted with repeated *ptubs*. The old editors read and printed *parturbationibus*; but Mr Capperonier, librarian to the French King in 1762, who saw the MS. in the Paris library, made an attestation that «*on lit et qu'on doit lire, partubus exhaustum*.» De Sade joined the names of Messrs Boudot and Bejot with Mr Capperonier, and in the whole discussion on this *ptubs*, showed himself a downright literary rogue. See Riflessioni, etc. p. 267. Thomas Aquinas is called in to settle whether Petrarch's mistress was a *chaste* maid or a *continent* wife.

[4] «Pigmalion, quanto lodarti dei
Dell' immagine tua, se mille volte
N' avesti quel ch' i' sol una vorrei.»
Sonetto 58, *Quando giunse a Simon l' alto concetto. Le Rime*, etc. par. i. pag. 189, edit. Ven. 1756.

[5] See Riflessioni, etc. p. 291.

[1] «Quella rea e perversa passione che solo tutto mi occupava e mi regnava nel cuore.»

[2] *Azion disonesta*, are his words.

[3] «A questa confessione così sincera diede forse occasione una nuova caduta ch' ei fece.» Tiraboschi, Storia, etc. tom. v, lib. iv, par. ii, pag. 492.

[4] «*Il n'y a que la vertu seule qui soit capable de faire des impressions que la mort n'efface pas.*» M. de Bimard, Baron de la Bastie, in the Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres for 1740 and 1751. See also Riflessioni, etc. p. 295.

[5] «And if the virtue or prudence of Laura was inexorable, he enjoyed, and might boast of enjoying the nymph of poetry.» Decline and Fall, cap. lxx, p. 327, vol. xii, oct. Perhaps the *if* is here meant for *although*.

the moment of his death to the present hour, have, it may be hoped, a better chance of authenticity than the Shaksperian memorials of Stratford upon Avon.

Arquà (for the last syllable is accented in pronunciation, although the analogy of the English language has been observed in the verse), is twelve miles from Padua, and about three miles on the right of the high road to Rovigo, in the bosom of the Euganean hills. After a walk of twenty minutes, across a flat well-wooded meadow, you come to a little blue lake, clear but fathomless, and to the foot of a succession of acclivities and hills, clothed with vineyards and orchards, rich with fir and pomegranate trees, and every sunny fruit shrub. From the banks of the lake the road winds into the hills, and the church of Arquà is soon seen between a cleft where two ridges slope towards each other, and nearly inclose the village. The houses are scattered at intervals on the steep sides of these summits; and that of the poet is on the edge of a little knoll overlooking two descents, and commanding a view not only of the glowing gardens in the dales immediately beneath, but of the wide plains, above whose low woods of mulberry and willow thickened into a dark mass by festoons of vines, tall single cypresses, and the spires of towns are seen in the distance, which stretches to the mouths of the Po and the shores of the Adriatic. The climate of these volcanic hills is warmer, and the vintage begins a week sooner than in the plains of Padua. Petrarch is laid, for he cannot be said to be buried, in a sarcophagus of red marble, raised on four pilasters on an elevated base, and preserved from an association with meaner tombs. It stands conspicuously alone, but will be soon overshadowed by four lately planted laurels. Petrarch's fountain, for here every thing is Petrarch's, springs and expands itself beneath an artificial arch, a little below the church, and abounds plentifully, in the driest season, with that soft water which was the ancient wealth of the Euganean hills. It would be more attractive, were it not, in some seasons, beset with hornets and wasps. No other coincidence could assimilate the tombs of Petrarch and Archilochus. The revolutions of centuries have spared these sequestered valleys, and the only violence which has been offered to the ashes of Petrarch was prompted, not by hate, but veneration. An attempt was made to rob the sarcophagus of its treasure, and one of the arms was stolen by a Florentine through a rent which is still visible. The injury is not forgotten, but has served to identify the poet with the country where he was born, but where he would not live. A peasant boy of Arquà being asked who Petrarch was, replied, « that the people of the parsonage knew all about him, but that he only knew that he was a Florentine.»

Mr Forsyth [1] was not quite correct in saying, that Petrarch never returned to Tuscany after he had once quitted it when a boy. It appears he did pass through Florence on his way from Parma to Rome, and on his return in the year 1350, and remained there long enough to form some acquaintance with its most distinguished inhabitants. A Florentine gentleman, ashamed of the aversion of the poet for his native country, was eager to point out this trivial error in our accomplished traveller, whom he knew and respected for an extraordinary capacity, extensive erudition, and refined taste, joined to that engaging simplicity of manners which has been so frequently recognized as the surest, though it is certainly not an indispensable, trait of superior genius.

Every footstep of Laura's lover has been anxiously traced and recorded. The house in which he lodged is shown in Venice. The inhabitants of Arezzo, in order to decide the ancient controversy between their city and the neighbouring Ancisa, where Petrarch was carried when seven months old, and remained until his seventh year, have designated by a long inscription the spot where their great fellow-citizen was born. A tablet has been raised to him at Parma, in the chapel of St Agatha, at the cathedral, [1] because he was archdeacon of that society, and was only snatched from his intended sepulture in their church by a *foreign* death. Another tablet with a bust has been erected to him at Pavia, on account of his having passed the autumn of 1368 in that city, with his son-in-law Brossano. The political condition which has for ages precluded the Italians from the criticism of the living, has concentrated their attention to the illustration of the dead.

Note 17. Stanza xxxiv.

Or it may be with demons.

The struggle is to the full as likely to be with demons as with our better thoughts. Satan chose the wilderness for the temptation of Our Saviour. And our unsullied John Locke preferred the presence of a child to complete solitude.

Note 18. Stanza xxxviii.

In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire;
And Boileau, whose rash envy, etc.

Perhaps the couplet in which Boileau depreciates Tasso, may serve as well as any other specimen to justify the opinion given of the harmony of French verse.

A Malherbe, à Racan préférer Théophile,
Et le clinquant du Tasse a tout l'or de Virgile.
Sat. ix. verse 176.

The biographer Serassi, [2] out of tenderness to the reputation either of the Italian or the French poet, is eager to observe that the satirist recanted or explained away this censure, and subsequently allowed the author of the Jerusalem to be a « genius sublime, vast, and happily born for the higher flights of poetry.» To this we will add, that the recantation is far from satisfactory, when

[1] D. O. M.
Francisco Petrarchæ
Parmensi Archidiacono.
Parentibus prædaris genere perantiquo
Ethices Christianæ scriptori eximio
Romanæ linguæ restitutori
Etruscæ principi
Africæ ob carmen hâc in urbe peractum regibus accito
S. P. Q. R. laurea donato.
Tanti Viri
Juvenilium juvenis senilium senex
Studiosissimus
Comes Nicolaus Canonicus Cicognarus
Marmorea proxima ara excitata.
Ibique condito
Divæ Januariæ cruento corpore
H. M. P.
Suffectum
Sed infra meritum Francisci sepulchro
Summa hac in æde efferri mandantis
Si Parmæ occumberet
Extera morte heu nobis erepti.

[1] Remarks, etc. on Italy, p. 95, note, 2nd edit.

[2] La vita del Tasso, lib. iii. p. 284, tom. ii. edit. Bergamo, 1790.

we examine the whole anecdote as reported by Olivet.[1] The sentence pronounced against him by Bohours,[2] is recorded only to the confusion of the critic, whose *palinodia* the Italian makes no effort to discover, and would not perhaps accept. As to the opposition which the Jerusalem encountered from the Cruscan academy, who degraded Tasso from all competition with Ariosto, below Bojardo and Pulci, the disgrace of such opposition must also in some measure be laid to the charge of Alphonso, and the court of Ferrara. For Leonard Salviati, the principal and nearly the sole origin of this attack, was, there can be no doubt,[3] influenced by a hope to acquire the favour of the House of Este: an object which he thought attainable by exalting the reputation of a native poet at the expense of a rival, then *a prisoner of state*. The hopes and efforts of Salviati must serve to show the cotemporary opinion as to the nature of the poet's imprisonment; and will fill up the measure of our indignation at the tyrant jailer.[4] In fact, the antagonist of Tasso was not disappointed in the reception given to his criticism; he was called to the court of Ferrara, where, having endeavoured to heighten his claims to favour, by panegyrics on the family of his sovereign,[5] he was in his turn abandoned, and expired in neglected poverty. The opposition of the Cruscans was brought to a close in six years after the commencement of the controversy; and if the academy owed its first renown to having almost opened with such a paradox,[6] it is probable that, on the other hand, the care of his reputation alleviated rather than aggravated the imprisonment of the injured poet. The defence of his father and of himself, for both were involved in the censure of Salviati, found employment for many of his solitary hours, and the captive could have been but little embarrassed to reply to accusations, where, amongst other delinquencies, he was charged with invidiously omitting, in his comparison between France and Italy, to make any mention of the cupola of St Maria del Fiore at Florence.[7] The late biographer of Ariosto seems as if willing to renew the controversy by doubting the interpretation of Tasso's self-estimation,[8] related in Serassi's life of the poet. But Tiraboschi had before laid that rivalry at rest,[1] by showing, that between Ariosto and Tasso it is not a question of comparison, but of preference.

[1] Histoire de l'Académie Française, depuis 1652 jusqu'à 1700, par l'abbé d'Olivet, p. 181, édit. Amsterdam, 1730. «Mais, ensuite, venant à l'usage qu'il a fait de ses talens, j'aurais montré que le bon sens n'est pas toujours ce qui domine chez lui,» p. 182. Boileau said he had not changed his opinion. «J'en ai si peu changé, dit-il,» etc. p. 181.

[2] La manière de bien penser dans les ouvrages de l'esprit, sec. dial. p. 89, édit. 1692. Philanthes is for Tasso, and says, in the outset, «de tous les beaux esprits que l'Italie a portés, le Tasse est peut-être celui qui pense le plus noblement.» But Bohours seems to speak in Eudoxus, who closes with the absurd comparison: «Faites valoir le Tasse tant qu'il vous plaira, je m'en tiens pour moi à Virgile,» etc. ib. p. 102.

[3] La Vita, etc. lib. iii, p. 90, tom. ii. The English reader may see an account of the opposition of the Crusca to Tasso, in Dr Black, Life, etc. cap. xvii, vol. ii.

[4] For further, and, it is hoped, decisive proof, that Tasso was neither more nor less than a *prisoner of state*, the reader is referred to «Historical Illustrations of the IVth Canto of Childe Harold,» p. 5, and following.

[5] Orazioni funebri.... Delle lodi di Don Luigi Cardinal d'Este.... Delle lodi di Donno Alfonso d'Este.. See La Vita, lib. iii, pag. 117.

[6] It was founded in 1582, and the Cruscan answer to Pellegrino's *Caraffa* or *epica poesia* was published in 1584.

[7] «Cotanto potè sempre in lui il veleno della sua pessima volontà contro alla nazion Fiorentina.» La Vita, lib. iii, p. 96, 98, tom. ii.

[8] La Vita di M. L. Ariosto, scritta dall' Abate Girolamo Baruffaldi giuniore, etc., Ferrara 1807, lib iii, page 262 See Historical Illustrations, etc., p. 26.

Note 19. Stanza xli.

The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
The iron crown of laurel's mimic'd leaves.

Before the remains of Ariosto were removed from the Benedictine church to the library of Ferrara, his bust, which surmounted the tomb, was struck by lightning, and a crown of iron laurels melted away. The event has been recorded by a writer of the last century.[2] The transfer of these sacred ashes on the 6th of June 1801 was one of the most brilliant spectacles of the short-lived Italian Republic, and to consecrate the memory of the ceremony, the once famous fallen *Intrepidi* were revived and re-formed into the Ariostean academy. The large public place through which the procession paraded was then for the first time called Ariosto Square. The author of the Orlando is jealously claimed as the Homer, not of Italy, but Ferrara.[3] The mother of Ariosto was of Reggio, and the house in which he was born is carefully distinguished by a tablet with these words: «*Qui nacque Ludovico Ariosto il giorno 8 di Settembre dell' anno* 1474.» But the Ferrarese make light of the accident by which their poet was born abroad, and claim him exclusively for their own. They possess his bones, they show his arm-chair, and his ink-stand, and his autographs.

«.....Hic illius arma,
Hic currus fuit.....»

The house where he lived, the room where he died, are designated by his own replaced memorial,[4] and by a recent inscription. The Ferrarese are more jealous of their claims since the animosity of Denina, arising from a cause which their apologists mysteriously hint is not unknown to them, ventured to degrade their soil and climate to a Bœotian incapacity for all spiritual productions. A quarto volume has been called forth by the detraction, and this supplement to Barotti's Memoirs of the illustrious Ferrarese has been considered a triumphant reply to the «Quadro Storico Statistico dell' Alta Italia.»

[1] Stor'a della Lett., etc. lib. iii, tom. vii, par. i i, p. 1220, sect. 4.

[2] «Mi raccontarono que' monaci, ch' essendo caduto un fulmine nella loro chiesa schiantò esso dalle tempie la corona di lauro a quell' immortale poeta.» Op. di Bianconi, vol. iii, p. 176, ed. Milano, 1802; lettera al Signor Guido Saviui Arcilisiocritico, sull' indole di un fulmine caduto in Dresda l' anno 1759.

[3] «Appassionato ammiratore ed invitto apologista dell' *Omero Ferrarese*.» The title was first given by Tasso, and is quoted to the confusion of the *Tassisti*, lib. iii, pp. 262, 265. La Vita di M. L. Ariosto, etc.

[4] «Parva sed apta mihi, sed nulli obnoxia, sed non
Sordida, parta meo sed tamen ære domus.»

Note 20. Stanza xli.

For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves.

The eagle, the sea-calf, the laurel,[5] and the white vine,[6] were amongst the most approved preservatives against lightning: Jupiter chose the first, Augustus Cæsar the second,[7] and Tiberius never failed to wear a wreath of the third when the sky threatened a thunder storm.[8] These superstitions may be received without a

[5] Aquila, vitulus marinus, et laurus, fulmine non feriuntur. Plin Nat. Hist. lib. ii, cap. [illegible]

[6] Columella, lib. x.

[7] Sueton. in Vit. August. cap. xc.

[8] Id. in Vit. Tiberii, cap. lxix.

sneer in a country where the magical properties of the hazel twig have not lost all their credit; and perhaps the reader may not be much surprised to find that a commentator on Suetonius has taken upon himself gravely to disprove the imputed virtues of the crown of Tiberius, by mentioning that, a few years before he wrote, a laurel was actually struck by lightning at Rome.[1]

Note 21. Stanza xli.

Know that the lightning sanctifies below.

The Curtian lake and the Ruminal fig-tree in the Forum, having been touched by lightning, were held sacred, and the memory of the accident was preserved by a *puteal*, or altar, resembling the mouth of a well, with a little chapel covering the cavity supposed to be made by the thunderbolt. Bodies scathed and persons struck dead were thought to be incorruptible;[2] and a stroke not fatal conferred perpetual dignity upon the man so distinguished by Heaven.[3]

Those killed by lightning were wrapped in a white garment, and buried where they fell. The superstition was not confined to the worshippers of Jupiter: the Lombards believed in the omens furnished by lightning, and a Christian priest confesses that by a diabolical skill in interpreting thunder, a seer foretold to Agilulf, duke of Turin, an event which came to pass, and gave him a queen and a crown.[4] There was, however, something equivocal in this sign, which the ancient inhabitants of Rome did not always consider propitious; and as the fears are likely to last longer than the consolations of superstition, it is not strange that the Romans of the age of Leo X. should have been so much terrified at some misinterpreted storms as to require the exhortations of a scholar who arrayed all the learning on thunder and lightning to prove the omen favourable: beginning with the flash which struck the walls of Velitræ, and including that which played upon a gate at Florence, and foretold the pontificate of one of its citizens.[5]

Note 22. Stanza xlii.

Italia, oh Italia! etc.

The two stanzas, XLII. and XLIII., are, with the exception of a line or two, a translation of the famous sonnet of Filicaja:

"Italia, Italia, O tu cui feo la sorte."

Note 23. Stanza xliv.

Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least mortal mind.

The celebrated letter of Servius Sulpicius to Cicero on the death of his daughter, describes as it then was, and now is, a path which I often traced in Greece, both by sea and land, in different journeys and voyages.

"On my return from Asia, as I was sailing from Ægina towards Megara, I began to contemplate the prospect of the countries around me: Ægina was behind, Megara before me; Piræus on the right, Corinth on the left; all which towns, once famous and flourishing, now lie overturned and buried in their ruins. Upon this sight, I could not but think presently within myself, Alas! how do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves if any of our friends happen to die or be killed, whose life is yet so short, when the carcases of so many noble cities lie here exposed before me in one view."[1]

Note 24. Stanza xlvi.

——————And we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form.

It is Poggio who, looking from the Capitoline hill upon ruined Rome, breaks forth into the exclamation, "Ut nunc omni decore nudata, prostrata jacet, instar gigantei cadaveris corrupti atque undique excesi."[2]

Note 25. Stanza xlix.

There too the goddess loves in stone.

The view of the Venus of Medicis instantly suggests the lines in the *Seasons*, and the comparison of the object with the description proves, not only the correctness of the portrait, but the peculiar turn of thought, and, if the term may be used, the sexual imagination of the descriptive poet. The same conclusion may be deduced from another hint in the same episode of Musidora; for Thomson's notion of the privileges of favoured love must have been either very primitive, or rather deficient in delicacy, when he made his grateful nymph inform her discreet Damon that in some happier moment he might perhaps be the companion of her bath:

"The time may come you need not fly."

The reader will recollect the anecdote told in the life of Dr Johnson. We will not leave the Florentine gallery without a word on the *Whetter*. It seems strange that the character of that disputed statue should not be entirely decided, at least in the mind of any one who has seen a sarcophagus in the vestibule of the Basilica of St Paul without the walls, at Rome, where the whole group of the fable of Marsyas is seen in tolerable preservation; and the Scythian slave whetting the knife is represented exactly in the same position as this celebrated masterpiece. The slave is not naked: but it is easier to get rid of this difficulty than to suppose the knife in the hand of the Florentine statue an instrument for shaving, which it must be, if, as Lanzi supposes, the man is no other than the barber of Julius Cæsar. Winkelmann, illustrating a bas-relief of the same subject, follows the opinion of Leonard Agostini, and his authority might have been thought conclusive, even if the resemblance did not strike the most careless observer.[3]

Amongst the bronzes of the same princely collection, is still to be seen the inscribed tablet copied and commented upon by Mr Gibbon.[4] Our historian found some difficulties, but did not desist from his illustration: he might be vexed to hear that his criticism has been thrown away on an inscription now generally recognized to be a forgery.

Note 26. Stanza li.

————His eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek!

Ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐστιᾶν.

"...Atque oculos pascat uterque suos."—*Ovid. Amor. lib. ii.*

[1] Note 2, pag. 409, edit. Lugd.-Bat. 1667.

[2] Vid. J. C. Bullenger, de Terræ motu et Fulminibus, lib. v. cap. xi.

[3] Ὀυδεὶς κεραυνοβλὴς ἄταφος ἐστι, ὁθεν καὶ ὡς θεὸς τιμᾶται. Plut. Sympos. vid. J. C. Bulleng. ut sup.

[4] Paul. Diacon. de gestis Langobard. lib. iii. cap. xxv. fo. xx, edit. Taurin. 1532.

[5] I. P. Valerianus, de fulminum significationibus declamatio, ap. Græv. Antiq. Rom. tom. v. p. 695. The declamation is addressed to Julian of Medicis.

[1] De Middleton—History of the Life of M. Tullius Cicero, sect. viii. pag. 321, vol. ii.

[2] De fortunæ varietate urbis Romæ et de ruinis ejusdem descriptio, ap. Salengre. Thesaur. tom. i. pag. 601.

[3] See Monum. Ant. inedi. par. i. cap. xvii. n. xlii. pag. 50, and Storia delle arti, etc. lib. xi. cap. i. tom. ii. p. 314, not. B.

[4] Nummi gentesque Antiquæ Italiæ, p. 205, edit. oct.

Note 27. Stanza liv.

In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie.

This name will recal the memory, not only of those whose tombs have raised the Santa Croce into the centre of pilgrimage, the Mecca of Italy, but of her whose eloquence was poured over the illustrious ashes, and whose voice is now as mute as those she sung. CORINNA is no more; and with her should expire the fear, the flattery, and the envy, which threw too dazzling or too dark a cloud round the march of genius, and forbad the steady gaze of disinterested criticism. We have her picture embellished or distorted, as friendship or detraction has held the pencil: the impartial portrait was hardly to be expected from a cotemporary. The immediate voice of her survivors will, it is probable, be far from affording a just estimate of her singular capacity. The gallantry, the love of wonder, and the hope of associated fame, which blunted the edge of censure, must cease to exist.—The dead have no sex; they can surprise by no new miracles; they can confer no privilege; Corinna has ceased to be a woman—she is only an author: and it may be foreseen that many will repay themselves for former complaisance, by a severity to which the extravagance of previous praises may perhaps give the colour of truth. The latest posterity, for to the latest posterity they will assuredly descend, will have to pronounce upon her various productions; and the longer the vista through which they are seen, the more accurately minute will be the object, the more certain the justice, of the decision. She will enter into that existence in which the great writers of all ages and nations are, as it were, associated in a world of their own, and from that superior sphere, shed their eternal influence for the control and consolation of mankind. But the individual will gradually disappear as the author is more distinctly seen: some one, therefore, of all those whom the charms of involuntary wit, and of easy hospitality, attracted within the friendly circles of Coppet, should rescue from oblivion those virtues which, although they are said to love the shade, are, in fact, more frequently chilled than excited by the domestic cares of private life. Some one should be found to pourtray the unaffected graces with which she adorned those dearer relationships, the performance of whose duties is rather discovered amongst the interior secrets, than seen in the outward management, of family intercourse; and which, indeed, it requires the delicacy of genuine affection to qualify for the eye of an indifferent spectator. Some one should be found, not to celebrate, but to describe, the amiable mistress of an open mansion, the centre of a society, ever varied, and always pleased, the creator of which, divested of the ambition and the arts of public rivalry, shone forth only to give fresh animation to those around her. The mother tenderly affectionate and tenderly beloved, the friend unboundedly generous, but still esteemed, the charitable patroness of all distress, cannot be forgotten by those whom she cherished, and protected, and fed. Her loss will be mourned the most where she was known the best; and, to the sorrows of very many friends and more dependants, may be offered the disinterested regret of a stranger, who, amidst the sublimer scenes of the Leman lake, received his chief satisfaction from contemplating the engaging qualities of the incomparable Corinna.

Note 28. Stanza liv.

————————Here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones.

Alfieri is the great name of this age. The Italians, without waiting for the hundred years, consider him as «a poet good in law.»—His memory is the more dear to them because he is the bard of freedom; and because, as such, his tragedies can receive no countenance from any of their sovereigns. They are but very seldom, and but very few of them allowed to be acted. It was observed by Cicero, that nowhere were the true opinions and feelings of the Romans so clearly shown as at the theatre.[1] In the autumn of 1816, a celebrated improvisatore exhibited his talents at the Opera-house of Milan. The reading of the theses handed in for the subjects of his poetry was received by a very numerous audience, for the most part in silence, or with laughter; but when the assistant, unfolding one of the papers, exclaimed, «*The apotheosis of Victor Alfieri,*» the whole theatre burst into a shout, and the applause was continued for some moments. The lot did not fall on Alfieri; and the Signor Sgricci had to pour forth his extemporary common-places on the bombardment of Algiers. The choice, indeed, is not left to accident quite so much as might be thought from a first view of the ceremony; and the police not only takes care to look at the papers beforehand, but, in case of any prudential after-thought, steps in to correct the blindness of chance. The proposal for deifying Alfieri was received with immediate enthusiasm, the rather because it was conjectured there would be no opportunity of carrying it into effect.

Note 29. Stanza liv.

Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.

The affectation of simplicity in sepulchral inscriptions, which so often leaves us uncertain whether the structure before us is an actual depository, or a cenotaph, or a simple memorial not of death but life, has given to the tomb of Machiavelli no information as to the place or time of the birth or death, the age or parentage, of the historian.

TANTO NOMINI NVLLVM PAR ELOGIVM
NICCOLAVS MACHIAVELLI.

There seems at least no reason why the name should not have been put above the sentence which alludes to it.

It will readily be imagined that the prejudices which have passed the name of Machiavelli into an epithet proverbial of iniquity, exist no longer at Florence. His memory was persecuted as his life had been for an attachment to liberty, incompatible with the new system of despotism, which succeeded the fall of the free governments of Italy. He was put to the torture for being a «*libertine*,» that is, for wishing to restore the republic of Florence; and such are the undying efforts

[1] The free expression of their honest sentiments survived their liberties. Titius, the friend of Antony, presented them with games in the theatre of Pompey. They did not suffer the brilliancy of the spectacle to efface from their memory that the man who furnished them with the entertainment had murdered the son of Pompey. They drove him from the theatre with curses. The moral sense of a populace, spontaneously expressed, is never wrong. Even the soldiers of the triumvirs joined in the execration of the citizens, by shouting round the chariots of Lepidus and Plancus, who had proscribed their brothers, *De Germanis non de Gallis duo triumphant Consules*, a saying worth a record, were it nothing but a good pun. [C. Vell. Paterculi Hist. lib. ii, cap. lxvix, pag. 78, edit. Elzevir, 1639. Ibid. lib. ii, cap. lxxvii.]

of those who are interested in the perversion not only of the nature of actions, but the meaning of words, that what was once *patriotism*, has by degrees come to signify *debauch*. We have ourselves outlived the old meaning of «liberality,» which is now another word for treason in one country and for infatuation in all. It seems to have been a strange mistake to accuse the author of the Prince, as being a pandar to tyranny; and to think that the inquisition would condemn his work for such a delinquency. The fact is, that Machiavelli, as is usual with those against whom no crime can be proved, was suspected of and charged with atheism; and the first and last most violent opposers of the Prince were both Jesuits, one of whom persuaded the Inquisition «benchè fosse tardo,» to prohibit the treatise, and the other qualified the secretary of the Florentine republic as no better than a fool. The father Possevin was proved never to have read the book, and the father Lucchesini not to have understood it. It is clear, however, that such critics must have objected not to the slavery of the doctrines, but to the supposed tendency of a lesson which shows how distinct are the interests of a monarch from the happiness of mankind. The Jesuits are re-established in Italy, and the last chapter of the Prince may again call forth a particular refutation, from those who are employed once more in moulding the minds of the rising generation, so as to receive the impressions of despotism. The chapter bears for title, «Esortazione a liberare la Italia dai Barbari,» and concludes with a *libertine* excitement to the future redemption of Italy. «*Non si deve adunque lasciar passare questa occasione, acciocchè la Italia vegga dopo tanto tempo apparire un suo redentore. Nè posso esprimere con qual amore ei fusse ricevuto in tutte quelle provincie, che hanno patito per queste illuvioni esterne, con qual sete di vendetta, con che ostinata fede, con che lacrime. Quali porte se li serrerebeno? Quali popoli li negherebbeno la obbedienza? Quale Italiano li negherebbe l' ossequio?* AD OGNUNO PUZZA QUESTO BARBARO DOMINIO.»[1]

Note 30. Stanza lvii.

Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar.

Dante was born in Florence in the year 1261. He fought in two battles, was fourteen times ambassador, and once prior of the republic. When the party of Charles of Anjou triumphed over the Bianchi, he was absent on an embassy to Pope Boniface VIII, and was condemned to two years' banishment, and to a fine of eight thousand lire; on the non-payment of which he was further punished by the sequestration of all his property. The republic, however, was not content with this satisfaction, for in 1772 was discovered in the archives at Florence a sentence in which Dante is the eleventh of a list of fifteen condemned in 1302 to be burnt alive; *Talis perveniens igne comburatur sic quod moriatur*. The pretext for this judgment was a proof of unfair barter, extortions, and illicit gains: *Baracteriarum iniquarum, extorsionum, et illicitorum lucrorum*,[2] and with such an accusation it is not strange that Dante should have always protested his innocence, and the injustice of his fellow-citizens. His appeal to Florence was accompanied by another to the Emperor Henry, and the death of that sovereign in 1313, was the signal for a sentence of irrevocable banishment. He had before lingered near Tuscany, with hopes of recal; then travelled into the north of Italy, where Verona had to boast of his longest residence, and he finally settled at Ravenna, which was his ordinary but not constant abode until his death. The refusal of the Venetians to grant him a public audience, on the part of Guido Novello da Polenta, his protector, is said to have been the principal cause of this event, which happened in 1321. He was buried («in sacra minorum æde,») at Ravenna, in a handsome tomb, which was erected by Guido, restored by Bernardo Bembo in 1483, pretor for that republic which had refused to hear him, again restored by Cardinal Corsi in 1692, and replaced by a more magnificent sepulchre, constructed in 1780 at the expense of the Cardinal Luigi Valenti Gonzaga. The offence or misfortune of Dante was an attachment to a defeated party, and, as his least favourable biographers allege against him, too great a freedom of speech and haughtiness of manner. But the next age paid honours almost divine to the exile. The Florentines, having in vain and frequently attempted to recover his body, crowned his image in a church,[1] and his picture is still one of the idols of their cathedral. They struck medals, they raised statues to him. The cities of Italy, not being able to dispute about his own birth, contended for that of his great poem, and the Florentines thought it for their honour to prove that he had finished the seventh Canto, before they drove him from his native city. Fifty-one years after his death, they endowed a professorial chair for the expounding of his verses, and Boccaccio was appointed to this patriotic employment. The example was imitated by Bologna and Pisa, and the commentators, if they performed but little service to literature, augmented the veneration which beheld a sacred or moral allegory in all the images of his mystic muse. His birth and his infancy were discovered to have been distinguished above those of ordinary men; the author of the Decameron, his earliest biographer, relates that his mother was warned in a dream of the importance of her pregnancy; and it was found, by others, that at ten years of age he had manifested his precocious passion for that wisdom or theology which, under the name of Beatrice, had been mistaken for a substantial mistress. When the Divine Comedy had been recognized as a mere mortal production, and at the distance of two centuries, when criticism and competition had sobered the judgment of Italians, Dante was seriously declared superior to Homer,[2] and though the preference appeared to some casuists «an heretical blasphemy worthy of the flames,» the contest was vigorously maintained for nearly fifty years. In later times it was made a question which of the Lords of Verona could boast of having patronized him,[3] and the jealous scepticism of one writer would not allow Ravenna the undoubted possession of his bones. Even the critical Tiraboschi was inclined to believe that the poet had foreseen and foretold one of the discoveries of

[1] Il Principe di Niccolo Machiavelli, etc. con la prefazione e le note istoriche e politiche di M. Amelot de la Houssaye, e l'esame e confutazione dell' opera .. Cosmopoli, 1769.

[2] Storia della Lett. Ital. tom. v. lib. iii. par. 2, pag. 448. Tiraboschi is incorrect. The dates of the three decrees against Dante are A. D. 1302, 1315, and 1316.

[1] So relates Fazino, but some think his coronation only an allegory. See Storia, etc. ut sup. p. 453.

[2] By Varchi in his Ercolano. The controversy continued from 1570 to 1616. See Storia, etc. tom. vii. lib. iii. par. iii. p. 1280.

[3] Gio. Jacopo Dionisi canonico di Verona. Serie di Aneddoti. n. 2. See Storia, etc. tom. v. lib. i. par. i. p. 24.

Galileo. Like the great originals of other nations, his popularity has not always maintained the same level. The last age seemed inclined to undervalue him as a model and a study; and Bettinelli one day rebuked his pupil Monti, for, poring over the harsh and obsolete extravagances of the Commedia. The present generation having recovered from the Gallic idolatries of Cesarotti, has returned to the ancient worship, and the *Danteggiare* of the northern Italians is thought even indiscreet by the more moderate Tuscans.

There is still much curious information relative to the life and writings of this great poet, which has not as yet been collected even by the Italians; but the celebrated Hugo Foscolo meditates to supply this defect; and it is not to be regretted that this national work has been reserved for one so devoted to his country and the cause of truth.

Note 31. Stanza lvii.

Like Scipio buried by the upbraiding shore,
Thy factions in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed, etc.

The elder Scipio Africanus had a tomb, if he was not buried, at Liternum, whither he had retired to voluntary banishment. This tomb was near the sea-shore, and the story of an inscription upon it, *Ingrata Patria*, having given a name to a modern tower, is, if not true, an agreeable fiction. If he was not buried, he certainly lived there.[1]

In così augusta e solitaria villa
Era 'l grand' uomo che d'Africa s'appella
Perchè prima col ferro al vivo apprilla.[2]

Ingratitude is generally supposed the vice peculiar to republics; and it seems to be forgotten, that for one instance of popular inconstancy, we have a hundred examples of the fall of courtly favourites. Besides, a people have often repented—a monarch seldom or never. Leaving apart many familiar proofs of this fact, a short story may show the difference between even an aristocracy and the multitude.

Vettor Pisani, having been defeated in 1354 at Portolongo, and many years afterwards in the more decisive action of Pola, by the Genoese, was recalled by the Venetian Government, and thrown into chains. The Avvogadori proposed to behead him, but the supreme tribunal was content with the sentence of imprisonment. Whilst Pisani was suffering this unmerited disgrace, Chioza, in the vicinity of the capital,[3] was, by the assistance of the *Signor of Padua*, delivered into the hands of Pietro Doria. At the intelligence of that disaster, the great bell of St Mark's tower tolled to arms, and the people and the soldiery of the galleys were summoned to the repulse of the approaching enemy; but they protested they would not move a step, unless Pisani were liberated, and placed at their head. The great council was instantly assembled: the prisoner was called before them, and the Doge, Andrea Contarini, informed him of the demands of the people and the necessities of the state, whose only hope of safety was reposed on his efforts, and who implored him to forget the indignities he had endured in her service. «I have submitted,» replied the magnanimous republican, «I have submitted to your deliberations without complaint; I have supported patiently the pains of imprisonment, for they were inflicted at your command: this is no time to inquire whether I deserved them—the good of the republic may have seemed to require it, and that which the republic resolves is always resolved wisely. Behold me ready to lay down my life for the preservation of my country.» Pisani was appointed generalissimo, and, by his exertions, in conjunction with those of Carlo Zeno, the Venetians soon recovered the ascendancy over their maritime rivals.

The Italian communities were no less unjust to their citizens than the Greek republics. Liberty, both with the one and the other, seems to have been a national, not an individual object: and, notwithstanding the boasted *equality before the laws*, which an ancient Greek writer[1] considered the great distinctive mark between his countrymen and the barbarians, the mutual rights of fellow-citizens seem never to have been the principal scope of the old democracies. The world may have not yet seen an essay by the author of the Italian Republics, in which the distinction between the liberty of former states, and the signification attached to that word by the happier constitution of England, is ingeniously developed. The Italians, however, when they had ceased to be free, still looked back with a sigh upon those times of turbulence, when every citizen might rise to a share of sovereign power, and have never been taught fully to appreciate the repose of a monarchy. Speroue Speroni, when Francis Maria II. Duke of Rovere proposed the question, «which was preferable, the republic or the principality—the perfect and not durable, or the less perfect and not so liable to change,» replied, «that our happiness is to be measured by its quality, not by its duration; and that he preferred to live for one day like a man, than for a hundred years like a brute, a stock, or a stone.» This was thought, and called a *magnificent* answer, down to the last days of Italian servitude.[2]

Note 32. Stanza lvii.

——————————And the crown
Which Petrarch's laureat brow supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown.

The Florentines did not take the opportunity of Petrarch's short visit to their city in 1350 to revoke the decree which confiscated the property of his father, who had been banished shortly after the exile of Dante. His crown did not dazzle them; but when in the next year they were in want of his assistance in the formation of their university, they repented of their injustice, and Boccaccio was sent to Padua to intreat the laureate to conclude his wanderings in the bosom of his native country, where he might finish his *immortal Africa*, and enjoy, with his recovered possessions, the esteem of all classes of his fellow-citizens. They gave him the option of the book, and the science he might condescend to expound: they called him the glory of his country, who was dear, and would be dearer to them; and they added, that if there was any thing unpleasing in their letter, he ought to return amongst them, were it only to

[1] Vitam Literni egit sine desiderio urbis. See T. Liv. Hist. lib. xxxviii. Livy reports that some said he was buried at Liternum, others at Rome. Ib. cap. LV.

[2] Trionfo della Castità.

[3] See note to stanza XIII.

[1] The Greek boasted that he was ἰσονόμος.—See the last chapter of the first book of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

[2] «E intorno *alla magnifica risposta*,» etc. Serassi Vita del Tasso, lib. iii, pag. 149, tom. ii, edit. 2, Bergamo.

correct their style.[1] Petrarch seemed at first to listen to the flattery and to the intreaties of his friend, but he did not return to Florence, and preferred a pilgrimage to the tomb of Laura and the shades of Vaucluse.

Note 33. Stanza lviii.

Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd
His dust.

Boccaccio was buried in the church of St Michael and St James, at Certaldo, a small town in the Valdelsa, which was by some supposed the place of his birth. There he passed the latter part of his life in a course of laborious study, which shortened his existence; and there might his ashes have been secure, if not of honour, at least of repose. But the «hyæna bigots» of Certaldo tore up the tombstone of Boccaccio, and ejected it from the holy precincts of St Michael and St James. The occasion, and, it may be hoped, the excuse, of this ejectment was the making of a new floor for the church: but the fact is, that the tombstone was taken up and thrown aside at the bottom of the building. Ignorance may share the sin with bigotry. It would be painful to relate such an exception to the devotion of the Italians for their great names, could it not be accompanied by a trait more honourably conformable to the general character of the nation. The principal person of the district, the last branch of the house of Medicis, afforded that protection to the memory of the insulted dead which her best ancestors had dispensed upon all cotemporary merit. The Marchioness Lenzoni rescued the tombstone of Boccaccio from the neglect in which it had sometime lain, and found for it an honourable elevation in her own mansion. She has done more: the house in which the poet lived has been as little respected as his tomb, and is falling to ruin over the head of one indifferent to the name of its former tenant. It consists of two or three little chambers, and a low tower, on which Cosmo II. affixed an inscription. This house she has taken measures to purchase, and proposes to devote to it that care and consideration which are attached to the cradle and to the roof of genius.

This is not the place to undertake the defence of Boccaccio; but the man who exhausted his little patrimony in the acquirement of learning, who was amongst the first, if not the first, to allure the science and the poetry of Greece to the bosom of Italy;—who not only invented a new style, but founded, or certainly fixed, a new language; who, besides the esteem of every polite court of Europe, was thought worthy of employment by the predominant republic of his own country, and, what is more, of the friendship of Petrarch, who lived the life of a philosopher and a freeman, and who died in the pursuit of knowledge,—such a man might have found more consideration than he has met with from the priest of Certaldo, and from a late English traveller, who strikes off his portrait as an odious, contemptible, licentious writer, whose impure remains should be suffered to rot without a record.[2] That English traveller, unfortunately for those who have to deplore the loss of a very amiable person, is beyond all criticism; but the mortality which did not protect Boccaccio from Mr Eustace, must not defend Mr Eustace from the impartial judgment of his successors. Death may canonize his virtues, not his errors; and it may be modestly pronounced that he transgressed, not only as an author, but as a man, when he evoked the shade of Boccaccio in company with that of Aretino, amidst the sepulchres of Santa Croce, merely to dismiss it with indignity. As far as respects

«Il flagello de' Principi,
Il divin Pietro Aretino,»

it is of little import what censure is past upon a coxcomb who owes his present existence to the above burlesque character given to him by the poet whose amber has preserved many other grubs and worms: but to classify Boccaccio with such a person, and to excommunicate his very ashes, must of itself make us doubt of the qualification of the classical tourist for writing upon Italian, or, indeed, upon any other literature; for ignorance on one point may incapacitate an author merely for that particular topic, but subjection to a professional prejudice must render him an unsafe director on all occasions. Any perversion and injustice may be made what is vulgarly called «a case of conscience,» and this poor excuse is all that can be offered for the priest of Certaldo, or the author of the Classical Tour. It would have answered the purpose to confine the censure to the novels of Boccaccio, and gratitude to that source which supplied the muse of Dryden with her last and most harmonious numbers, might perhaps have restricted that censure to the objectionable qualities of the hundred tales. At any rate, the repentance of Boccaccio might have arrested his exhumation, and it should have been recollected and told, that in his old age he wrote a letter intreating his friend to discourage the reading of the Decameron, for the sake of modesty, and for the sake of the author, who would not have an apologist always at hand to state in his excuse that he wrote it when young, and at the command of his superiors.[1] It is neither the licentiousness of the writer, nor the evil propensities of the reader, which have given to the Decameron alone, of all the works of Boccaccio, a perpetual popularity. The establishment of a new and delightful dialect conferred an immortality on the works in which it was first fixed. The sonnets of Petrarch were, for the same reason, fated to survive his self-admired Africa, the «*favourite of kings.*» The invariable traits of nature and feeling with which the novels, as well as the verses, abound, have doubtless been the chief source of the foreign celebrity of both authors, but Boccaccio, as a man, is no more to be estimated by that work, than Petrarch is to be regarded in no other light than as the

[1] «Accingiti inoltre, se ci è lecito ancor l'esortarti, a compire l' immortal tua Africa ... Se ti avviene d'incontrare nel nostro stile cosa che ti dispiaccia, ciò debb' essere un altro motivo ad esaudire i desideri della tua patria.» Storia della Lett. Ital. tom. v. par. i, lib. i, pag. 76.

[2] Classical Tour, cap. ix. vol. ii. p. 355, edit. 3d. «Of Boccaccio, the modern Petronius, we say nothing: the abode of genius is more odious and more contemptible than its absence; and it imports little where the impure remains of a licentious author are consigned to their kindred dust. For the same reason the traveller may pass unnoticed the tomb of the malignant Aretino.»

This dubious phrase is hardly enough to save the tourist from the suspicion of another blunder respecting the burial place of Aretino, whose tomb was in the church of St Luke at Venice, and gave rise to the famous controversy of which some notice is taken in Bayle. Now the words of Mr Eustace would lead us to think the tomb was at Florence, or at least was to be somewhere recognized. Whether the inscription so much disputed was ever written on the tomb cannot now be decided, for all memorial of this author has disappeared from the church of St Luke, which is now changed into a lamp warehouse.

[1] «Non enim ubique est, qui in excusationem meam consurgens dicat, juvenis scripsit, et majoris coactus imperio.» The letter was addressed to Maghinard of Cavalcanti, marshal of the kingdom of Sicily. See Tiraboschi, Storia, etc. tom. v. par. ii. lib. iii. pag. 525, ed Ven. 1795.

lover of Laura. Even, however, had the father of the Tuscan prose been known only as the author of the Decameron, a considerate writer would have been cautious to pronounce a sentence irreconcileable with the unerring voice of many ages and nations. An irrevocable value has never been stamped upon any work solely recommended by impurity.

The true source of the outcry against Boccaccio, which began at a very early period, was the choice of his scandalous personages in the cloisters as well as the courts; but the princes only laughed at the gallant adventures so unjustly charged upon Queen Theodelinda, whilst the priesthood cried shame upon the debauches drawn from the convent and the hermitage; and, most probably, for the opposite reason, namely, that the picture was faithful to the life. Two of the novels are allowed to be facts usefully turned into tales, to deride the canonization of rogues and laymen. Ser Ciappelletto and Marcellinus are cited with applause even by the decent Muratori.[1] The great Arnaud, as he is quoted in Bayle, states, that a new edition of the novels was proposed, of which the expurgation consisted in omitting the words «monk» and «nun,» and tacking the immoralities to other names. The literary history of Italy particularizes no such edition; but it was not long before the whole of Europe had but one opinion of the Decameron; and the absolution of the author seems to have been a point settled at least a hundred years ago: «On se ferait siffler si l'on prétendait convaincre Boccace de n'avoir pas été honnête homme, puisqu'il a fait le Décameron.» So said one of the best men, and perhaps the best critic, that ever-lived—the very martyr to impartiality.[2] But as this information, that in the beginning of the last century one would have been hooted at for pretending that Boccaccio was not a good man, may seem to come from one of those enemies who are to be suspected, even when they make us a present of truth, a more acceptable contrast with the proscription of the body, soul, and muse of Boccaccio may be found in a few words from the virtuous, the patriotic cotemporary, who thought one of the tales of this impure writer worthy a Latin version from his own pen. «*I have remarked elsewhere,*» says Petrarch, writing to Boccaccio, «*that the book itself has been worried by certain dogs, but stoutly defended by your staff and voice. Nor was I astonished, for I have had proof of the vigour of your mind, and I know you have fallen on that unaccommodating incapable race of mortals who, whatever they either like not, or know not, or cannot do, are sure to reprehend in others; and on those occasions only put on a show of learning and eloquence, but otherwise are entirely dumb.*[3]

It is satisfactory to find that all the priesthood do not resemble those of Certaldo, and that one of them who did not possess the bones of Boccaccio would not lose the opportunity of raising a cenotaph to his memory. Bevius, canon of Padua, at the beginning of the 16th century, erected at Arquà, opposite to the tomb of the laureate, a tablet, in which he associated Boccaccio to the equal honours of Dante and of Petrarch.

[1] Dissertazioni sopra lo antichità Italiane. Diss. lviii, p. 253, tom. iii, edit. Milan, 1751.

[2] *Eclaircissement*, etc. etc. p. 638, edit. Basle, 1741, in the Supplement to Bayle's Dictionary.

[3] «Animadverti alicubi librum ipsum canum dentibus lacessitum, tuo tamen baculo egregiè tuâque voce defensum. Nec miratus sum: nam et vires ingenii tui novi, et scio expertus esses hominum genus insolens et ignavum, qui, quicquid ipsi vel nolunt vel nesciunt, vel non possunt, in aliis reprehendunt; ad hoc unum docti et arguti, sed elingues ad reliqua.» Epist. Joan. Boccatio. opp. tom. i, p. 540, edit. Basil.

Note 34. Stanza lx.

What is her pyramid of precious stones?

Our veneration for the Medici begins with Cosmo, and expires with his grandson; that stream is pure only at the source; and it is in search of some memorial of the virtuous republicans of the family, that we visit the church of St Lorenzo at Florence. The tawdry, glaring, unfinished chapel in that church, designed for the mausoleum of the Dukes of Tuscany, set round with crowns and coffins, gives birth to no emotions but those of contempt for the lavish vanity of a race of despots, whilst the pavement slab simply inscribed to the Father of his Country, reconciles us to the name of Medici.[1] It was very natural for Corinna [2] to suppose that the statue raised to the Duke of Urbino in the *capella de' depositi* was intended for his great namesake; but the magnificent Lorenzo is only the sharer of a coffin half hidden in a niche of the sacristy. The decay of Tuscany dates from the sovereignty of the Medici. Of the sepulchral peace which succeeded to the establishment of the reigning families in Italy, our own Sidney has given us a glowing, but a faithful picture. «Notwithstanding all the seditions of Florence, and other cities of Tuscany, the horrid factions of Guelphs and Ghibelins, Neri and Bianchi, nobles and commons, they continued populous, strong, and exceeding rich; but in the space of less than a hundred and fifty years, the peaceable reign of the Medices is thought to have destroyed nine parts in ten of the people of that province. Amongst other things it is remarkable, that when Philip the Second of Spain gave Sienna to the Duke of Florence, his ambassador then at Rome sent him word, that he had given away more than 650,000 subjects; and it is not believed there are now 20,000 souls inhabiting that city and territory. Pisa, Pistoia, Arezzo, Cortona, and other towns, that were then good and populous, are in the like proportion diminished, and Florence more than any. When that city had been long troubled with seditions, tumults, and wars, for the most part unprosperous, they still retained such strength, that when Charles VIII. of France, being admitted as a friend with his whole army, which soon after conquered the kingdom of Naples, thought to master them, the people taking arms, struck such a terror into him, that he was glad to depart upon such conditions as they thought fit to impose. Machiavel reports, that in that time Florence alone, with the Val d'Arno, a small territory belonging to that city, could, in a few hours, by the sound of a bell, bring together 135,000 well-armed men; whereas now that city, with all the others in that province, are brought to such despicable weakness, emptiness, poverty, and baseness, that they can neither resist the oppressions of their own prince, nor defend him or themselves if they were assaulted by a foreign enemy. The people are dispersed or destroyed, and the best families sent to seek habitations in Venice, Genoa, Rome, Naples, and Lucca. This is not the effect of war or pestilence; they enjoy a perfect peace, and suffer no other plague than the government

[1] Cosmus Medices, Decreto Publico, Pater Patriæ.

[2] Corinne, Liv. xviii, cap. iii, vol. iii, page 248.

they are under.[1] From the usurper Cosmo down to the imbecile Gaston, we look in vain for any of those unmixed qualities which should raise a patriot to the command of his fellow citizens. The Grand Dukes, and particularly the third Cosmo, had operated so entire a change in the Tuscan character, that the candid Florentines, in excuse for some imperfections in the philanthropic system of Leopold, are obliged to confess that the sovereign was the only liberal man in his dominions. Yet that excellent prince himself had no other notion of a national assembly, than of a body to represent the wants and wishes, not the will of the people.

Note 35. Stanza lxiii.

An earthquake reel'd unheededly away!

« *And such was their mutual animosity, so intent were they upon the battle, that the earthquake, which overthrew in great part many of the cities of Italy, which turned the course of rapid streams, poured back the sea upon the rivers, and tore down the very mountains, was not felt by one of the combatants.*»[2] Such is the description of Livy. It may be doubted whether modern tactics would admit of such an abstraction.

The site of the battle of Thrasimene is not to be mistaken. The traveller from the village under Cortona to Casa di Piano, the next stage on the way to Rome, has for the first two or three miles, around him, but more particularly to the right, that flat land which Hannibal laid waste in order to induce the Consul Flaminius to move from Arezzo. On his left, and in front of him, is a ridge of hills, bending down towards the lake of Thrasimene, called by Livy « montes Cortonenses,» and now named the Gualandra. These hills he approaches at Ossaja, a village which the itineraries pretend to have been so denominated from the bones found there: but there have been no bones found there, and the battle was fought on the other side of the hill. From Ossaja the road begins to rise a little, but does not pass into the roots of the mountains until the sixty-seventh mile-stone from Florence. The ascent thence is not steep but perpetual, and continues for twenty minutes. The lake is soon seen below on the right, with Borghetto, a round tower close upon the water; and the undulating hills partially covered with wood, amongst which the road winds, sink by degrees into the marshes near to this tower. Lower than the road, down to the right amidst these woody hillocks, Hannibal placed his horse,[3] in the jaws of or rather above the pass, which was between the lake and the present road, and most probably close to Borghetto, just under the lowest of the « tumuli.»[4] On a summit to the left, above the road, is an old circular ruin which the peasants call « the Tower of Hannibal the Carthaginian.» Arrived at the highest point of the road, the traveller has a partial view of the fatal plain, which opens fully upon him as he descends the Gualandra. He soon finds himself in a vale inclosed to the left and in front and behind him by the Gualandra hills, bending round in a segment larger than a semicircle, and running down at each end to the lake, which obliques to the right and forms the chord of this mountain arc. The position cannot be guessed at from the plains of Cortona, nor appears to be so completely inclosed unless to one who is fairly within the hills. It then, indeed, appears « a place made as it were on purpose for a snare,» «*locus insidiis natus.*» Borghetto is then found to stand in a narrow marshy pass close to the hill and to the lake, whilst there is no other outlet at the opposite turn of the mountains than through the little town of Pasignano, which is pushed into the water by the foot of a high rocky acclivity.[1] There is a woody eminence branching down from the mountains into the upper end of the plain nearer to the side of Passignano, and on this stands a white village called Torre. Polybius seems to allude to this eminence as the one on which Hannibal encamped and drew out his heavy-armed Africans and Spaniards in a conspicuous position.[2] From this spot he dispatched his Balearic and light-armed troops round through the Gualandra heights to the right, so as to arrive unseen, and form an ambush amongst the broken acclivities which the road now passes, and to be ready to act upon the left flank and above the enemy, whilst the horse shut up the pass behind. Flaminius came to the lake near Borghetto at sunset; and, without sending any spies before him, marched through the pass the next morning before the day had quite broken, so that he perceived nothing of the horse and light troops above and about him, and saw only the heavy-armed Carthaginians in front on the hill of Torre.[3] The Consul began to draw out his army in the flat, and in the mean time the horse in ambush occupied the pass behind him at Borghetto. Thus the Romans were completely inclosed, having the lake on the right, the main army on the hill of Torre in front, the Gualandra hills filled with the light-armed on their left flank, and being prevented from receding by the cavalry, who, the farther they advanced, stopped up all the outlets in the rear. A fog rising from the lake now spread itself over the army of the Consul, but the high lands were in the sun-shine, and all the different corps in ambush looked towards the hill of Torre for the order of attack. Hannibal gave the signal, and moved down from his post on the height. At the same moment all his troops on the eminences behind and in the flank of Flaminius, rushed forwards as it were with one accord into the plain. The Romans, who were forming their array in the mist, suddenly heard the shouts of the enemy amongst them, on every side, and, before they could fall into their ranks, or draw their swords, or see by whom they were attacked, felt at once that they were surrounded and lost.

There are two little rivulets which run from the Gualandra into the lake. The traveller crosses the first of these at about a mile after he comes into the plain, and this divides the Tuscan from the Papal territories. The second, about a quarter of a mile further on, is called « the bloody rivulet,» and the peasants point out an open spot to the left between the « Sanguinetto» and

[1] On Government, chap. ii, sect. xvi, page 208, edit. 1751. Sidney is, together with Locke and Hoadley, one of Mr Hume's «*despicable*» writers.

[2] Tantoque fuit ardor animorum, adeo intentus pugnæ animus, ut cum terræ motum qui multarum urbium Italiæ magnas partes prostravit, everteretque cursu rapido omnes, mare fluminibus invexit, montes lapsu ingenti proruit, nemo pugnantium senserit...» Tit. Liv. lib. xxii, cap. xii.

[3] « Equites ad ipsas fauces saltus tumulis apte tegentibus, locat.» Tit. Liv. lib. xxii, cap. iv.

[4] « Ubi maxime montes Cortonenses Thrasimenus subit.» Ibid.

[1] « Inde colles assurgunt.» Tit. Liv. lib. xxii, cap. iv.

[2] Τὸν μὲν κατὰ πρόσωπον τῆς πορείας λόφον αὐτὸς κατελάβετο καὶ τοὺς Λίβυας καὶ τοὺς Ἴβηρας ἔχων ἐπ' αὐτοῦ κατεστρατοπέδευσε. Hist. lib. iii, cap. 83. The account in Polybius is not so easily reconcileable with present appearances as that in Livy; he talks of hills to the right and left of the pass and valley; but when Flaminius entered he had the lake at the right of both.

[3] « A tergo et super caput decepere insidiæ.» Tit. Liv. etc.

the hills, which, they say, was the principal scene of slaughter. The other part of the plain is covered with thick-set olive trees in corn-grounds, and is no where quite level except near the edge of the lake. It is, indeed, most probable that the battle was fought near this end of the valley, for the six thousand Romans who, at the beginning of the action, broke through the enemy, escaped to the summit of an eminence which must have been in this quarter, otherwise they would have had to traverse the whole plain, and to pierce through the main army of Hannibal.

The Romans fought desperately for three hours, but the death of Flaminius was the signal for a general dispersion. The Carthaginian horse then burst in upon the fugitives, and the lake, the marsh about Borghetto, but chiefly the plain of the Sanguinetto and the passes of the Gualandra, were strewed with dead. Near some old walls on a bleak ridge to the left above the rivulet many human bones have been repeatedly found, and this has confirmed the pretensions and the name of the « stream of blood.»

Every district of Italy has its hero. In the north some painter is the usual genius of the place, and the foreign Julio Romano more than divides Mantua with her native Virgil.[1] To the south we hear of Roman names. Near Thrasimene tradition is still faithful to the fame of an enemy, and Hannibal the Carthaginian is the only ancient name remembered on the banks of the Perugian lake. Flaminius is unknown; but the postillions on that road have been taught to show the very spot where *il Console Romano* was slain. Of all who fought and fell in the battle of Thrasimene, the historian himself has, besides the generals and Maharbal, preserved indeed only a single name. You overtake the Carthaginian again on the same road to Rome. The antiquary, that is, the hostler of the post-house at Spoleto, tells you that his town repulsed the victorious enemy, and shows you the gate still called *Porta di Annibale*. It is hardly worth while to remark that a French travel writer, well known by the name of the President Dupaty, saw Thrasimene in the lake of Bolsena, which lay conveniently on his way from Sienna to Rome.

Note 36. Stanza lxvi.

But thou, Clitumnus!

No book of travels has omitted to expatiate on the temple of the Clitumnus, between Foligno and Spoleto; and no site, or scenery, even in Italy, is more worthy a description. For an account of the dilapidation of this temple, the reader is referred to Historical Illustrations of the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold.

Note 37. Stanza lxxi.

Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract.

I saw the « Cascata del marmore» of Terni twice, at different periods; once from the summit of the precipice, and again from the valley below. The lower view is far to be preferred, if the traveller has time for one only: but in any point of view, either from above or below, it is worth all the cascades and torrents of Switzerland put together; the Staubach, Reichenbach, Pisse Vache, fall of Arpenaz, etc. are rills in comparative appearance. Of the fall of Schaffhausen I cannot speak, not yet having seen it.

Note 38. Stanza lxxii.

An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge.

Of the time, place, and qualities of this kind of Iris, the reader may have seen a short account in a note to *Manfred*. The fall looks so much like « the hell of waters» that Addison thought the descent alluded to to be the gulph in which Alecto plunged into the infernal regions. It is singular enough that two of the finest cascades in Europe should be artificial—this of the Velino, and the one at Tivoli. The traveller is strongly recommended to trace the Velino, at least as high as the little lake called *Pie' di Lup*. The Reatine territory was the Italian Tempe,[1] and the ancient naturalist, amongst other beautiful varieties, remarked the daily rainbows of the lake Velinus.[2] A scholar of great name has devoted a treatise to this district alone.[3]

Note 39. Stanza lxxiii.

The thundering lauwine.

In the greater part of Switzerland the avalanches are known by the name of lauwine.

Note 40. Stanza lxxv.

——————————I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word.

These stanzas may probably remind the reader of *Ensign Northerton's* remarks: « D—n Homo,» etc. but the reasons for our dislike are not exactly the same. I wish to express that we become tired of the task before we can comprehend the beauty; that we learn by rote before we can get by heart; that the freshness is worn away, and the future pleasure and advantage deadened and destroyed, by the didactic anticipation, at an age when we can neither feel nor understand the power of compositions which it requires an acquaintance with life, as well as Latin and Greek, to relish or to reason upon. For the same reason we never can be aware of the fulness of some of the finest passages of Shakspeare (« To be or not to be,» for instance), from the habit of having them hammered into us at eight years old, as an exercise, not of mind but of memory: so that when we are old enough to enjoy them, the taste is gone, and the appetite palled. In some parts of the continent, young persons are taught from more common authors, and do not read the best classics till their maturity. I certainly do not speak on this point from any pique or aversion towards the place of my education. I was not a slow, though an idle boy; and I believe no one could, or can be more attached to Harrow than I have always been, and with reason;—a part of the time passed there was the happiest of my life; and my preceptor (the Rev. Dr Joseph Drury) was the best and worthiest friend I ever possessed, whose warnings I have remembered but too well, though too late—when I have erred, and whose counsels I have but followed when I have done well or wisely. If ever this imperfect

[1] About the middle of the XIIth century the coins of Mantua bore on one side the image and figure of Virgil. Zecca d'Italia, pl. xvii. i. 6... Voyage dans le Milanais, etc. par A. Z. Millin, tom. ii, pag. 294. Paris, 1817.

[1] « Reatini me ad sua Tempe duxerunt.» Cicer. Epist. ad Attic. xv, lib. iv.

[2] « In eodem lacu nullo non die apparere arcus.» Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. ii, cap. lxii.

[3] Ald. Manut. de Reatina urbe agroque, ap. Sallengre Thesaur. tom. i, p. 773.

record of my feelings towards him should reach his eyes, let it remind him of one who never thinks of him but with gratitude and veneration—of one who would more gladly boast of having been his pupil, if, by more closely following his injunctions, he could reflect any honour upon his instructor.

Note 41. Stanza lxxix.

The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now.

For a comment on this and the two following stanzas, the reader may consult Historical Illustrations of the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold.

Note 42. Stanza lxxxii.

The trebly hundred triumphs!

Orosius gives three hundred and twenty for the number of triumphs. He is followed by Panvinius: and Panvinius by Mr Gibbon and the modern writers.

Note 43. Stanza lxxxiii.

Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel, etc.

Certainly were it not for these two traits in the life of Sylla, alluded to in this stanza, we should regard him as a monster unredeemed by any admirable quality. The *atonement* of his voluntary resignation of empire may perhaps be accepted by us, as it seems to have satisfied the Romans, who if they had not respected must have destroyed him. There could be no mean, no division of opinion; they must have all thought, like Eucrates, that what had appeared ambition was a love of glory, and that what had been mistaken for pride was a real grandeur of soul.[1]

Note 44. Stanza lxxxvi.

And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.

On the third of September, Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar; a year afterwards he obtained «his crowning mercy» of Worcester; and a few years after, on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, died.

Note 45. Stanza lxxxvii.

And thou, dread statue! still existent in
The austerest form of naked majesty.

The projected division of the Spada Pompey has already been recorded by the historian of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Mr Gibbon found it in the memorials of Flaminius Vacca,[2] and it may be added to his mention of it that Pope Julius III. gave the contending owners five hundred crowns for the statue; and presented it to Cardinal Capo di Ferro, who had prevented the judgment of Solomon from being executed upon the image. In a more civilized age this statue was exposed to an actual operation: for the French, who acted the Brutus of Voltaire in the Coliseum, resolved that their Cæsar should fall at the base of that Pompey, which was supposed to have been sprinkled with the blood of the original dictator. The nine foot hero was therefore removed to the arena of the amphitheatre, and to facilitate its transport suffered the temporary amputation of its right arm. The republican tragedians had to plead that the arm was a restoration: but their accusers do not believe that the integrity of the statue would have protected it. The love of finding every coincidence has discovered the true Cæsarean ichor in a stain near the right knee; but colder criticism has rejected not only the blood but the portrait, and assigned the globe of power rather to the first of the emperors than to the last of the republican masters of Rome. Winkelmann[4] is loth to allow an heroic statue of a Roman citizen, but the Grimani Agrippa, a cotemporary almost, is heroic; and naked Roman figures were only very rare, not absolutely forbidden. The face accords much better with the «*hominem integrum et castum et gravem*,»[3] than with any of the busts of Augustus, and is too stern for him who was beautiful, says Suetonius, at all periods of his life. The pretended likeness to Alexander the Great cannot be discerned, but the traits resemble the medal of Pompey.[3] The objectionable globe may not have been an ill-applied flattery to him who found Asia Minor the boundary, and left it the centre of the Roman empire. It seems that Winkelmann has made a mistake in thinking that no proof of the identity of this statue, with that which received the bloody sacrifice, can be derived from the spot where it was discovered.[4] Flaminius Vacca says *sotto una cantina*, and this cantina is known to have been in the Vicolo de' Leutari near the Cancellaria, a position corresponding exactly to that of the Janus before the basilica of Pompey's theatre, to which Augustus transferred the statue after the *curia* was either burnt or taken down [5] Part of the Pompeian shade,[6] the portico, existed in the beginning of the XVth century, and the *atrium* was still called *Satrum*. So says Blondus.[7] At all events, so imposing is the stern majesty of the statue, and so memorable is the story, that the play of the imagination leaves no room for the exercise of the judgment, and the fiction, if a fiction it is, operates on the spectator with an effect not less powerful than truth.

Note 46. Stanza lxxxviii.

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome!

Ancient Rome, like modern Sienna, abounded most probably with images of the foster-mother of her founder; but there were two she-wolves of whom history makes particular mention. One of these, *of brass in ancient work*, was seen by Dionysius[8] at the temple of Romulus under the Palatine, and is universally believed to be that mentioned by the Latin historian, as having been made from the money collected by a fine on usurers, and as standing under the Ruminal fig-tree.[9] The other was that which Cicero[10] has celebrated both in prose and verse, and which the

[1] «Seigneur, vous changez toutes mes idées de la façon dont je vous vois agir. Je croyais que vous aviez de l'ambition, mais aucun amour pour la gloire je voyais bien que votre âme était haute; mais je ne soupçonnais pas qu'elle fût grande.»—*Dialogue de Sylla et d'Eucrate.*

[2] Memorie, num. lvii, pag 9, ap. Montfaucon Diarium Italicum.

[3] Stor a delle arti, etc. lib. ix, cap. i, pag. 321, 322, tom. ii.

[4] Cicer. epist. ad Atticum, xi, 6.

[5] Published by Causeus in his Museum Romanum.

[6] Storia delle arti, etc. ibid.

[7] Sueton. in vit. August. cap. 31, and in vit. C. J. Cæsar, cap 88. Appian says it was burnt down. See a note of Pitiscus to Suetonius, pag. 224.

[8] «Tu modo Pompeia lenta spatiare sub umbra.»
Ovid. Ar. Amat.

[9] Roma instaurata, lib. ii, fol. 31.

[10] Κόλπεα ποιήματα παλαιᾶς ἐργασίας. Antiq. Rom. lib. i.

[11] «Ad ficum Ruminalem simulacra infantium conditorum urbis sub uberibus lupæ posuerunt.» Liv. Hist. lib. x. cap. lxix. This was in the year U. C. 455, or 457.

[12] «Tum statua Nattæ, tum simulacra Deorum, Romulusque et Remus cum altricę bellua vi fulminis uti concidernnt.» De Divinat. ii, 20. «Lectus est ille etiam qui hanc urbem condidit Romulus, quem

historian Dion also records as having suffered the same accident as is alluded to by the orator.[1] The question agitated by the antiquaries is, whether the wolf now in the conservator's palace is that of Livy and Dionysius, or that of Cicero, or whether it is neither one nor the other. The earlier writers differ as much as the moderns: Lucius Faunus[2] says, that it is the one alluded to by both, which is impossible, and also by Virgil, which may be. Fulvius Ursinus[3] calls it the wolf of Dionysius, and Marlianus[4] talks of it as the one mentioned by Cicero. To him Rycquius *tremblingly* assents.[5] Nardini is inclined to suppose it may be one of the many wolves preserved in ancient Rome; but of the two rather bends to the Ciceronian statue.[6] Montfaucon[7] mentions it as a point without doubt. Of the latter writers the decisive Winkelmann[8] proclaims it as having been found at the church of Saint Theodore, where, or near where, was the temple of Romulus, and consequently makes it the wolf of Dionysius. His authority is Lucius Faunus, who, however, only says that it *was placed*, not *found*, at the Ficus Ruminalis by the Comitium, by which he does not seem to allude to the church of Saint Theodore. Rycquius was the first to make the mistake, and Winkelmann followed Rycquius.

Flaminius Vacca tells quite a different story, and says he had heard the wolf with the twins was found[1] near the arch of Septimius Severus. The commentator on Winkelmann is of the same opinion with that learned person, and is incensed at Nardini for not having remarked that Cicero, in speaking of the wolf struck with lightning in the Capitol, makes use of the past tense. But, with the Abate's leave, Nardini does not positively assert the statue to be that mentioned by Cicero, and, if he had, the assumption would not perhaps have been so exceedingly indiscreet. The Abate himself is obliged to own that there are marks very like the scathing of lightning in the hinder legs of the present wolf; and, to get rid of this, adds, that the wolf seen by Dionysius might have been also struck by lightning, or otherwise injured.

Let us examine the subject by a reference to the words of Cicero. The orator in two places seems to particularize the Romulus and the Remus, especially the first, which his audience remembered to *have been* in the Capitol, as being struck with lightning. In his verses he records that the twins and wolf both fell, and that the latter left behind the marks of her feet. Cicero does not say that the wolf was consumed: and Dion only mentions that it fell down, without alluding, as the Abate has made him, to the force of the blow, or the firmness with which it had been fixed. The whole strength, therefore, of the Abate's argument, hangs upon the past tense; which, however, may be somewhat diminished by remarking that the phrase only shows that the statue was not then standing in its former position. Winkelmann has observed, that the present twins are modern; and it is equally clear that there are marks of gilding on the wolf, which might therefore be supposed to make part of the ancient group. It is known that the sacred images of the Capitol were not destroyed when injured by time or accident, but were put into certain underground depositories called *favissæ*.[2] It may be thought possible that the wolf had been so deposited, and had been replaced in some conspicuous situation when the Capitol was rebuilt by Vespasian. Rycquius, without mentioning his authority, tells that it was transferred from the Comitium to the Lateran, and thence brought to the Capitol. If it was found near the arch of Severus, it may have been one of the images which Orosius[3] says was thrown down in the Forum by lightning when Alaric took the city. That it is of very high antiquity the workmanship is a decisive proof; and that circumstance induced Winkelmann to believe it the wolf of Dionysius. The Capitoline wolf, however, may have been of the same early date as that at the temple of Romulus. Lactantius[4] asserts that in his time the Romans worshipped a wolf; and it is known that the Lupercalia held out to

inauratum in Capitolio parvum atque lactantem, uberibus lupinis inhiantem fuisse meministis.» In Catilin. iii, 8.

«Hic silvestris erat Romani nominis altrix
Martia, quæ parvos Mavortis semine natos
Uberibus gravidis vitali rore rigabat,
Quæ tum cum pueris flammato fulminis ictu
Concidit, atque avulsa pedum vestigia liquit.»
De Consulatu, lib. ii. (lib. i. de Divinat. cap. ii.)

[1] Ἐν γὰρ τῷ καπητωλίῳ ἀνδριάντες τὲ πολλοὶ ὑπὸ κεραυνῶν συνεχωνεύθησαν, καὶ ἀγάλματα ἄλλά τε, καὶ διὸς ἐπὶ κίονος ἱδρυμένου, ἐικών τέ τις λυκαίνης σύντε τῷ Ῥώμῳ καὶ σὺν τῷ Ῥωμύλῳ ἱδρυμένη ἔπεση. Dion. Hist. lib. xxxvii, pag. 37, edit. Rob. Steph. 1548. He goes on to mention that the letters of the columns on which the laws were written were liquified and become ἀμυδρά. All that the Romans did was to erect a large statue to Jupiter, looking towards the east: no mention is afterwards made of the wolf. This happened in A. U. C. 689. The Abate Fea, in noticing this passage of Dion, (Storia delle arti, etc. tom. i, p. 202, note x.) says, *Non ostante, aggiunge Dione, che fusse ben-fermata* (the wolf), by which it is clear the Abate translated the Xylandro-Leuclavian version, which puts *quamvis stabilita* for the original ἱδρυμένη, a word that does not mean *ben-fermata*, but only *raised*, as may be distinctly seen from another passage of the same Dion: Ἠβουλήθη μὲν οὖν ὁ Ἀγρίππας καὶ τὸν Αὔγουστον ἐνταῦθα ἱδρύσαι. Hist. lib. lvi, Dion says that Agrippa «wished *to raise a statue* of Augustus in the Pantheon.»

[2] «In eadem porticu ænea lupa, cujus uberibus Romulus ac Remus lactantes inhiant, conspicitur: de hac Cicero et Virgilius semper intelexere. Livius hoc signum ab Ædilibus ex pecuniis quibus mulctati essent fœneratores, positum innuit. Antea in Comitiis ad Ficum Ruminalem, quo loco pueri fuerant expositi locatum pro certo est.» Luc. Faun. de Antiq. Urb. Rom. lib. ii, cap. vii, ap. Salengre, tom. i, p. 217. In his XVIIth chapter he repeats that the statues were there, but not that they were *found* there.

[3] Ap. Nardini, Roma Vetus, lib. v, cap. iv.

[4] Marliani, Urb. Rom. topograph. lib. ii, cap. ix. He mentions another wolf and twins in the Vatican, lib. v, cap. xxi.

[5] «Non desunt qui hanc ipsam esse putent, quam adpiximus, quæ è comitio in Basilicam Lateranam, cum nonnullis aliis antiquitatum reliquiis, atque hinc in Capitolium postea relata sit, quamvis Marlianus antiquam Capitolinam esse maluit a Tullio descriptam, cui ut in re minus dubia, trepidè adsentimur.» Just. Rycquii de Capit. Roman. Comm. cap. xxiv, pag. 250, edit. Lugd. Bat. 1696.

[6] Nardini Roma Vetus, lib. v, cap. iv.

[7] «Lupa hodieque in capitolinis prostat ædibus, cum vestigio fulminis quo ictam narrat Cicero.» Diarium Italic. tom. i, pag. 174.

[8] Storia delle arti, etc. lib. iii, cap. iii, § ii, note 10. Winkelmann has made a strange blunder in the note, by saying the Ciceronian wolf was not in the Capitol, and that Dion was wrong in saying so.

[1] «Intesi dire, che l'Ercole di bronzo, che oggi si trova nella sala del Campidoglio, fu trovato nel foro Romano appresso l'arco di Settimio; e vi fu trovata anche la lupa di bronzo che allatta Romolo e Remo, e stà nella Loggia de' conservatori.» Flam. Vacca. Memorie. mum. iii, pag. 1, ap. Monfaucon piar. Ital. tom. i.

[2] Luc. Faun. ibid.

[3] See Note to stanza LXXX in Historical Illustrations.

[4] «Romuli nutrix Lupa honoribus est affecta divinis, et ferrem si animal ipsum fuisset, cujus figuram gerit.» Lactant. de falsa religione. Lib. i, cap. 20, pag. 101, edit. varior. 1660; that is to say, he would rather adore a wolf than a prostitute. His commentator has observed, that the opinion of Livy concerning Laurentia being figured in this wolf was not universal. Strabo thought so. Rycquius is wrong in saying that Lactantius mentions the wolf was in the Capitol.

a very late period[1] after every other observance of the ancient superstition had totally expired. This may account for the preservation of the ancient image longer than the other early symbols of Paganism.

It may be permitted, however, to remark that the wolf was a Roman symbol, but that the worship of that symbol is an inference drawn by the zeal of Lactantius. The early Christian writers are not to be trusted in the charges which they make against the pagans. Eusebius accused the Romans to their faces of worshipping Simon Magus, and raising a statue to him in the island of the Tyber. The Romans had probably never heard of such a person before, who came, however, to play a considerable, though scandalous part in the church history, and has left several tokens of his aerial combat with St Peter at Rome; notwithstanding that an inscription found in this very island of the Tyber showed the Simon Magus of Eusebius to be a certain indigenal god, called Semo Sangus or Fidius.[2]

Even when the worship of the founder of Rome had been abandoned, it was thought expedient to humour the habits of the good matrons of the city by sending them with their sick infants to the church of St Theodore, as they had before carried them to the temple of Romulus.[3] The practice is continued to this day; and the site of the above church seems to be thereby identified with that of the temple: so that if the wolf had been really found there, as Winkelmann says, there would be no doubt of the present statue being that seen by Dionysius.[4] But Faunus, in saying that it was at the Ficus Ruminalis by the Comitium, is only talking of its ancient position as recorded by Pliny; and even if he had been remarking where it was found, would not have alluded to the church of St Theodore, but to a very different place, near which it was then thought the Ficus Ruminalis had been, and also the Comitium; that is, the three columns by the church of Santa Maria Liberatrice, at the corner of the Palatine looking on the Forum.

It is, in fact, a mere conjecture where the image was actually dug up,[5] and perhaps, on the whole, the marks of the gilding, and of the lightning, are a better argument in favour of its being the Ciceronian wolf than any that can be adduced for the contrary opinion. At any rate, it is reasonably selected in the text of the poem as one of the most interesting relics of the ancient city,[1] and is certainly the figure, if not the very animal to which Virgil alludes in his beautiful verses:

"Geminos huic ubera circum
Ludere pendentes pueros et lambere matrem
Impavidos: illam tereti cervice reflexam
Mulcere alternos, et fingere corpora lingua."[2]

Note 47. Stanza xc.

——————For the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould.

It is possible to be a very great man, and to be still very inferior to Julius Cæsar, the most complete character, so Lord Bacon thought, of all antiquity. Nature seems incapable of such extraordinary combinations as composed his versatile capacity, which was the wonder even of the Romans themselves. The first general—the only triumphant politician—inferior to none in eloquence—comparable to any in the attainments of wisdom, in an age made up of the greatest commanders, statesmen, orators, and philosophers that ever appeared in the world—an author who composed a perfect specimen of military annals in his travelling carriage—at one time in a controversy with Cato, at another writing a treatise on punning, and collecting a set of good sayings—fighting[3] and making love at the same moment, and willing to abandon both his empire and his mistress for a sight of the fountains of the Nile. Such did Julius Cæsar appear to his cotemporaries, and to those of the subsequent ages, who were the most inclined to deplore and execrate his fatal genius.

But we must not be so much dazzled with his surpassing glory or with his magnanimous, his amiable qualities, as to forget the decision of his impartial countrymen:

HE WAS JUSTLY SLAIN.[4]

[1] To A. D. 496. "Quis credere possit," says Baronius, [Ann. Eccle. tom. viii, pag. 602, in an. 496.] "vigusse adhuc Romæ ad Gelasii tempora, quæ fuere ante exordia urbis allata in Italiam Lupercalia?" Gelasius wrote a letter which occupies four folio pages to Andromachus, the senator, and others, to show that the rites should be given up.

[2] Eusebius has these words; καὶ ἀνδριάντι παρ' ὑμῖν ὡς θεὸς τετίμηται, ἐν τῷ Τίβερι ποταμῷ μεταξὺ τῶν δύο γεφυρῶν, ἤχων ἐπιγραφὴν Ρωμαϊκὴν ταύτην Σίμωνι θεῷ Σάγκτῳ. Ecclesi. Hist. lib. ii, cap. xiii, p. 40. Justin Martyr had told the story before; but Baronius himself was obliged to detect this fable. See Nardini Roma Vet. lib. vii, cap. xii.

[1] "In essa gli antichi pontefici per toglier la memoria de' giuochi Lupercali istituiti in onore di Romolo, introdussero l' uso di portarvi Bambini oppressi da infermità occulte, acciò si liberino per l'intercessione di questo Santo, come di continuo si sperimenta." Rione xii. Ripa, accurata e succinta descrizione, etc. di Roma Moderna dell' Ab. Ridolf. Venuti. 1766.

[1] Nardini, lib. v, cap. ii, convicta Pomponius Lætus *crassi erroris*, in putting the Ruminal fig-tree at the church of Saint Theodore; but, as Livy says the wolf was at the Ficus Ruminalis, and Dionysius at the temple of Romulus, he is obliged (cap. iv.) to own that the two were close together, as well as the Lupercal cave, shaded, as it were, by the fig-tree.

[2] "Ad comitium ficus olim Ruminalis germinabat, sub qua lupæ rumam, hoc est, mammam, docente Varrone, suxerant olim Romulus et Remus; non procul a templo hodie D. Mariæ Liberatrici appellato ubi *forsan* inventa nobilis illa ænea statua lupæ geminos pueruloS lactantis, quam hodie in Capitolio videmus." Olai Borrichii antiqua Urbis Romanæ facies, cap. x. See also cap. xii. Borrichius wrote after Nardini in 1687. Ap. Grav. Antiq. Rom. tom. iv, p. 1522.

[1] Donatus, lib. xi, cap. 18, gives a medal representing on one side the wolf in the same position as that in the Capitol; and on the reverse the wolf with the head not reverted. It is of the time of Antoninus Pius.

[2] Æneid. viii, 631. See Dr Middleton, in his Letter from Rome, who inclines to the Ciceronian wolf, but without examining the subject.

[3] In his tenth book, Lucan shows him sprinkled with the blood of Pharsalia in the arms of Cleopatra:

Sanguine Thessalicæ cladis perfusus adulter
Admisit Venerem curis, et miscuit armis.

After feasting with his mistress, he sits up all night to converse with the Ægyptian sages, and tells Achoreus,

Spes sit mihi certa videndi
Niliacos fontes, bellum civile relinquam.
"Sic velut in tuta securi pace trahebant
Noctis iter medium."

Immediately afterwards, he is fighting again and defending every position.

"Sed adest defensor ubique
Cæsar et hos aditus gladiis, hos ignibus arcet.
. . . . . Cæca nocte carinis
Insiluit Cæsar semper feliciter usus
Præcipiti cursu bellorum et tempore rapto."

[4] "Jure cæsus existimetur," says Suetonius, after a fair estimation of his character, and making use of a phrase which was a formula in Livy's time. "Melum jure cæsum pronuntiavit, etiam si regni crimine insons fuerit" [lib. iv, cap. 48.] and which was continued in the legal judgments pronounced in justifiable homicides, such as killing housebreakers. See Sueton. in vit. C. J. Cæsaris, with the commentary of Pitiscus, p. 184.

Note 48. Stanza xciii.

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail.

«. . . . Omnes pene veteres; qui nihil cognosci, nihil percipi, nihil sciri posse dixerunt; angustos sensus; imbecillos animos, brevia curricula vitæ; in profundo veritatem demersam; opinionibus et institutis omnia teneri; nihil veritati relinqui: deinceps omnia tenebris circumfusa esse dixerunt.»[1] The eighteen hundred years which have elapsed since Cicero wrote this have not removed any of the imperfections of humanity: and the complaints of the ancient philosophers may, without injustice or affectation, be transcribed in a poem written yesterday.

Note 49. Stanza xcix.

There is a stern round tower of other days.

Alluding to the tomb of Cecilia Metella, called Capo di Bove, in the Appian Way. See Historical Illustrations of the IVth Canto of Childe Harold.

Note 50. Stanza cii.

————————Prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death.

Ὃν οἱ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν, ἀποθνήσκει νέος.
Τὸ γὰρ θανεῖν οὐκ αἰσχρὸν, ἀλλ' αἰσχρῶς θανεῖν.

Rich. Franc. phil. Brunck. Poetæ Gnomici, p. 231, edit. 1784.

Note 51. Stanza cvii.

Behold the Imperial Mount!

The Palatine is one mass of ruins, particularly on the side towards the Circus Maximus. The very soil is formed of crumbled brick-work. Nothing has been told, nothing can be told, to satisfy the belief of any but a Roman antiquary.—See Historical Illustrations, page 206.

Note 52. Stanza cviii.

There is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First freedom, and then glory, etc.

The author of the Life of Cicero, speaking of the opinion entertained of Britain by that orator and his cotemporary Romans, has the following eloquent passage: « From their railleries of this kind, on the barbarity and misery of our island, one cannot help reflecting on the surprising fate and revolutions of kingdoms, how Rome, once the mistress of the world, the seat of arts, empire, and glory, now lies sunk in sloth, ignorance, and poverty, enslaved to the most cruel as well as to the most contemptible of tyrants, superstition, and religious imposture: while this remote country, anciently the jest and contempt of the polite Romans, is become the happy seat of liberty, plenty, and letters; flourishing in all the arts and refinements of civil life; yet running perhaps the same course which Rome itself had run before it, from virtuous industry to wealth; from wealth to luxury; from luxury to an impatience of discipline, and corruption of morals: till by a total degeneracy and loss of virtue, being grown ripe for destruction, it fall a prey at last to some hardy oppressor, and, with the loss of liberty, losing every thing that is valuable, sinks gradually again into its original barbarism.»[2]

[1] Academ. l. 13.

[2] The History of the Life of M. Tullius Cicero, sect. vi, vol. ii, pag. 102. The contrast has been reversed in a late extraordinary instance. A gentleman was thrown into prison at Paris; efforts were made for his release. The French minister continued to detain him, under the pretext that he was not an Englishman, but only *a Roman*. See «Interesting facts relating to Joachim Murat,» pag. 139.

Note 53. Stanza cx.

————————And apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime.

The column of Trajan is surmounted by St Peter, that of Aurelius by St Paul. See Historical Illustrations of the IVth Canto, etc.

Note 54. Stanza cxi.

Still we Trajan's name adore.

Trajan was *proverbially* the best of the Roman princes:[1] and it would be easier to find a sovereign uniting exactly the opposite characteristics, than one possessed of all the happy qualities ascribed to this emperor. «When he mounted the throne,» says the historian Dion,[2] «he was strong in body, he was vigorous in mind; age had impaired none of his faculties; he was altogether free from envy and from detraction; he honoured all the good and he advanced them; and on this account they could not be the objects of his fear or of his hate; he never listened to informers; he gave not way to his anger; he abstained equally from unfair exactions and unjust punishments; he had rather be loved as a man than honoured as a sovereign; he was affable with his people, respectful to the senate, and universally beloved by both; he inspired none with dread but the enemies of his country.»

Note 55. Stanza cxiv.

Rienzi, last of Romans!

The name and exploits of Rienzi must be familiar to the reader of Gibbon. Some details and inedited manuscripts, relative to this unhappy hero, will be seen in the Illustrations of the IVth Canto.

Note 56. Stanza cxv.

Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast.

The respectable authority of Flaminius Vacca would incline us to believe in the claims of the Egerian grotto.[3] He assures us that he saw an inscription in the pavement, stating that the fountain was that of Egeria dedi-

[1] «Hujus tantum memoriæ delatum est, ut, usque ad nostram ætatem non aliter in Senatu principibus acclamatur, nisi, FELICIOR AVGVSTO MELIOR TRAJANO.» Eutrop. Brev. Hist. Rom. lib. viii, cap. v.

[2] Τῷ τε γὰρ σώματι ἐῤῥωτο..... καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ ἤκμαζεν, ὡς μήθ' ὑπὸ γήρως ἀμβλύνεσθαι..... καὶ οὔτ' ἐφθόνει οὔτε καθήρει τινὰ, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάνυ πάντας τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἐτίμα καὶ ἐμεγάλυνε· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὔτε ἐφοβεῖτό τινα αὐτῶν, οὔτε ἐμίσει..... διαβολαῖς τε ἥκιστα ἐπιστεύε, καὶ ὀργῇ ἥκιστα ἐδουλοῦτο· τῶν τε χρημάτων τῶν ἀλλωτρίων ἴσα καὶ φόνων τῶν ἀδίκων ἀπείχετο..... φιλούμενός τε οὕτ' ἐπ' αὐτοῖς μᾶλλον ἢ τιμώμενος ἔχαιρε, καὶ τῷ τε δήμῳ· μετ' ἐπιείκειας συνεγίνετο, καὶ τῇ γερουσίᾳ σεμνοπρεπῶς ὡμίλει· ἀγαπητὸς μὲν πᾶσι· φοβερὸς δὲ μηδενὶ, πλὴν πολεμίοις· ὢν. Hist. Rom. lib. lxviii, cap. vi, vii, tom. ii, pp. 1123 1124, edit. Hamb. 1750.

[3] «Poco lontano dal detto luogo si scende ad un casaletto, del quale ne sono Padroni li Caforelli, che con questo nome è chiamato il luogo; vi è una fontana sotto una gran volta antica, che al presente si gode, e li Romani vi vanno l'estate a ricrearsi; nel pavimento di essa fonte si legge in un epitaffio essere quella la fonte di Egeria, dedicata alle ninfe, e questa, dice l'epitaffio, essere la medesima fonte in cui fu convertita.» Memorie, etc. ap. Nardini, pag. 13. He does not give the inscription.

cated to the nymphs. The inscription is not there at this day; but Montfaucon quotes two lines[1] of Ovid from a stone in the Villa Giustiniani, which he seems to think had been brought from the same grotto.

This grotto and valley were formerly frequented in summer, and particularly the first Sunday in May, by the modern Romans, who attached a salubrious quality to the fountain which trickles from an orifice at the bottom of the vault, and, overflowing the little pools, creeps down the matted grass into the brook below. The brook is the Ovidian Almo, whose name and qualities are lost in the modern Aquataccio. The valley itself is called Valle di Caffarelli, from the dukes of that name who made over their fountain to the Pallavicini, with sixty *rubbia* of adjoining land.

There can be little doubt that this long dell is the Egerian valley of Juvenal, and the pausing place of Umbritius, notwithstanding the generality of his commentators have supposed the descent of the satirist and his friend to have been into the Arician grove, where the nymph met Hippolitus, and where she was more peculiarly worshipped.

The step from the Porta Capena to the Alban hill, fifteen miles distant, would be too considerable, unless we were to believe in the wild conjecture of Vossius, who makes that gate travel from its present station, where he pretends it was during the reign of the Kings, as far as the Arician grove, and then makes it recede to its old site with the shrinking city.[2] The tufo, or pumice, which the poet prefers to marble, is the substance composing the bank in which the grotto is sunk.

The modern topographers[3] find in the grotto the statue of the nymph and nine niches for the Muses, and a late traveller[4] has discovered that the cave is restored to that simplicity which the poet regretted had been exchanged for injudicious ornament. But the headless statue is palpably rather a male than a nymph, and has none of the attributes ascribed to it at present visible. The nine Muses could hardly have stood in six niches; and Juvenal certainly does not allude to any individual cave.[5] Nothing can be collected from the satirist but that somewhere near the Porta Capena was a spot in which it was supposed Numa held nightly consultations with his nymph, and where there was a grove and a sacred fountain, and fanes once consecrated to the Muses; and that from this spot there was a descent into the valley of Egeria, where were several artificial caves. It is clear that the statues of the Muses made no part of the decoration which the satirist thought misplaced in these caves; for he expressly assigns other fanes (delubra) to these divinities above the valley, and moreover tells us, that they had been ejected to make room for the Jews. In fact, the little temple, now called that of Bacchus, was formerly thought to belong to the Muses, and Nardini[1] places them in a poplar grove, which was in his time above the valley.

It is probable, from the inscription and position, that the cave now shown may be one of the «artificial caverns,» of which, indeed, there is another a little way higher up the valley, under a tuft of alder bushes: but a *single* grotto of Egeria is a mere modern invention, grafted upon the application of the epithet Egerian to these nymphea in general, and which might send us to look for the haunts of Numa upon the banks of the Thames.

Our English Juvenal was not seduced into mistranslation by his acquaintance with Pope: he carefully preserves the correct plural—

> «Thence slowly winding down the vale we view
> The Egerian *grots*; oh, how unlike the true!»

The valley abounds with springs,[2] and over these springs, which the Muses might haunt from their neighbouring groves, Egeria presided: hence she was said to supply them with water; and she was the nymph of the grottos through which the fountains were taught to flow.

The whole of the monuments in the vicinity of the Egerian valley have received names at will, which have been changed at will. Venuti[3] owns he can see no traces of the temples of Jove, Saturn, Juno, Venus, and Diana, which Nardini found, or hoped to find. The mutatorium of Caracalla's circus, the temple of Honour and Virtue, the temple of Bacchus, and above all, the temple of the god Rediculus, are the antiquaries' despair.

The circus of Caracalla depends on a medal of that emperor cited by Fulvius Ursinas, of which the reverse shows a circus, supposed, however, by some to represent the Circus Maximus. It gives a very good idea of that place of exercise. The soil has been but little raised, if we may judge from the small cellular structure at the end of the Spina, which was probably the chapel of the god Consus. This cell is half beneath the soil, as it must have been in the circus itself, for Dionysius[4] could not be persuaded to believe that this divinity was the Roman Neptune, because his altar was under ground.

Note 57. Stanza cxxvii.

Yet let us ponder boldly.

«At all events,» says the author of the Academical Questions, «I trust, whatever may be the fate of my own speculations, that philosophy will regain that estimation which it ought to possess. The free and philosophic spirit of our nation has been the theme of admiration to the world. This was the proud distinction of Englishmen, and the luminous source of all their glory. Shall we then forget the manly and dignified

[1] «In villa Justiniana exstat ingens lapis quadratus solidus in quo sculpta hæc duo Ovidii carmina sunt:

Ægeria est quæ præbet aquas dea grata Camœnis.
Illa Numæ conjux consiliumque fuit.

Qui lapis videtur ex eodem Egeriæ fonte, aut ejus vicinia isthuc comportatus.» Diarium Italic. p. 153.

[2] De Magnit. Vet. Rom. ap. Græv. Ant. Rom. tom. iv. p. 1507.

[3] Echinard. Descrizione di Roma e dell' agro Romano corretto dall' Abate Venuti in Roma, 1750. They believe in the grotto and nymph. «Simulacro di questo fonte, essendovi scolpite le acque a pie di esso.»

[4] Classical Tour, chap. vi. p. 217, vol. ii.

[5] «Substitit ad veteres arcus, madidamque Capenam,
Hic ubi nocturnæ Numa constituebat amicæ.
Nunc sacri fontis nemus, et delubra locantur
Judæis quorum cophinum fœnumque supellex.
Omnis enim populo mercedem pendere jussa est
Arbor, et ejectis mendicat silva Camœnis.
In vallem Egeriæ descendimus, et speluncas
Dissimiles veris: quanto præstantius esset
Numen aquæ, viridi si margine clauderet undas
Herba, nec ingenuum violarent marmora tophum.»
Sat. III.

[1] Lib. iii. cap. iii.

[2] «Undique e solo aquæ scaturiunt.» Nardini, lib. iii. cap. iii.

[3] Echinard. etc. Cit. sit. pp. 297—298.

[4] Antiq. Rom. lib. ii. cap. xxii.

sentiments of our ancestors, to prate in the language of the mother or the nurse about our good old prejudices? This is not the way to defend the cause of truth. It was not thus that our fathers maintained it in the brilliant periods of our history. Prejudice may be trusted to guard the outworks for a short space of time while reason slumbers in the citadel: but if the latter sink into a lethargy, the former will quickly erect a standard for herself. Philosophy, wisdom, and liberty, support each other; he who will not reason, is a bigot; he who cannot, is a fool; and he who dares not, is a slave.» Preface, p. xiv. xv. vol. i. 1805.

Note 58. Stanza cxxxii.

——————Great Nemesis!
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long.

We read in Suetonius that Augustus, from a warning received in a dream,[1] counterfeited once a-year, the beggar, sitting before the gate of his palace, with his hand hollowed and stretched out for charity. A statue formerly in the Villa Borghese, and which should be now at Paris, represents the emperor in that posture of supplication. The object of this self-degradation was the appeasement of Nemesis, the perpetual attendant on good fortune, of whose power the Roman conquerors were also reminded by certain symbols attached to their cars of triumph. The symbols were the whip and the *crotalo*, which were discovered in the Nemesis of the Vatican. The attitude of beggary made the above statue pass for that of Belisarius: and until the criticism of Winkelmann[2] had rectified the mistake, one fiction was called in to support another. It was the same fear of the sudden termination of prosperity that made Amasis king of Egypt warn his friend Polycrates of Samos, that the gods loved those whose lives were chequered with good and evil fortunes. Nemesis was supposed to lie in wait particularly for the prudent: that is, for those whose caution rendered them accessible only to mere accidents: and her first altar was raised on the banks of the Phrygian Æsepus by Adrastus, probably the prince of that name who killed the son of Crœsus by mistake. Hence the goddess was called Adrastea.[3]

The Roman Nemesis was *sacred* and *august;* there was a temple to her in the Palatine under the name of Rhamnusia:[4] so great indeed was the propensity of the ancients to trust to the revolution of events, and to believe in the divinity of fortune, that in the same Palatine there was a temple to the fortune of the day.[5] This is the last superstition which retains its hold over the human heart; and from concentrating in one object the credulity so natural to man, has always appeared strongest in those unembarrassed by other articles of belief. The antiquaries have supposed this goddess to be synonymous with fortune and with fate:[1] but it was in her vindictive quality that she was worshipped under the name of Nemesis.

Note 59. Stanza cxl.

I see before me the Gladiator lie.

Whether the wonderful statue which suggested this image be a laquearian gladiator, which in spite of Winkelmann's criticism has been stoutly maintained,[2] or whether it be a Greek herald, as that great antiquary positively asserted,[3] or whether it is to be thought a Spartan or barbarian shield-bearer, according to the opinion of his Italian editor,[4] it must assuredly seem *a copy* of that masterpiece of Ctesilaus which represented «a wounded man dying, who perfectly expressed what there remained of life in him.»[5] Montfaucon[6] and Maffei[7] thought it the identical statue; but that statue was of bronze. The gladiator was once in the villa Ludovizi, and was bought by Clement XII. The right arm is an entire restoration of Michael Angelo.[8]

Note 60. Stanza cxli.

——————He, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday.

Gladiators were of two kinds, compelled and voluntary; and were supplied from several conditions; from slaves sold for that purpose; from culprits; from barbarian captives either taken in war, and, after being led in triumph, set apart for the games, or those seized and condemned as rebels; also from free citizens, some fighting for hire (*auctorati*), others from a depraved ambition: at last even knights and senators were exhibited, a disgrace of which the first tyrant was naturally the first inventor.[9] In the end, dwarfs, and even women, fought; an enormity prohibited by Severus. Of these the most to be pitied undoubtedly were the barbarian captives; and to this species a Christian writer[10] justly applies the epithet «*innocent,*» to distinguish them

[1] Sueton. in vit. Augusti, cap. 91. Casaubon, in the note, refers to Plutarch's Lives of Camillus and Æmilius Paulus, and also to his apophthegms, for the character of this deity. The hollowed hand was reckoned the last degree of degradation: and when the dead body of the præfect Rufinus was borne about in triumph by the people, the indignity was increased by putting his hand in that position.

[2] Storia delle arti, etc. lib. xii, cap. iii, tom. ii, p. 422. Visconti calls the statue, however, a Cybele. It is given in the Museo Pio-Clement. tom. i, par. 40. The Abate Fea (Spiegaziode dei Rami. Storia, etc. tom. iii, p. 513,) calls it a Chrisippus.

[3] Dict. de Bayle, article Adrastea.

[4] It is enumerated by the regionary Victor.

[5] Fortunæ hujusce dici. Cicero mentions her, de legib. lib. ii.

[1] DEAE NEMESI
SIVE FORTVNAE
PISTORIVS
RVGIANVS
V. C. LEGAT.
LEG. XIII. G.
CORD.

See Questiones Romanæ, etc. Ap. Grev. Antiq. Roman. tom. v, p. 942 See also Muratori Nov. Thesaur. Inscript. Vet. tom. i, pp. 88, 89, where there are three Latin and one Greek inscription to Nemesis, and others to Fate.

[2] By the Abate Bracci, dissertazione supra un clipeo-votivo, etc. Preface, pag. 7, who accounts for the cord round the neck, but not for the horn, which it does not appear the gladiators themselves ever used. Note A, Storia delle arti, tom. ii, p. 205.

[3] Either Polifontes, herald of Laius, killed by OEdipus; or Cepreus, herald of Euritheus, killed by the Athenians when he endeavoured to drag the Heraclidæ from the altar of mercy, and in whose honour they instituted annual games, continued to the time of Hadrian; or Anthemocritus, the Athenian herald, killed by the Megarenses, who never recovered the impiety. See Storia delle arti, etc. tom. ii, pp. 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, lib. ix, cap. ii.

[4] Storia, etc. tom ii, p. 207. Not. (A).

[5] «Vulneratum deficientem fecit in quo possit intelligi quantum restat animæ.» Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxxiv, cap. 8.

[6] Antiq. tom. iii, par. 2, tab. 155.

[7] Race. stat. tab. 64.

[8] Mus. Capitol. tom. iii, p. 154, edit. 1755.

[9] Julius Cæsar, who rose by the fall of the aristocracy, brought Furius Leptinus and A. Calenus upon the arena.

[10] Tertullian, «certe quidem et innocentes gladiatores in ludum veniunt, ut voluptatis publicæ hostiæ fiant.» Just. Lips. Saturn. Sermon. lib. ii, cap. iii.

from the professional gladiators. Aurelian and Claudius supplied great numbers of these unfortunate victims; the one after his triumph, and the other on the pretext of a rebellion.[1] No war, says Lipsius,[2] was ever so destructive to the human race as these sports. In spite of the laws of Constantine and Constans, gladiatorial shows survived the old established religion more than seventy years; but they owed their final extinction to the courage of a Christian. In the year 404, on the kalends of January, they were exhibiting the shows in the Flavian amphitheatre before the usual immense concourse of people. Almachius or Telemachus, an eastern monk, who had travelled to Rome intent on his holy purpose, rushed into the midst of the area, and endeavoured to separate the combatants. The prætor Alypius, a person incredibly attached to these games,[3] gave instant orders to the gladiators to slay him; and Telemachus gained the crown of martyrdom, and the title of saint, which surely has never either before or since been awarded for a more noble exploit. Honorius immediately abolished the shows, which were never afterwards revived. The story is told by Theodoret [4] and Cassiodorus, [5] and seems worthy of credit notwithstanding its place in the Roman martyrology. [6] Besides the torrents of blood which flowed at the funerals, in the amphitheatres, the circus, the forums, and other public places, gladiators were introduced at feasts, and tore each other to pieces amidst the supper tables, to the great delight and applause of the guests. Yet Lipsius permits himself to suppose the loss of courage, and the evident degeneracy of mankind, to be nearly connected with the abolition of these bloody spectacles.[7]

Note 61. Stanza cxlii.

Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd.

When one gladiator wounded another, he shouted «*he has it*,» «hoc habet,» or «habet.» The wounded combatant dropped his weapon, and advancing to the edge of the arena, supplicated the spectators. If he had fought well, the people saved him; if otherwise, or as they happened to be inclined, they turned down their thumbs, and he was slain. They were occasionally so savage, that they were impatient if a combat lasted longer than ordinary without wounds or death. The emperor's presence generally saved the vanquished: and it is recorded as an instance of Caracalla's ferocity, that he sent those who supplicated him for life, in a spectacle at Nicomedia, to ask the people; in other words, handed them over to be slain. A similar ceremony is observed at the Spanish bull-fights. The magistrate presides; and, after the horsemen and piccadores have fought the bull, the matadore steps forward and bows to him for permission to kill the animal. If the bull has done his duty by killing two or three horses, or a man, which last is rare, the people interfere with shouts, the ladies wave their handkerchiefs, and the animal is saved. The wounds and death of the horses are accompanied with the loudest acclamations, and many gestures of delight, especially from the female portion of the audience, including those of the gentlest blood. Every thing depends on habit. The author of Childe Harold, the writer of this note, and one or two other Englishmen, who have certainly in other days borne the sight of a pitched battle, were, during the summer of 1809, in the governor's box at the great amphitheatre of Santa Maria, opposite to Cadiz. The death of one or two horses completely satisfied their curiosity. A gentleman present, observing them shudder and look pale, noticed that unusual reception of so delightful a sport to some young ladies, who stared and smiled, and continued their applauses as another horse fell bleeding to the ground. One bull killed three horses *off his own horns*. He was saved by acclamations, which were redoubled when it was known he belonged to a priest.

An Englishman who can be much pleased with seeing two men beat themselves to pieces, cannot bear to look at a horse galloping round an arena with his bowels trailing on the ground, and turns from the spectacle and the spectators with horror and disgust.

Note 62. Stanza cxliv.

Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head.

Suetonius informs us that Julius Cæsar was particularly gratified by that decree of the senate, which enabled him to wear a wreath of laurel on all occasions. He was anxious, not to show that he was the conqueror of the world, but to hide that he was bald. A stranger at Rome would hardly have guessed at the motive, nor should we without the help of the historian.

Note 63, Stanza cxlv.

While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand.

This is quoted in the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire: and a notice on the Coliseum may be seen in the Historical Illustrations to the IVth Canto of Childe Harold.

Note 64. Stanza cxlvi.

Spared and blest by time.

«Though plundered of all its brass, except the ring which was necessary to preserve the aperture above, though exposed to repeated fires, though sometimes flooded by the river, and always open to the rain, no monument of equal antiquity is so well preserved as this rotundo. It passed with little alteration from the Pagan into the present worship; and so convenient were its niches for the Christian altar, that Michael Angelo, ever studious of ancient beauty, introduced their design as a model in the Catholic church.»

Forsyth's Remarks, etc. on Italy, p. 137, sec. edit.

Note 65. Stanza cxlvii.

And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around them close.

The Pantheon has been made a receptacle for the busts of modern great, or, at least, distinguished men. The flood of light which once fell through the large orb above on the whole circle of divinities, now

[1] Vopiscus, in vit. Aurel. and in vit. Claud. ibid.

[2] «Credo imo scio nullum bellum tantam cladem vastitiemque generi humano intulisse, quam hos ad voluptatem ludos.» Just. Lips. ibid. lib. i. cap. xii.

[3] Augustinus, (lib. vi. confess. cap. viii.) «Alypium autem gladiatorii spectaculi inhiatu incredibiliter abreptum,» scribit. Ibid. lib. i, cap. xii.

[4] Hist. Eccles. cap. xxvi. lib. v.

[5] Cassiod. Tripartita, l. x, c. xi, Saturn. ib. ib.

[6] Baronius, ad ann. et in notis ad Martyrol. Rom. 1, Jan. See Marangoni delle memorie sacre e profane dell' Amfiteatro Flavio, p. 25, edit 1746.

[7] «Quod' non tu Lipsi momentum aliquod habuisse censes ad virtutem? Magnum. Tempora nostra, nosque ipsos videamus. Oppidum ecce unum alterumve captum, direptum est; tumultus circa nos, non in nobis, et tamen concidimus et turbamur. Ubi robur, ubi tot per annos meditata sapientiæ studia' ubi ille animus qui possit dicere, *si fractus illabatur orbis*'» etc. ibid. lib. ii, cap. xxv. The prototype of Mr Windham's panegyric on bull-baiting

shines on a numerous assemblage of mortals, some one or two of whom have been almost deified by the veneration of their countrymen.

Note 66. Stanza cxlviii.

There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light.

This and the three next stanzas allude to the story of the Roman daughter, which is recalled to the traveller, by the site or pretended site of that adventure now shown at the church of St Nicholas *in carcere*. The difficulties attending the full belief of the tale are stated in Historical Illustrations, etc.

Note 67. Stanza clii.

Turn to the mole which Hadrian rear'd on high.

The castle of Saint Angelo. See Historical Illustrations.

Note 68. Stanza cliii.

This and the six next stanzas have a reference to the church of St Peter. For a measurement of the comparative length of this basilica, and the other great churches of Europe, see the pavement of St Peter's, and the Classical Tour through Italy, vol. ii. page 125. et seq. chap. iv.

Note 69. Stanza clxxi.

——————The strange fate
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns.

Mary died on the scaffold; Elizabeth of a broken heart; Charles V. a hermit; Louis XIV. a bankrupt in means and glory; Cromwell of anxiety; and, « the greatest is behind,» Napoleon lives a prisoner. To these sovereigns a long but superfluous list might be added of names equally illustrious and unhappy.

Note 70. Stanza clxxiii.

Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills.

The village of Nemi was near the Arician retreat of Egeria, and, from the shades which embosomed the temple of Diana, has preserved to this day its distinctive appellation of *The Grove*. Nemi is but an evening's ride from the comfortable inn of Albano.

Note 71. Stanza clxxiv.

——————And afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast, etc. etc.

The whole declivity of the Alban hill is of unrivalled beauty, and from the convent on the highest point, which has succeeded to the temple of the Latian Jupiter, the prospect embraces all the objects alluded to in the cited stanza: the Mediterranean; the whole scene of the latter half of the Æneid, and the coast from beyond the mouth of the Tiber to the headland of Circæum and the Cape of Terracina.

The site of Cicero's villa may be supposed either at the Grotta Ferrata, or at the Tusculum of Prince Lucien Buonaparte.

The former was thought some years ago the actual site, as may be seen from Middleton's Life of Cicero. At present it has lost something of its credit, except for the Domenichinos. Nine monks, of the Greek order, live there, and the adjoining villa is a cardinal's summer-house. The other villa, called Rufinella, is on the summit of the hill above Frascati, and many rich remains of Tusculum have been found there, besides seventy-two statues of different merit and preservation, and seven busts.

From the same eminence are seen the Sabine hills, embosomed in which lies the long valley of Rustica. There are several circumstances which tend to establish the identity of this valley with the « *Ustica*» of Horace: and it seems possible that the mosaic pavement which the peasants uncover by throwing up the earth of a vineyard, may belong to his villa. Rustica is pronounced short, not according to our stress upon—« *Usticæ cubantis.*»—It is more rational to think that we are wrong than that the inhabitants of this secluded valley have changed their tone in this word. The addition of the consonant prefixed is nothing: yet it is necessary to be aware that Rustica may be a modern name which the peasants may have caught from the antiquaries.

The villa, or the mosaic, is in a vineyard on a knoll covered with chesnut trees. A stream runs down the valley, and although it is not true, as said in the guide books, that this stream is called Licenza, yet there is a village on a rock at the head of the valley which is so denominated, and which may have taken its name from the Digentia. Licenza contains 700 inhabitants. On a peak a little way beyond is Civitella, containing 300. On the banks of the Anio, a little before you turn up into Valle Rustica, to the left, about an hour from the *villa*, is a town called Vico-varo, another favourable coincidence with the *Varia* of the poet. At the end of the valley, towards the Anio, there is a bare hill, crowned with a little town called Bardela. At the foot of this hill the rivulet of Licenza flows, and is almost absorbed in a wide sandy bed before it reaches the Anio. Nothing can be more fortunate for the lines of the poet, whether in a metaphorical or direct sense:

« Me quotiens reficit gelidus Digentia rivus,
Quem Mandela bibit rugosus frigore pagus.»

The stream is clear high up the valley, but before it reaches the hill of Bardela looks green and yellow like a sulphur rivulet.

Rocca Giovane, a ruined village in the hills, half an hour's walk from the vineyard where the pavement is shown, does seem to be the site of the fane of Vacuna, and an inscription found there tells that this temple of the Sabine victory was repaired by Vespasian.[1] With these helps, and a position corresponding exactly to every thing which the poet has told us of his retreat, we may feel tolerably secure of our site.

The hill which should be Lucretilis is called Campanile, and by following up the rivulet to the pretended Bandusia, you come to the roots of the higher mountain Gennaro. Singularly enough, the only spot of ploughed land in the whole valley is on the knoll where this Bandusia rises,

« . . . . . Tu frigus amabile
Fessis vomere tauris
Præbes, et pecori vago.»

The peasants show another spring near the mosaic pavement, which they call « Oradina,» and which flows down the hills into a tank, or mill dam, and thence trickles over into the Digentia. But we must not hope

« To trace the Muses upwards to their spring,»

by exploring the windings of the romantic valley in search of the Bandusian fountain. It seems strange that

[1] IMP. CÆSAR VESPASIANVS
PONTIFEX MAXIMVS. TRIB.
POTEST. CENSOR. ÆDEM
VICTORIÆ. VETVSTATE ILLAPSAM.
SVA. IMPENSA. RESTITVIT.

any one should have thought Bandusia a fountain of the Digentia—Horace has not let drop a word of it; and this immortal spring has in fact been discovered in possession of the holders of many good things in Italy, the monks. It was attached to the church of St Gervais and Protais near Venusia, where it was most likely to be found.[1] We shall not be so lucky as a late traveller in finding the *occasional pine* still pendant on the poetic villa. There is not a pine in the whole valley, but there are two cypresses, which he evidently took, or mistook, for the tree in the ode.[2] The truth is, that the pine is now, as it was in the days of Virgil, a garden tree, and it was not at all likely to be found in the craggy acclivities of the valley of Rustica. Horace probably had one of them in the orchard close above his farm, immediately overshadowing his villa, not on the rocky heights at some distance from his abode. The tourist may have easily supposed himself to have seen this pine figured in the above cypresses, for the orange and lemon trees which throw such a bloom over his description of the royal gardens at Naples, unless they have been since displaced, were assuredly only acacias and other common garden shrubs.[3] The extreme disappointment experienced by choosing the Classical Tourist as a guide in Italy must be allowed to find vent in a few observations, which, it is asserted without fear of contradiction, will be confirmed by every one who has selected the same conductor through the same country. This author is in fact one of the most inaccurate, unsatisfactory writers that have in our times attained a temporary reputation, and is very seldom to be trusted even when he speaks of objects which he must be presumed to have seen. His errors, from the simple exaggeration to the downright mistatement, are so frequent as to induce a suspicion that he had either never visited the spots described, or had trusted to the fidelity of former writers. Indeed the Classical Tour has every characteristic of a mere compilation of former notices, strung together upon a very slender thread of personal observation, and swelled out by those decorations which are so easily supplied by a systematic adoption of all the common-places of praise, applied to every thing, and therefore signifying nothing.

The style which one person thinks cloggy and cumbrous, and unsuitable, may be to the taste of others, and such may experience some salutary excitement in ploughing through the periods of the Classical Tour. It must be said, however, that polish and weight are apt to beget an expectation of value. It is amongst the pains of the damned to toil up a climax with a huge round *stone*.

The tourist had the choice of his words, but there was no such latitude allowed to that of his sentiments. The love of virtue and of liberty, which must have distinguished the character, certainly adorns the pages of Mr Eustace, and the gentlemanly spirit, so recommendatory either in an author or his productions, is very conspicuous throughout the Classical Tour. But these generous qualities are the foliage of such a performance, and may be spread about it so prominently and profusely, as to embarrass those who wish to see and find the fruit at hand. The unction of the divine, and the exhortations of the moralist, may have made this work something more and better than a book of travels, but they have not made it a book of travels; and this observation applies more especially to that enticing method of instruction conveyed by the perpetual introduction of the same Gallic Helot to reel and bluster before the rising generation, and terrify it into decency by the display of all the excesses of the revolution. An animosity against atheists and regicides in general, and Frenchmen specifically, may be honourable, and may be useful, as a record; but that antidote should either be administered in any work rather than a tour, or, at least, should be served up apart, and not so mixed with the whole mass of information and reflection, as to give a bitterness to every page: for who would choose to have the antipathies of any man, however just, for his travelling companions? A tourist, unless he aspires to the credit of prophecy, is not answerable for the changes which may take place in the country which he describes: but his reader may very fairly esteem all his political portraits and deductions as so much waste paper, the moment they cease to assist, and more particularly if they obstruct, his actual survey.

Neither encomium nor accusation of any government, or governors, is meant to be here offered; but it is stated as an incontrovertible fact, that the change operated, either by the address of the late imperial system, or by the disappointment of every expectation by those who have succeeded to the Italian thrones, has been so considerable, and is so apparent, as not only to put Mr Eustace's Antigallican philippics entirely out of date, but even to throw some suspicion upon the competency and candour of the author himself. A remarkable example may be found in the instance of Bologna, over whose papal attachments, and consequent desolation, the tourist pours forth such strains of condolence and revenge, made louder by the borrowed trumpet of Mr Burke. Now Bologna is at this moment, and has been for some years, notorious amongst the states of Italy for its attachment to revolutionary principles, and was almost the only city which made any demonstrations in favour of the unfortunate Murat. This change may, however, have been made since Mr Eustace visited this country; but the traveller whom he has thrilled with horror at the projected stripping of the copper from the cupola of St Peter's, must be much relieved to find that sacrilege out of the power of the French, or any other plunderers, the cupola being covered with *lead*.[1]

If the conspiring voice of otherwise rival critics had not given considerable currency to the Classical Tour, it would have been unnecessary to warn the reader, that, however it may adorn his library, it will be of little or no service to him in his carriage; and if the judgment of those critics had hitherto been suspended, no attempt would have been made to anticipate their decision. As it is, those who stand in the relation of posterity to Mr Eustace, may be permitted to appeal from cotemporary praises, and are perhaps more likely to be just

[1] See Historical Illustrations of the fourth Canto, p. 43

[2] See Classical Tour, etc. chap. vii, p. 250, vol. ii.

[3] « Under our windows, and bordering on the beach, is the royal garden, laid out in parterres, and walks shaded by rows of orange trees. » *Classical Tour*, etc. chap. x, vol. ii, oct. 365.

[1] « What then will be the astonishment, or rather the horror of my reader, when I inform him. . . . . the French Committee turned its attention to Saint Peter's, and employed a company of Jews to estimate and purchase the gold, silver, and bronze that adorn the inside of the edifice, as well as the copper that covers the vaults and dome on the outside » Chap. iv, p. 130, vol ii. The story about the Jews is positively denied at Rome.

in proportion as the causes of love and hatred are the farther removed. This appeal had, in some measure, been made before the above remarks were written; for one of the most respectable of the Florentine publishers, who had been persuaded by the repeated inquiries of those on their journey southwards, to reprint a cheap edition of the Classical Tour, was, by the concurring advice of returning travellers, induced to abandon his design, although he had already arranged his types and paper, and had struck off one or two of the first sheets.

The writer of these notes would wish to part (like Mr Gibbon) on good terms with the Pope and the Cardinals, but he does not think it necessary to extend the same discreet silence to their humble partisans.

The Giaour,

A FRAGMENT OF A TURKISH TALE.

"One fatal remembrance—one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes—
To which life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
For which joy hath no balm—and affliction no sting."
MOORE.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

AS A SLIGHT BUT MOST SINCERE TOKEN OF ADMIRATION OF HIS GENIUS,
RESPECT FOR HIS CHARACTER, AND GRATITUDE FOR HIS FRIENDSHIP;
This Production is Inscribed,
BY HIS OBLIGED AND AFFECTIONATE SERVANT,
BYRON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Tale which these disjointed fragments present, is founded upon circumstances now less common in the East than formerly; either because the ladies are more circumspect than in the «olden time;» or because the Christians have better fortune, or less enterprise. The story, when entire, contained the adventures of a female slave, who was thrown, in the Mussulman manner, into the sea for infidelity, and avenged by a young Venetian, her lover, at the time the Seven Islands were possessed by the Republic of Venice, and soon after the Arnauts were beaten back from the Morea, which they had ravaged for some time subsequent to the Russian invasion. The desertion of the Mainotes, on being refused the plunder of Misitra, led to the abandonment of that enterprise, and to the desolation of the Morea, during which the cruelty exercised on all sides was unparalleled even in the annals of the faithful.

THE GIAOUR.

No breath of air to break the wave
That rolls below the Athenian's grave,
That tomb[1] which, gleaming o'er the cliff,
First greets the homeward-veering skiff,—
High o'er the land he saved in vain:
When shall such hero live again?
* * * * * *

Fair clime! where every season smiles
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,
Which, seen from far Colonna's height,
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,
And lend to loneliness delight.
There mildly dimpling, Ocean's cheek
Reflects the tints of many a peak
Caught by the laughing tides that lave
These Edens of the eastern wave;
And if at times a transient breeze
Break the blue crystal of the seas,
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,
How welcome is each gentle air
That wakes and wafts the odours there!
For there—the rose o'er crag or vale,
Sultana of the nightingale,[2]
The maid for whom his melody,
His thousand songs are heard on high,
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale:
His queen, the garden queen, his rose,
Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,
Far from the winters of the west,
By every breeze and season blest,
Returns the sweets by nature given,
In softest incense back to heaven;
And grateful yields that smiling sky
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.
And many a summer flower is there,
And many a shade that love might share,
And many a grotto, meant for rest,
That holds the pirate for a guest;
Whose bark in sheltering cove below
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,
Till the gay mariner's guitar[3]
Is heard, and seen the evening star;

Then stealing with the muffled oar,
Far shaded by the rocky shore,
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,
And turn to groans his roundelay.
Strange—that where nature loved to trace,
As if for gods, a dwelling-place,
And every charm and grace hath mix'd
Within the paradise she fix'd,
There man, enamour'd of distress,
Should mar it into wilderness,
And trample, brute-like, o'er each flower
That tasks not one laborious hour;
Nor claims the culture of his hand
To bloom along the fairy land,
But springs as to preclude his care,
And sweetly woos him—but to spare!
Strange—that where all is peace beside
There passion riots in her pride,
And lust and rapine wildly reign
To darken o'er the fair domain.
It is as though the fiends prevail'd
Against the seraphs they assail'd,
And, fix'd on heavenly thrones, should dwell
The freed inheritors of hell;
So soft the scene, so form'd for joy,
So curst the tyrants that destroy!

He who hath bent him o'er the dead,
Ere the first day of death is fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress
(Before decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers),
And mark'd the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that 's there,
The fix'd, yet tender traits that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And but for that chill changeless brow,
Where cold obstruction's apathy[4]
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,
As if to him it could impart
The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon;
Yes, but for these, and these alone,
Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour,
He still might doubt the tyrant's power;
So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
The first, last look by death reveal'd![5]
Such is the aspect of this shore;
'T is Greece, but living Greece no more!
So coldly sweet, so deadly fair,
We start, for soul is wanting there.
Hers is the loveliness in death,
That parts not quite with parting breath;
But beauty with that fearful bloom,
That hue which haunts it to the tomb,
Expression's last receding ray,
A gilded halo hovering round decay,
The farewell beam of feeling past away!
Spark of that flame, perchance of heavenly birth,
Which gleams, but warms no more its cherish'd earth!

Clime of the unforgotten brave!
Whose land from plain to mountain-cave
Was freedom's home or glory's grave!
Shrine of the mighty! can it be,
That this is all remains of thee?
Approach, thou craven crouching slave:
Say, is not this Thermopylæ?
These waters blue that round you lave,
Oh servile offspring of the free—
Pronounce what sea, what shore is this?
The gulf, the rock of Salamis!
These scenes, their story not unknown,
Arise, and make again your own;
Snatch from the ashes of your sires
The embers of their former fires;
And he who in the strife expires
Will add to theirs a name of fear
That tyranny shall quake to hear,
And leave his sons a hope, a fame,
They too will rather die than shame:
For freedom's battle once begun,
Bequeath'd by bleeding sire to son,
Though baffled oft is ever won.
Bear witness, Greece, thy living page,
Attest it many a deathless age!
While kings, in dusty darkness hid,
Have left a nameless pyramid,
Thy heroes, though the general doom
Hath swept the column from their tomb,
A mightier monument command,
The mountains of their native land!
There points thy muse to stranger's eye
The graves of those that cannot die!
'T were long to tell, and sad to trace,
Each step from splendour to disgrace;
Enough—no foreign foe could quell
Thy soul, till from itself it fell;
Yes! Self-abasement paved the way
To villain-bonds and despot-sway.

What can he tell who treads thy shore?
No legend of thine olden time,
No theme on which the muse might soar,
High as thine own in days of yore,
When man was worthy of thy clime.
The hearts within thy valleys bred,
The fiery souls that might have led
Thy sons to deeds sublime,
Now crawl from cradle to the grave,
Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a slave,[6]
And callous, save to crime;
Stain'd with each evil that pollutes
Mankind, where least above the brutes:
Without even savage virtue blest,
Without one free or valiant breast.
Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
Proverbial wiles, and ancient craft,
In this the subtle Greek is found,
For this, and this alone, renown'd.
In vain might liberty invoke
The spirit to its bondage broke,
Or raise the neck that courts the yoke.
No more her sorrows I bewail,
Yet this will be a mournful tale,
And they who listen may believe,
Who heard it first had cause to grieve.

* * * * * * *

Far, dark, along the blue sea glancing,
The shadows of the rocks advancing,
Start on the fisher's eye like boat
Of island-pirate or Mainote;
And fearful for his light caique,
He shuns the near but doubtful creek:
Though worn and weary with his toil,
And cumber'd with his scaly spoil,
Slowly, yet strongly, plies the oar,
Till Port Leone's safer shore
Receives him by the lovely light
That best becomes an eastern night.

* * * * * * *

Who thundering comes on blackest steed,
With slacken'd bit and hoof of speed?
Beneath the clattering iron's sound,
The cavern'd echoes wake around
In lash for lash, and bound for bound;
The foam that streaks the courser's side
Seems gather'd from the ocean-tide:
Though weary waves are sunk to rest,
There 's none within his rider's breast;
And though to-morrow's tempest lower,
'T is calmer than thy heart, young Giaour! 7
I know thee not, I loathe thy race,
But in thy lineaments I trace
What time shall strengthen, not efface:
Though young and pale, that sallow front
Is scathed by fiery passion's brunt;
Though bent on earth thine evil eye,
As meteor-like thou glidest by,
Right well I view and deem thee one
Whom Othman's sons should slay or shun.

On—on he hasten'd, and he drew
My gaze of wonder as he flew:
Though like a demon of the night
He pass'd and vanish'd from my sight,
His aspect and his air impress'd
A troubled memory on my breast,
And long upon my startled ear
Rung his dark courser's hoofs of fear.
He spurs his steed; he nears the steep,
That, jutting, shadows o'er the deep;
He winds around; he hurries by;
The rock relieves him from mine eye;
For well I ween unwelcome he
Whose glance is fix'd on those that flee;
And not a star but shines too bright
On him who takes such timeless flight.
He wound along; but ere he pass'd
One glance he snatch'd, as if his last,
A moment check'd his wheeling steed,
A moment breathed him from his speed,
A moment on his stirrup stood—
Why looks he o'er the olive wood?
The crescent glimmers on the hill,
The mosque's high lamps are quivering still:
Though too remote for sound to wake
In echoes of the far tophaike, 8
The flashes of each joyous peal
Are seen to prove the Moslem's zeal.
To-night, set Rhamazani's sun;
To-night, the Bairam feast 's begun;
To-night—but who and what art thou,
Of foreign garb and fearful brow?
And what are these to thine or thee,
That thou should'st either pause or flee?
He stood—some dread was on his face,
Soon hatred settled in its place:
It rose not with the reddening flush
Of transient anger's darkening blush,
But pale as marble o'er the tomb,
Whose ghastly whiteness aids its gloom.
His brow was bent, his eye was glazed,
He raised his arm, and fiercely raised,
And sternly shook his hand on high,
As doubting to return or fly:
Impatient of his flight delay'd,
Here loud his raven charger neigh'd—
Down glanced that hand, and grasp'd his blade;
That sound had burst his waking dream,
As slumber starts at owlet's scream.
The spur hath lanced his courser's sides;
Away, away, for life he rides;
Swift as the hurl'd on high jerreed, 9
Springs to the touch his startled steed;
The rock is doubled, and the shore
Shakes with the clattering tramp no more;
The crag is won, no more is seen
His christian crest and haughty mien.
'T was but an instant he restrain'd
That fiery barb so sternly rein'd:
'T was but a moment that he stood,
Then sped as if by death pursued;
But in that instant o'er his soul
Winters of memory seem'd to roll,
And gather in that drop of time
A life of pain, an age of crime.
O'er him who loves, or hates, or fears,
Such moment pours the grief of years:
What felt *he* then, at once opprest
By all that most distracts the breast?
That pause, which ponder'd o'er his fate,
Oh, who its dreary length shall date!
Though in time's record nearly nought,
It was eternity to thought!
For infinite as boundless space
The thought that conscience must embrace,
Which in itself can comprehend
Woe without name, or hope, or end.

The hour is past, the Giaour is gone;
And did he fly or fall alone?
Woe to that hour he came or went!
The curse for Hassan's sin was sent,
To turn a palace to a tomb:
He came, he went, like the simoom, 10
That harbinger of fate and gloom,
Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
The very cypress droops to death—
Dark tree, still sad when others' grief is fled,
The only constant mourner o'er the dead!
The steed is vanish'd from the stall;
No serf is seen in Hassan's hall;
The lonely spider's thin grey pall
Waves slowly widening o'er the wall;
The bat builds in his haram bower;
And in the fortress of his power
The owl usurps the beacon-tower;
The wild-dog howls o'er the fountain's brim,
With baffled thirst, and famine, grim;

For the stream has shrunk from its marble bed,
Where the weeds and the desolate dust are spread,
'T was sweet of yore to see it play
And chase the sultriness of day,
As springing high the silver dew
In whirls fantastically flew,
And flung luxurious coolness round
The air, and verdure o'er the ground.
'T was sweet, when cloudless stars were bright,
To view the wave of watery light,
And hear its melody by night,
And oft had Hassan's childhood play'd
Around the verge of that cascade;
And oft upon his mother's breast
That sound had harmonized his rest;
And oft had Hassan's youth along
Its bank been soothed by beauty's song;
And softer seem'd each melting tone
Of music mingled with its own.
But ne'er shall Hassan's age repose
Along the brink at twilight's close:
The stream that fill'd that font is fled—
The blood that warm'd his heart is shed!
And here no more shall human voice
Be heard to rage, regret, rejoice;
The last sad note that swell'd the gale
Was woman's wildest funeral wail:
That quenched in silence, all is still,
But the lattice that flaps when the wind is shrill:
Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
No hand shall close its clasp again.
On desert sands 't were joy to scan
The rudest steps of fellow man—
So here the very voice of grief
Might wake an echo-like relief;
At least 't would say, «all are not gone;
«There lingers life, though but in one—»
For many a gilded chamber 's there,
Which solitude might well forbear;
Within that dome as yet decay
Hath slowly work'd her cankering way—
But gloom is gather'd o'er the gate,
Nor there the fakir's self will wait;
Nor there will wandering dervise stay,
For bounty cheers not his delay;
Nor there will weary stranger halt
To bless the sacred «bread and salt.»[11]
Alike must wealth and poverty
Pass heedless and unheeded by,
For courtesy and pity died
With Hassan on the mountain side.
His roof, that refuge unto men,
Is desolation's hungry den.
The guest flies the hall, and the vassals from labour,
Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's sabre![12]

* * * * * * *

I hear the sound of coming feet,
But not a voice mine ear to greet;
More near—each turban I can scan,
And silver-sheathed ataghan;[13]
The foremost of the band is seen,
An emir by his garb of green:[14]
«Ho! who art thou?—this low salam[15]
Replies of Moslem faith I am.
The burthen ye so gently bear,
Seems one that claims your utmost care,
And, doubtless, holds some precious freight,
My humble bark would gladly wait.»

«Thou speakest sooth, thy skiff unmoor,
And waft us from the silent shore;
Nay, leave the sail still furl'd, and ply
The nearest oar that 's scatter'd by,
And midway to those rocks where sleep
The channel'd waters dark and deep.
Rest from your task—so—bravely done,
Our course has been right swiftly run;
Yet 't is the longest voyage, I trow,
That one of—

* * * * * * *

Sullen it plunged, and slowly sank,
The calm wave rippled to the bank;
I watch'd it as it sank, methought
Some motion from the current caught
Bestirrd it more,—'t was but the beam
That chequered o'er the living stream:
I gazed, till vanishing from view,
Like lessening pebble it withdrew;
Still less and less, a speck of white
That gemm'd the tide, then mock'd the sight;
And all its hidden secrets sleep,
Known but to genii of the deep,
Which, trembling in their coral caves,
They dare not whisper to the waves.

* * * * * * *

As rising on its purple wing
The insect-queen[16] of eastern spring,
O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer
Invites the young pursuer near,
And leads him on from flower to flower
A weary chase and wasted hour,
Then leaves him, as it soars on high,
With panting heart and tearful eye:
So beauty lures the full-grown child,
With hue as bright, and wing as wild;
A chase of idle hopes and fears,
Begun in folly, closed in tears.
If won, to equal ills betray'd,
Woe waits the insect and the maid;
A life of pain, the loss of peace,
From infant's play, and man's caprice:
The lovely toy so fiercely sought
Hath lost its charm by being caught.
For every touch that wooed its stay
Hath brush'd its brightest hues away,
Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,
'Tis left to fly or fall alone.
With wounded wing, or bleeding breast,
Ah! where shall either victim rest?
Can this with faded pinion soar
From rose to tulip as before?
Or beauty, blighted in an hour,
Find joy within her broken bower?
No: gayer insects fluttering by
Ne'er droop the wing o'er those that die,
And lovelier things have mercy shown
To every failing but their own,

And every woe a tear can claim
Except an erring sister's shame.

* * * * * * *

The mind, that broods o'er guilty woes,
Is like the scorpion girt by fire,
In circle narrowing as it glows,
The flames around their captive close,
Till inly search'd by thousand throes,
And maddening in her ire,
One sad and sole relief she knows,
The sting she nourish'd for her foes,
Whose venom never yet was vain,
Gives but one pang, and cures all pain,
And darts into her desperate brain:
So do the dark in soul expire,
Or live like scorpion girt by fire; [17]
So writhes the mind remorse hath riven,
Unfit for earth, undoom'd for heaven,
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame, within it death!

* * * * * * *

Black Hassan from the haram flies,
Nor bends on woman's form his eyes;
The unwonted chase each hour employs,
Yet shares he not the hunter's joys.
Not thus was Hassan wont to fly
When Leila dwelt in his Serai.
Doth Leila there no longer dwell?
That tale can only Hassan tell:
Strange rumours in our city say
Upon that eve she fled away,
When Rhamazan's [18] last sun was set,
And, flashing from each minaret,
Millions of lamps proclaim'd the feast
Of Bairam through the boundless east.
'T was then she went as to the bath,
Which Hassan vainly search'd in wrath;
For she was flown her master's rage,
In likeness of a Georgian page,
And far beyond the Moslem's power
Had wrong'd him with the faithless Giaour.
Somewhat of this had Hassan deem'd;
But still so fond, so fair she seem'd,
Too well he trusted to the slave
Whose treachery deserved a grave:
And on that eve had gone to mosque,
And thence to feast in his kiosk.
Such is the tale his Nubians tell,
Who did not watch their charge too well;
But others say, that on that night,
By pale Phingari's [19] trembling light,
The Giaour upon his jet-black steed
Was seen, but seen alone to speed
With bloody spur along the shore,
Nor maid nor page behind him bore.

* * * * * * *

Her eye's dark charm 't were vain to tell,
But gaze on that of the gazelle,
It will assist thy fancy well;
As large, as languishingly dark,
But soul beam'd forth in every spark
That darted from beneath the lid,
Bright as the jewel of Giamschid. [20]

Yea, *soul*, and should our prophet say
That form was nought but breathing clay,
By Alla! I would answer nay;
Though on Al-Sirat's [21] arch I stood,
Which totters o'er the fiery flood,
With paradise within my view,
And all his houris beckoning through.
Oh! who young Leila's glance could read,
And keep that portion of his creed [22]
Which saith that woman is but dust,
A soulless toy for tyrant's lust?
On her might muftis gaze, and own
That through her eye the Immortal shone;
On her fair cheek's unfading hue
The young pomegranate's [23] blossoms strew
Their bloom in blushes ever new;
Her hair in hyacinthine [24] flow,
When left to roll its folds below,
As midst her handmaids in the hall
She stood superior to them all,
Hath swept the marble where her feet
Gleam'd whiter than the mountain sleet,
Ere from the cloud that gave it birth
It fell, and caught one stain of earth.
The cygnet nobly walks the water;
So moved on earth Circassia's daughter,
The loveliest bird of Franguestan! [25]
As rears her crest the ruffled swan,
And spurns the wave with wings of pride,
When pass the steps of stranger man
Along the banks that bound her tide;
Thus rose fair Leila's whiter neck:—
Thus arm'd with beauty would she check
Intrusion's glance, till folly's gaze
Shrunk from the charms it meant to praise.
Thus high and graceful was her gait;
Her heart as tender to her mate;
Her mate—stern Hassan, who was he?
Alas! that name was not for thee!

* * * * * * *

Stern Hassan hath a journey ta'en,
With twenty vassals in his train,
Each arm'd, as best becomes a man,
With arquebuss and ataghan;
The chief before, as deck'd for war,
Bears in his belt the scimitar
Stain'd with the best of Arnaut blood,
When in the pass the rebels stood,
And few return'd to tell the tale
Of what befell in Parne's vale.
The pistols which his girdle bore
Were those that once a pasha wore,
Which still, though gemm'd and boss'd with gold,
Even robbers tremble to behold.
'T is said he goes to woo a bride
More true than her who left his side;
The faithless slave that broke her bower,
And, worse than faithless, for a Giaour!

* * * * * * *

The sun's last rays are on the hill,
And sparkle in the fountain rill,
Whose welcome waters, cool and clear,
Draw blessings from the mountaineer:
Here may the loitering merchant Greek
Find that repose 't were vain to seek

In cities lodged too near his lord,
And trembling for his secret hoard—
Here may he rest where none can see,
In crowds a slave, in deserts free;
And with forbidden wine may stain
The bowl a Moslem must not drain.

* * * * * * *

The foremost Tartar 's in the gap,
Conspicuous by his yellow cap;
The rest in lengthening line the while
Wind slowly through the long defile:
Above, the mountain rears a peak,
Where vultures whet the thirsty beak,
And theirs may be a feast to-night,
Shall tempt them down ere morrow's light;
Beneath, a river's wintry stream
Has shrunk before the summer beam,
And left a channel bleak and bare,
Save shrubs that spring to perish there:
Each side the midway path there lay
Small broken crags of granite gray,
By time, or mountain lightning, riven
From summits clad in mists of heaven;
For where is he that hath beheld
The peak of Liakura unveil'd?

* * * * * * *

They reach the grove of pine at last:
«Bismillah![26] now the peril 's past;
For yonder view the opening plain,
And there we 'll prick our steeds amain:»
The Chiaus spake, and as he said,
A bullet whistled o'er his head;
The foremost Tartar bites the ground!
Scarce had they time to check the rein,
Swift from their steeds the riders bound:
But three shall never mount again:
Unseen the foes that gave the wound,
The dying ask revenge in vain.
With steel unsheath'd, and carbine bent,
Some o'er their courser's harness leant,
Half shelter'd by the steed;
Some fly behind the nearest rock,
And there await the coming shock,
Nor tamely stand to bleed
Beneath the shaft of foes unseen,
Who dare not quit their craggy screen.
Stern Hassan only from his horse
Disdains to light, and keeps his course,
Till fiery flashes in the van
Proclaim too sure the robber-clan
Have well secured the only way
Could now avail the promised prey;
Then curl'd his very beard[27] with ire,
And glared his eye with fiercer fire:
«Though far and near the bullets hiss,
I 've scaped a bloodier hour than this.»
And now the foe their covert quit,
And call his vassals to submit;
But Hassan's frown and furious word
Are dreaded more than hostile sword,
Nor of his little band a man
Resign'd carbine or ataghan,
Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun![28]

In fuller sight, more near and near,
The lately ambush'd foes appear,
And, issuing from the grove, advance
Some who on battle-charger prance.
Who leads them on with foreign brand,
Far flashing in his red right hand?
«'T is he! 't is he! I know him now;
I know him by his pallid brow;
I know him by the evil eye[29]
That aids his envious treachery;
I know him by his jet-black barb:
Though now array'd in Arnaut garb,
Apostate from his own vile faith,
It shall not save him from the death:
'T is he! well met in any hour!
Lost Leila's love, accursed Giaour!»

As rolls the river into ocean,
In sable torrent wildly streaming;
As the sea-tide's opposing motion,
In azure column proudly gleaming,
Beats back the current many a rood,
In curling foam and mingling flood,
While eddying whirl, and breaking wave,
Roused by the blast of winter, rave;
Through sparkling spray, in thundering clash,
The lightnings of the waters flash
In awful whiteness o'er the shore,
That shines and shakes beneath the roar;
Thus—as the stream and ocean greet,
With waves that madden as they meet—
Thus join the bands, whom mutual wrong,
And fate, and fury, drive along.
The bickering sabres' shivering jar;
And pealing wide or ringing near
Its echoes on the throbbing ear,
The deathshot hissing from afar,
The shock, the shout, the groan of war,
Reverberate along that vale,
More suited to the shepherd's tale:
Though few the numbers—theirs the strife,
That neither spares nor speaks for life!
Ah! fondly youthful hearts can press,
To seize and share the dear caress:
But love itself could never pant
For all that beauty sighs to grant
With half the fervour hate bestows
Upon the last embrace of foes,
When grappling in the fight they fold
Those arms that ne'er shall loose their hold:
Friends meet to part; love laughs at faith:
True foes, once met, are join'd till death!

* * * * * * *

With sabre shiver'd to the hilt,
Yet dripping with the blood he spilt;
Yet strain'd within the sever'd hand
Which quivers round that faithless brand;
His turban far behind him roll'd,
And cleft in twain its firmest fold;
His flowing robe by falchion torn,
And crimson as those clouds of morn
That, streak'd with dusky red, portend
The day shall have a stormy end;
A stain on every bush that bore
A fragment of his palampore,[30]

His breast with wounds unnumber'd riven,
His back to earth, his face to heaven,
Fall'n Hassan lies—his unclosed eye
Yet lowering on his enemy,
As if the hour that seal'd his fate
Surviving left his quenchless hate;
And o'er him bends that foe with brow
As dark as his that bled below.—
* * * * * * *

« Yes, Leila sleeps beneath the wave,
But his shall be a redder grave;
Her spirit pointed well the steel
Which taught that felon heart to feel.
He call'd the Prophet, but his power
Was vain against the vengeful Giaour:
He call'd on Alla—but the word
Arose unheeded or unheard.
Thou Paynim fool! could Leila's prayer
Be pass'd, and thine accorded there?
I watch'd my time, I leagued with these,
The traitor in his turn to seize;
My wrath is wreak'd, the deed is done,
And now I go—but go alone.»
* * * * * * *
* * * * * * *

The browzing camels' bells are tinkling:
His mother look'd from her lattice high—
She saw the dews of eve besprinkling
The pasture green beneath her eye,
She saw the planets faintly twinkling:
« 'T is twilight—sure his train is nigh.»
She could not rest in the garden-bower,
But gazed through the grate of his steepest tower:
« Why comes he not? his steeds are fleet,
Nor shrink they from the summer heat;
Why sends not the bridegroom his promised gift?
Is his heart more cold, or his barb less swift?
Oh, false reproach! yon Tartar now
Has gain'd our nearest mountain's brow,
And warily the steep descends,
And now within the valley bends;
And he bears the gift at his saddle bow—
How could I deem his courser slow?
Right well my largess shall repay
His welcome speed, and weary way.»
The Tartar lighted at the gate,
But scarce upheld his fainting weight:
His swarthy visage spake distress,
But this might be from weariness;
His garb with sanguine spots was dyed,
But these might be from his courser's side;
He drew the token from his vest—
Angel of Death! 't is Hassan's cloven crest!
His calpac[31] rent—his caftan red—
« Lady, a fearful bride thy son hath wed:
Me, not from mercy, did they spare,
But this empurpled pledge to bear.
Peace to the brave! whose blood is spilt:
Woe to the Giaour! for his the guilt.»
* * * * * * *

A turban[32] carved in coarsest stone,
A pillar with rank weeds o'ergrown,
Whereon can now be scarcely read
The Koran verse that mourns the dead,
Point out the spot where Hassan fell
A victim in that lonely dell.
There sleeps as true an Osmanlie
As e'er at Mecca bent the knee;
As ever scorn'd forbidden wine,
Or pray'd with face towards the shrine,
In orisons resumed anew
At solemn sound of « Alla Hu!»[33]
Yet died he by a stranger's hand,
And stranger in his native land;
Yet died he as in arms he stood,
And unavenged, at least in blood.
But him the maids of paradise
Impatient to their halls invite,
And the dark heaven of Houri's eyes
On him shall glance for ever bright;
They come—their kerchiefs green they wave,[34]
And welcome with a kiss the brave!
Who falls in battle 'gainst a Giaour
Is worthiest an immortal bower.
* * * * * * *

But thou, false infidel! shalt writhe
Beneath avenging Monkir's[35] scythe;
And from its torment 'scape alone
To wander round lost Eblis'[36] throne;
And fire unquench'd, unquenchable,
Around, within, thy heart shall dwell;
Nor ear can hear nor tongue can tell
The tortures of that inward hell!
But first, on earth as vampire[37] sent,
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent:
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race;
There from thy daughter, sister, wife,
At midnight drain the stream of life;
Yet loathe the banquet which perforce
Must feed thy livid living corse:
Thy victims ere they yet expire
Shall know the dæmon for their sire,
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,
Thy flowers are wither'd on the stem.
But one that for thy crime must fall,
The youngest, most beloved of all,
Shall bless thee with a *father's* name—
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!
Yet must thou end thy task, and mark
Her cheek's last tinge, her eye's last spark,
And the last glassy glance must view
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;
Then with unhallow'd hand shalt tear
The tresses of her yellow hair,
Of which in life a lock when shorn
Affection's fondest pledge was worn;
But now is borne away by thee,
Memorial of thine agony!
Wet with thine own best blood shall drip[38]
Thy gnashing tooth and haggard lip;
Then stalking to thy sullen grave,
Go—and with Gouls and Afrits rave;
Till these in horror shrink away
From spectre more accursed than they!
* * * * * * *

« How name ye you lone Caloyer?
His features I have scann'd before
In mine own land: 't is many a year,
Since, dashing by the lonely shore,
I saw him urge as fleet a steed
As ever served a horseman's need.
But once I saw that face, yet then
It was so mark'd with inward pain,
I could not pass it by again;
It breathes the same dark spirit now,
As death were stamp'd upon his brow.»

« 'Tis twice three years at summer tide
Since first among our freres he came;
And here it soothes him to abide
For some dark deed he will not name.
But never at our vesper prayer,
Nor e'er before confession chair
Kneels he, nor recks he when arise
Incense or anthem to the skies,
But broods within his cell alone,
His faith and race alike unknown.
The sea from Paynim land he crost,
And here ascended from the coast;
Yet seems he not of Othman race,
But only Christian in his face:
I 'd judge him some stray renegade,
Repentant of the change he made,
Save that he shuns our holy shrine,
Nor tastes the sacred bread and wine.
Great largess to these walls he brought,
And thus our abbot's favour bought;
But were I prior, not a day
Should brook such stranger's further stay,
Or pent within our penance cell
Should doom him there for aye to dwell.
Much in his visions mutters he
Of maiden 'whelm'd beneath the sea;
Of sabres clashing, foemen flying,
Wrongs avenged, and Moslem dying.
On cliff he hath been known to stand,
And rave as to some bloody hand
Fresh sever'd from its parent limb,
Invisible to all but him,
Which beckons onward to his grave,
And lures to leap into the wave.»

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Dark and unearthly is the scowl
That glares beneath his dusky cowl:
The flash of that dilating eye
Reveals too much of times gone by;
Though varying, indistinct its hue,
Oft will his glance the gazer rue,
For in it lurks that nameless spell
Which speaks, itself unspeakable,
A spirit yet unquell'd and high,
That claims and keeps ascendancy;
And like the bird whose pinions quake,
But cannot fly the gazing snake,
Will others quail beneath his look,
Nor 'scape the glance they scarce can brook.
From him the half-affrighted friar
When met alone would fain retire,
As if that eye and bitter smile
Transferr'd to others fear and guile:
Not oft to smile descendeth he,
And when he doth 't is sad to see
That he but mocks at misery.
How that pale lip will curl and quiver!
Then fix once more as if for ever;
As if his sorrow or disdain
Forbade him e'er to smile again.
Well were it so—such ghastly mirth
From joyaunce ne'er derived its birth.
But sadder still it were to trace
What once were feelings in that face:
Time hath not yet the features fix'd,
But brighter traits with evil mix'd;
And there are hues not always faded,
Which speak a mind not all degraded
Even by the crimes through which it waded:
The common crowd but see the gloom
Of wayward deeds, and fitting doom;
The close observer can espy
A noble soul, and lineage high:
Alas! though both bestow'd in vain,
Which grief could change, and guilt could stain,
It was no vulgar tenement
To which such lofty gifts were lent,
And still with little less than dread
On such the sight is riveted.
The roofless cot, decay'd and rent,
Will scarce delay the passer by;
The tower by war or tempest bent.
While yet may frown one battlement,
Demands and daunts the stranger's eye,
Each ivied arch, and pillar lone,
Pleads haughtily for glories gone!
« His floating robe around him folding,
Slow sweeps he through the column'd aisle;
With dread beheld, with gloom beholding
The rites that sanctify the pile.
But when the anthem shakes the choir,
And kneel the monks, his steps retire;
By yonder lone and wavering torch
His aspect glares within the porch;
There will he pause till all is done—
And hear the prayer, but utter none.
See—by the half-illumined wall
His hood fly back, his dark hair fall,
That pale brow wildly wreathing round,
As if the Gorgon there had bound
The sablest of the serpent-braid
That o'er her fearful forehead stray'd:
For he declines the convent oath,
And leaves those locks unhallow'd growth,
But wears our garb in all beside;
And, not from piety but pride,
Gives wealth to walls that never heard
Of his one holy vow nor word.
Lo!—mark ye, as the harmony
Peals louder praises to the sky,
That livid cheek, that stony air
Of mix'd defiance and despair!
Saint Francis, keep him from the shrine!
Else may we dread the wrath divine
Made manifest by awful sign.
If ever evil angel bore
The form of mortal, such he wore:
By all my hope of sins forgiven,
Such looks are not of earth nor heaven!»

To love the softest hearts are prone,
But such can ne'er be all his own;
Too timid in his woes to share,
Too meek to meet, or brave despair;
And sterner hearts alone may feel
The wound that time can never heal.
The rugged metal of the mine
Must burn before its surface shine,
But plunged within the furnace-flame,
It bends and melts—though still the same;
Then temper'd to thy want, or will,
'T will serve thee to defend or kill;
A breast-plate for thine hour of need,
Or blade to bid thy foeman bleed;
But if a dagger's form it bear,
Let those who shape its edge, beware!
Thus passion's fire, and woman's art,
Can turn and tame the sterner heart;
From these its form and tone are ta'en,
And what they make it, must remain,
But break—before it bend again.

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If solitude succeed to grief,
Release from pain is slight relief;
The vacant bosom's wilderness
Might thank the pang that made it less.
We loathe what none are left to share:
Even bliss—'t were woe alone to bear;
The heart once left thus desolate
Must fly at last for ease—to hate.
It is as if the dead could feel
The icy worm around them steal,
And shudder, as the reptiles creep
To revel o'er their rotting sleep,
Without the power to scare away
The cold consumers of their clay!
It is as if the desert-bird,[39]
Whose beak unlocks her bosom's stream
To still her famish'd nestlings' scream,
Nor mourns a life to them transferr'd,
Should rend her rash devoted breast,
And find them flown her empty nest.
The keenest pangs the wretched find
Are rapture to the dreary void,
The leafless desert of the mind,
The waste of feelings unemploy'd.
Who would be doom'd to gaze upon
A sky without a cloud or sun?
Less hideous far the tempest's roar
Than ne'er to brave the billows more—
Thrown, when the war of winds is o'er,
A lonely wreck on fortune's shore,
'Mid sullen calm, and silent bay,
Unseen to drop by dull decay;—
Better to sink beneath the shock
Than moulder piecemeal on the rock!

* * * * * * *

«Father! thy days have pass'd in peace,
Mid counted beads, and countless prayer;
To bid the sins of others cease,
Thyself without a crime or care,
Save transient ills that all must bear,
Has been thy lot from youth to age;
And thou wilt bless thee from the rage
Of passions fierce and uncontroll'd,
Such as thy penitents unfold,
Whose secret sins and sorrows rest
Within thy pure and pitying breast.
My days, though few, have pass'd below
In much of joy, but more of woe;
Yet still in hours of love or strife,
I 've 'scaped the weariness of life:
Now leagued with friends, now girt by foes,
I loathed the languor of repose.
Now nothing left to love or hate,
No more with hope or pride elate,
I 'd rather be the thing that crawls
Most noxious o'er a dungeon's walls,
Than pass my dull, unvarying days,
Condemn'd to meditate and gaze.
Yet, lurks a wish within my breast
For rest—but not to feel 't is rest.
Soon shall my fate that wish fulfil;
And I shall sleep without the dream
Of what I was, and would be still,
Dark as to thee my deeds may seem:
My memory now is but the tomb
Of joys long dead; my hope, their doom:
Though better to have died with those
Than bear a life of lingering woes.
My spirits shrunk not to sustain
The searching throes of ceaseless pain;
Nor sought the self-accorded grave
Of ancient fool and modern knave:
Yet death I have not fear'd to meet;
And in the field it had been sweet,
Had danger woo'd me on to move
The slave of glory, not of love.
I 've braved it—not for honour's boast,
I smile at laurels won or lost;
To such let others carve their way,
For high renown, or hireling pay:
But place again before my eyes
Aught that I deem a worthy prize;
The maid I love, the man I hate,
And I will hunt the steps of fate,
To save or slay, as these require,
Through rending steel, and rolling fire;
Nor need'st thou doubt this speech from one
Who would but do—what he *hath* done.
Death is but what the haughty brave,
The weak must bear, the wretch must crave;
Then let life go to him who gave:
I have not quail'd to danger's brow
When high and happy—need I *now*?

* * * * * * *

«I loved her, friar! nay, adored—
But these are words that all can use—
I proved it more in deed than word;
There 's blood upon that dinted sword,
A stain its steel can never lose:
'T was shed for her, who died for me,
It warm'd the heart of one abhorr'd:
Nay, start not—no—nor bend thy knee,
Nor midst my sins such act record;
Thou wilt absolve me from the deed,
For he was hostile to thy creed!
The very name of Nazarene
Was wormwood to his Paynim spleen.

Ungrateful fool! since but for brands
Well wielded in some hardy hands,
And wounds by Galileans given,
The surest pass to Turkish heaven,
For him his Houris still might wait
Impatient at the prophet's gate.
I loved her—love will find its way
Through paths where wolves would fear to prey,
And if it dares enough, 't were hard
If passion met not some reward—
No matter how, or where, or why,
I did not vainly seek, nor sigh:
Yet sometimes, with remorse, in vain
I wish she had not loved again.
She died—I dare not tell thee how;
But look—'t is written on my brow!
There read of Cain the curse and crime,
In characters unworn by time:
Still, ere thou dost condemn me, pause;
Not mine the act, though I the cause.
Yet did he but what I had done
Had she been false to more than one.
Faithless to him, he gave the blow;
But true to me, I laid him low:
Howe'er deserved her doom might be,
Her treachery was truth to me;
To me she gave her heart, that all
Which tyranny can ne'er enthrall;
And I, alas! too late to save!
Yet all I then could give, I gave,
'T was some relief, our foe a grave.
His death sits lightly; but her fate
Has made me—what thou well may'st hate.
His doom was seal'd—he knew it well,
Warn'd by the voice of stern Taheer,
Deep in whose darkly-boding ear
The deathshot peal'd of murder near,
As filed the troop to where they fell!
He died too in the battle broil,
A time that heeds nor pain nor toil;
One cry to Mahomet for aid,
One prayer to Alla all he made:
He knew and cross'd me in the fray—
I gazed upon him where he lay,
And watch'd his spirit ebb away:
Though pierced like pard by hunters' steel,
He felt not half that now I feel.
I search'd, but vainly search'd, to find
The workings of a wounded mind;
Each feature of that sullen corse
Betray'd his rage, but no remorse.
Oh, what had vengeance given to trace
Despair upon his dying face!
The late repentance of that hour,
When penitence hath lost her power
To tear one terror from the grave,
And will not soothe, and can not save.

* * * * * * *

«The cold in clime are cold in blood,
Their love can scarce deserve the name;
But mine was like the lava flood
That boils in Ætna's breast of flame.
I cannot prate in puling strain
Of ladye-love, and beauty's chain.
If changing cheek, and scorching vein,
Lips taught to writhe, but not complain,
If bursting heart, and mad'ning brain,
And daring deed, and vengeful steel,
And all that I have felt, and feel,
Betoken love—that love was mine,
And shown by many a bitter sign.
'T is true I could not whine nor sigh,
I knew but to obtain or die.
I die—but first I have possess'd,
And come what may, I *have been* blest.
Shall I the doom I sought upbraid?
No—reft of all, yet undismay'd
But for the thought of Leila slain,
Give me the pleasure with the pain,
So would I live and love again.
I grieve, but not, my holy guide!
For him who dies, but her who died:
She sleeps beneath the wandering wave—
Ah! had she but an earthly grave,
This breaking heart and throbbing head
Should seek and share her narrow bed.
She was a form of life and light,
That, seen, became a part of sight;
And rose where'er I turn'd mine eye,
The morning-star of memory!

«Yes, love indeed is light from heaven;
A spark of that immortal fire
With angels shared, by Alla given,
To lift from earth our low desire.
Devotion wafts the mind above,
But heaven itself descends in love;
A feeling from the Godhead caught,
To wean from self each sordid thought;
A ray of him who form'd the whole;
A glory circling round the soul!
I grant *my* love imperfect, all
That mortals by the name miscall;
Then deem it evil, what thou wilt;
But say, oh say, *hers* was not guilt!
She was my life's unerring light:
That quench'd, what beam shall break my night?
Oh! would it shone to lead me still,
Although to death or deadliest ill!
Why marvel ye, if they who lose
This present joy, this future hope,
No more with sorrow meekly cope;
In phrensy then their fate accuse:
In madness do those fearful deeds
That seem to add but guilt to woe?
Alas! the breast that inly bleeds
Hath nought to dread from outward blow;
Who falls from all he knows of bliss,
Cares little into what abyss.
Fierce as the gloomy vulture's now
To thee, old man, my deeds appear:
I read abhorrence on thy brow,
And this too was I born to bear!
'T is true, that, like that bird of prey,
With havock have I mark'd my way:
But this was taught me by the dove,
To die—and know no second love.
This lesson yet hath man to learn,
Taught by the thing he dares to spurn.
The bird that sings within the brake,
The swan that swims upon the lake,
One mate, and one alone, will take.

And let the fool still prone to range,
And sneer on all who cannot change,
Partake his jest with boasting boys;
I envy not his varied joys,
But deem such feeble, heartless man,
Less than yon solitary swan;
Far, far beneath the shallow maid
He left believing and betray'd.
Such shame at least was never mine—
Leila! each thought was only thine!
My good, my guilt, my weal, my woe,
My hope on high—my all below.
Earth holds no other like to thee,
Or if it doth, in vain for me:
For worlds I dare not view the dame
Resembling thee, yet not the same.
The very crimes that mar my youth,
This bed of death—attest my truth!
'T is all too late—thou wert, thou art
The cherish'd madness of my heart!

«And she was lost—and yet I breathed,
But not the breath of human life:
A serpent round my heart was wreathed,
And stung my every thought to strife.
Alike all time, abhorr'd all place,
Shuddering I shrunk from nature's face,
Where every hue that charm'd before
The blackness of my bosom wore.
The rest thou dost already know,
And all my sins, and half my woe.
But talk no more of penitence;
Thou see'st I soon shall part from hence:
And if thy holy tale were true,
The deed that 's done can'st *thou* undo?
Think me not thankless—but this grief
Looks not to priesthood for relief.[41]
My soul's estate in secret guess:
But wouldst thou pity more, say less.
When thou canst bid my Leila live,
Then will I sue thee to forgive;
Then plead my cause in that high place
Where purchased masses proffer grace.
Go, when the hunter's hand hath wrung
From forest-cave her shrieking young,
And calm the lonely lioness:
But soothe not—mock not *my* distress!

« In earlier days, and calmer hours,
When heart with heart delights to blend,
Where bloom my native valley's bowers
I had—Ah! have I now?—a friend!
To him this pledge I charge thee send,
Memorial of a youthful vow;
I would remind him of my end:
Though souls absorb'd like mine allow
Brief thought to distant friendship's claim,
Yet dear to him my blighted name.
'T is strange—he prophesied my doom,
And I have smiled—I then could smile—
When prudence would his voice assume,
And warn—I reck'd not what—the while:
But now remembrance whispers o'er
Those accents scarcely mark'd before.
Say—that his bodings came to pass,
And he will start to hear their truth,
And wish his words had not been sooth:
Tell him, unheeding as I was,
Through many a busy bitter scene
Of all our golden youth had been,
In pain, my faltering tongue had tried
To bless his memory ere I died;
But Heaven in wrath would turn away,
If guilt should for the guiltless pray.
I do not ask him not to blame,
Too gentle he to wound my name;
And what have I to do with fame?
I do not ask him not to mourn,
Such cold request might sound like scorn;
And what than friendship's manly tear
May better grace a brother's bier?
But bear this ring, his own of old,
And tell him—what thou dost behold!
The wither'd frame, the ruin'd mind,
The wrack by passion left behind,
A shrivell'd scroll, a scatter'd leaf,
Seared by the autumn blast of grief!
* * * * * * *

« Tell me no more of fancy's gleam,
No, father, no, 't was not a dream;
Alas! the dreamer first must sleep,
I only watch'd, and wish'd to weep,
But could not, for my burning brow
Throbb'd to the very brain as now:
I wish'd but for a single tear,
As something welcome, new, and dear:
I wish'd it then, I wish it still—
Despair is stronger than my will.
Waste not thine orison, despair
Is mightier than thy pious prayer:
I would not, if I might, be blest;
I want no paradise, but rest.
'T was then, I tell thee, father! then
I saw her; yes, she lived again;
And shining in her white symar,[42]
As through yon pale gray cloud the star
Which now I gaze on, as on her,
Who look'd and looks far lovelier;
Dimly I view its trembling spark;
To-morrow's night shall be more dark;
And I, before its rays appear,
That lifeless thing the living fear.
I wander, father! for my soul
Is fleeting towards the final goal.
I saw her, friar! and I rose
Forgetful of our former woes;
And rushing from my couch, I dart,
And clasp her to my desperate heart;
I clasp—what is it that I clasp?
No breathing form within my grasp,
No heart that beats reply to mine.
Yet, Leila! yet the form is thine!
And art thou, dearest, changed so much,
As meet my eye, yet mock my touch?
Ah! were thy beauties e'er so cold,
I care not; so my arms enfold
The all they ever wish'd to hold.
Alas! around a shadow prest,
They shrink upon my lonely breast;

Yet still 't is there! in silence stands,
And beckons with beseeching hands!
With braided hair, and bright-black eye—
I knew 't was false—she could not die!
But he is dead! within the dell
I saw him buried where he fell;
He comes not, for he cannot break
From earth; why then art thou awake?
They told me wild waves roll'd above
The face I view, the form I love;
They told me—'t was a hideous tale!
I'd tell it, but my tongue would fail:
If true, and from thine ocean-cave
Thou com'st to claim a calmer grave,
Oh! pass thy dewy fingers o'er
This brow that then will burn no more;
Or place them on my hopeless heart:
But, shape or shade! whate'er thou art,
In mercy ne'er again depart!
Or farther with thee bear my soul,
Than winds can waft or waters roll!
* * * * * * *

« Such is my name, and such my tale.
Confessor! to thy secret ear
I breathe the sorrows I bewail,
And thank thee for the generous tear
This glazing eye could never shed.
Then lay me with the humblest dead,
And, save the cross above my head,
Be neither name nor emblem spread,
By prying stranger to be read,
Or stay the passing pilgrim's tread.»

He pass'd—nor of his name and race
Hath left a token or a trace,
Save what the father must not say
Who shrived him on his dying day:
This broken tale was all we knew
Of her he loved, or him he slew.[43]

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 132, line 3.

That tomb which, gleaming o'er the cliff.

A tomb above the rocks on the promontory, by some supposed the sepulchre of Themistocles.

Note 2. Page 132, line 22.

Sultana of the Nightingale.

The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable. If I mistake not, the « Bulbul of a thousand tales » is one of his appellations.

Note 3. Page 132, line 40.

Till the gay mariner's guitar.

The guitar is the constant amusement of the Greek sailor by night: with a steady fair wind, and during a calm, it is accompanied always by the voice, and often by dancing.

Note 4. Page 133, line 40.

Where cold obstruction's apathy.

« Ay, but to die and go we know not where,
« To lie in cold obstruction. »
Measure for Measure, Act III. 130. Sc. 1.

Note 5. Page 133, line 48.

The first, last look by death reveal'd.

I trust that few of my readers have ever had an opportunity of witnessing what is here attempted in description, but those who have will probably retain a painful remembrance of that singular beauty which pervades, with few exceptions, the features of the dead, a few hours, and but for a few hours, after « the spirit is not there.» It is to be remarked in cases of violent death by gun-shot wounds, the expression is always that of languor, whatever the natural energy of the sufferer's character; but in death from a stab the countenance preserves its traits of feeling or ferocity, and the mind its bias, to the last.

Note 6. Page 133, line 110.

Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a slave.

Athens is the property of the Kislar Aga (the slave of the seraglio and guardian of the women), who appoints the Waywode. A pander and eunuch—these are not polite, yet true appellations—now *governs* the *governor* of Athens!

Note 7. Page 134, line 23.

'T is calmer than thy heart, young Giaour.
Infidel.

Note 8. Page 134, line 58.

In echoes of the far tophaike.

« Tophaike,» musquet.—The Bairam is announced by the cannon at sunset; the illumination of the Mosques, and the firing of all kinds of small arms, loaded with *ball*, proclaim it during the night.

Note 9. Page 134, line 84.

Swift as the hurl'd on high jerreed.

Jerreed, or Djerrid, a blunted Turkish javelin, which is darted from horseback with great force and precision. It is a favourite exercise of the Mussulmans; but I know not if it can be called a *manly* one, since the most expert in the art are the Black Eunuchs of Constantinople—I think, next to these, a Mamlouk at Smyrna was the most skilful that came within my observation.

Note 10. Page 134, line 115.

He came, he went, like the Simoom.

The blast of the desert, fatal to every thing living, and often alluded to in eastern poetry.

Note 11. Page 135, line 47.

To bless the sacred « bread and salt.»

To partake of food, to break bread and salt with your host, insures the safety of the guest; even though an enemy, his person from that moment is sacred.

Note 12. Page 135, line 55.

Since his turban was cleft by the infidel's sabre.

I need hardly observe, that Charity and Hospitality are the first duties enjoined by Mahomet; and, to say truth, very generally practised by his disciples. The first praise that can be bestowed on a chief is a panegyric on his bounty; the next, on his valour.

Note 13. Page 135, line 59.

And silver-sheathed ataghan.

The ataghan, a long dagger worn with pistols in the belt, in a metal scabbard, generally of silver; and, among the wealthier, gilt, or of gold.

Note 14. Page 135, line 61.

An Emir by his garb of green.

Green is the privileged colour of the prophet's numerous pretended descendants; with them, as here, faith (the family inheritance) is supposed to supersede the necessity of good works: they are the worst of a very indifferent brood.

Note 15. Page 135, line 62.

Ho! who art thou?—this low salam.

Salam aleikoum! aleikoum salam! peace be with you; be with you peace—the salutation reserved for the faithful:—to a Christian, «Urlarula,» a good journey; or saban hiresem, saban serula; good morn, good even; and sometimes, «may your end be happy;» are the usual salutes.

Note 16. Page 135, line 93.

The insect-queen of eastern spring.

The blue-winged butterfly of Kashmeer, the most rare and beautiful of the species.

Note 17. Page 136, line 15.

Or live like scorpion girt by fire.

Alluding to the dubious suicide of the scorpion, so placed for experiment by gentle philosophers. Some maintain that the position of the sting, when turned towards the head, is merely a convulsive movement; but others have actually brought in the verdict, «Felo de se.» The scorpions are surely interested in a speedy decision of the question; as, if once fairly established as insect Catos, they will probably be allowed to live as long as they think proper, without being martyred for the sake of an hypothesis.

Note 18. Page 136, line 30.

When Rhamazan's last sun was set.

The cannon at sunset close the Rhamazan. See note 8.

Note 19. Page 136, line 49.

By pale Phingari's trembling light.

Phingari, the moon.

Note 20. Page 136, line 60.

Bright as the jewel of Giamschid.

The celebrated fabulous ruby of Sultan Giamschid, the embellisher of Istakhar; from its splendour, named Schebgerag, «the torch of night;» also, «the cup of the sun,» etc.—In the first editions «Giamschid» was written as a word of three syllables, so D'Herbelot has it; but I am told Richardson reduces it to a dissyllable, and writes «Jamshid.» I have left in the text the orthography of the one with the pronunciation of the other.

Note 21. Page 136, line 64.

Though on Al-Sirat's arch I stood.

Al-Sirat, the bridge, of breadth less than the thread of a famished spider, over which the Mussulmans must *skate* into paradise, to which it is the only entrance; but this is not the worst, the river beneath being hell itself, into which, as may be expected, the unskilful and tender of foot contrive to tumble with a «facilis descensus Averni,» not very pleasing in prospect to the next passenger. There is a shorter cut downwards for the Jews and Christians.

Note 22. Page 136, line 69.

And keep that portion of his creed.

A vulgar error; the Koran allots at least a third of paradise to well-behaved women; but by far the greater number of Mussulmans interpret the text their own way, and exclude their moieties from heaven. Being enemies to Platonics, they cannot discern «any fitness of things» in the souls of the other sex, conceiving them to be superseded by the Houris.

Note 23. Page 136, line 75.

The young pomegranate's blossoms strew.

An oriental simile, which may, perhaps, though fairly stolen, be deemed «plus Arabe qu'en Arabie.»

Note 24. Page 136, line 77.

Her hair in hyacinthine flow.

Hyacinthine, in Arabic, «Sunbul,» as common a thought in the eastern poets as it was among the Greeks.

Note 25. Page 136, line 87.

The loveliest bird of Franguestan

«Franguestan,» Circassia.

Note 26. Page 137, line 26.

Bismillah! now the peril 's past.

Bismillah—«In the name of God,» the commencement of all the chapters of the Koran but one, and of prayer and thanksgiving.

Note 27. Page 137, line 51.

Then curl'd his very beard with ire.

A phenomenon not uncommon with an angry Mussulman. In 1809, the Capitan Pacha's whiskers at a diplomatic audience were not less lively with indignation than a tiger cat's, to the horror of all the dragomans; the portentous mustachios twisted, they stood erect of their own accord, and were expected every moment to change their colour, but at last condescended to subside, which probably saved more heads than they contained hairs.

Note 28. Page 137, line 61.

Nor raised the craven cry, Amaun!

«Amaun,» quarter, pardon.

Note 29. Page 137, line 70.

I know him by the evil eye.

The «evil eye,» a common superstition in the Levant, and of which the imaginary effects are yet very singular on those who conceive themselves affected.

Note 30. Page 137, line 124.

A fragment of his palampore.

The flowered shawls generally worn by persons of rank.

Note 31. Page 138, line 51.

His calpac rent—his caftan red.

The «Calpac» is the solid cap or centre part of the head-dress; the shawl is wound round it, and forms the turban.

Note 32. Page 138, line 57.

A turban carved in coarsest stone.

The turban, pillar, and inscriptive verse, decorate the tombs of the Osmanlies, whether in the cemetery or the wilderness. In the mountains you frequently pass similar mementos; and on inquiry you are informed that they record some victim of rebellion, plunder, or revenge.

Note 33. Page 138, line 68.

At solemn sound of «Alla Hu!»

«Alla Hu!» the concluding words of the Muezzin's

call to prayer from the highest gallery on the exterior of the Minaret. On a still evening, when the Muezzin has a fine voice, which is frequently the case, the effect is solemn and beautiful beyond all the bells in Christendom.

Note 34. Page 138, line 77.

They come—their kerchiefs green they wave

The following is part of a battle song of the Turks: —«I see—I see a dark-eyed girl of Paradise, and she waves a handkerchief, a kerchief of green; and cries aloud, Come, kiss me, for I love thee,» etc.

Note 35. Page 138, line 82.

Beneath avenging Monkir's scythe.

Monkir and Nekir are the inquisitors of the dead, before whom the corpse undergoes a slight noviciate and preparatory training for damnation. If the answers are none of the clearest, he is hauled up with a scythe and thumped down with a red hot mace till properly seasoned, with a variety of subsidiary probations. The office of these angels is no sinecure; there are but two, and the number of orthodox deceased being in a small proportion to the remainder, their hands are always full.

Note 36. Page 138, line 84.

To wander round lost Eblis' throne.

Eblis, the Oriental Prince of Darkness.

Note 37. Page 138, line 89.

But first, on earth as vampire sent.

The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story, which Mr Southey, in the notes on Thalaba, quotes about these «Vroucolochas,» as he calls them. The Romaic term is «Vardoulacha.» I recollect a whole family being terrified by the scream of a child, which they imagined must proceed from such a visitation. The Greeks never mention the word without horror. I find that «Broucolokas» is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—at least is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the Devil. The moderns, however, use the word I mention.

Note 38. Page 138, line 115.

Wet with thine own best blood shall drip.

The freshness of the face, and the wetness of the lip with blood, are the never-failing signs of a Vampire. The stories told in Hungary and Greece of these foul feeders are singular, and some of them most *incredibly* attested.

Note 39. Page 140, line 36.

It is as if the desert-bird.

The pelican is, I believe, the bird so libelled, by the imputation of feeding her chickens with her blood.

Note 40. Page 141, line 36.

Deep in whose darkly boding ear.

This superstition of a second-hearing (for I never met with downright second-sight in the East) fell once under my own observation.—On my third journey to Cape Colonna early in 1811, as we passed through the defile that leads from the hamlet between Keratia and Colonna, I observed Dervish Tahiri riding rather out of the path, and leaning his head upon his hand, as if in pain. I rode up and inquired. «We are in peril,» he answered. «What peril? we are not now in Albania, nor in the passes to Ephesus, Messalunghi, or Lepanto; there are plenty of us, well armed, and the Choriates have not courage to be thieves.»—«True, Affendi; but nevertheless the shot is ringing in my ears.»—«The shot!—not a tophaike has been fired this morning.»—«I hear it notwithstanding—Bom—Bom—as plainly as I hear your voice.»—«Psha.»—«As you please, Affendi; if it is written, so will it be.»—I left this quick-eared predestinarian, and rode up to Basili, his Christian compatriot, whose ears, though not at all prophetic, by no means relished the intelligence. We all arrived at Colonna, remained some hours, and returned leisurely, saying a variety of brilliant things, in more languages than spoiled the building of Babel, upon the mistaken seer; Romaic, Arnaout, Turkish, Italian, and English were all exercised, in various conceits, upon the unfortunate Mussulman. While we were contemplating the beautiful prospect, Dervish was occupied about the columns. I thought he was deranged into an antiquarian, and asked him if he had become a «*Palaocastro*» man: «No,» said he, «but these pillars will be useful in making a stand;» and added other remarks, which at least evinced his own belief in his troublesome faculty of *fore-hearing*. On our return to Athens, we heard from Leoné (a prisoner set ashore some days after) of the intended attack of the Mainotes, mentioned, with the cause of its not taking place, in the notes to Childe Harold, Canto 2d. I was at some pains to question the man, and he described the dresses, arms, and marks of the horses of our party so accurately, that, with other circumstances, we could not doubt of *his* having been in «villanous company,» and ourselves in a bad neighbourhood. Dervish became a soothsayer for life, and I dare say is now hearing more musketry than ever will be fired, to the great refreshment of the Arnaouts of Berat, and his native mountains.—I shall mention one trait more of this singular race. In March 1811, a remarkably stout and active Arnaout came (I believe the 50th on the same errand) to offer himself as an attendant, which was declined: «Well, Affendi,» quoth he, «may you live!—you would have found me useful. I shall leave the town for the hills to-morrow; in the winter I return, perhaps you will then receive me.»—Dervish, who was present, remarked, as a thing of course, and of no consequence, «in the mean time he will join the Klephtes» (robbers), which was true to the letter.—If not cut off, they come down in the winter, and pass it unmolested in some town, where they are often as well known as their exploits.

Note 41. Page 142, line 36.

Looks not to priesthood for relief.

The monk's sermon is omitted It seems to have had so little effect upon the patient, that it could have no hopes from the reader. It may be sufficient to say, that it was of a customary length (as may be perceived from the interruptions and uneasiness of the penitent), and was delivered in the nasal tone of all orthodox preachers.

Note 42. Page 142, line 102.

And shining in her white symar.

«Symar»—Shroud.

Note 43. Page 143, line 37.

The circumstance to which the above story relates was not very uncommon in Turkey. A few years ago the wife of Muchtar Pacha complained to his father of his

son's supposed infidelity; he asked with whom, and she had the barbarity to give in a list of the twelve handsomest women in Yanina. They were seized, fastened up in sacks, and drowned in the lake the same night! One of the guards who was present informed me, that not one of the victims uttered a cry, or showed a symptom of terror at so sudden a «wrench from all we know, from all we love.» The fate of Phrosine, the fairest of this sacrifice, is the subject of many a Romaic and Arnaout ditty. The story in the text is one told of a young Venetian many years ago, and now nearly forgotten. I heard it by accident recited by one of the coffee-house story-tellers who abound in the Levant, and sing or recite their narratives. The additions and interpolations by the translator will be easily distinguished from the rest by the want of Eastern imagery; and I regret that my memory has retained so few fragments of the original.

For the contents of some of the notes I am indebted partly to D'Herbelot, and partly to that most eastern, and, as Mr Weber justly entitles it, «sublime tale,» the «Caliph Vathek.» I do not know from what source the author of that singular volume may have drawn his materials; some of his incidents are to be found in the «Bibliothèque Orientale;» but for correctness of costume, beauty of description, and power of imagination, it far surpasses all European imitations; and bears such marks of originality, that those who have visited the East will find some difficulty in believing it to be more than a translation. As an Eastern tale, even Rasselas must bow before it; his «Happy Valley» will not bear a comparison with the «Hall of Eblis.»

The Bride of Abydos,

A TURKISH TALE.

«Had we never loved so kindly,
Had we never loved so blindly,
Never met or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken hearted.»
BURNS.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD HOLLAND,

This Tale is Inscribed,

WITH EVERY SENTIMENT OF REGARD AND RESPECT, BY HIS GRATEFULLY OBLIGED AND SINCERE FRIEND,

BYRON.

CANTO I.

I.

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppress'd with perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul [1] in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine?
'Tis the clime of the east; 't is the land of the sun—
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?[2]
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they tell.

II.

Begirt with many a gallant slave,
Apparell'd as becomes the brave,
Awaiting each his lord's behest
To guide his steps, or guard his rest,
Old Giaffir sate in his Divan:
Deep thought was in his aged eye;
And though the face of Mussulman,
Not oft betrays to standers by
The mind within, well skill'd to hide
All but unconquerable pride,
His pensive cheek and pondering brow
Did more than he was wont avow.

III.

«Let the chamber be clear'd.»—The train disappear'd—
«Now call me the chief of the Haram guard.»
With Giaffir is none but his only son,
And the Nubian awaiting the sire's award.
«Haroun—when all the crowd that wait
Are pass'd beyond the outer gate,
(Woe to the head whose eye beheld
My child Zuleika's face unveil'd!)
Hence, lead my daughter from her tower;
Her fate is fix'd this very hour:

Yet not to her repeat my thought;
By me alone be duty taught!»

«Pacha! to hear is to obey.»
No more must slave to despot say—
Then to the tower had ta'en his way,
But here young Selim silence brake,
First lowly rendering reverence meet;
And downcast look'd, and gently spake,
Still standing at the Pacha's feet:
For son of Moslem must expire,
Ere dare to sit before his sire!

«Father! for fear that thou should'st chide
My sister, or her sable guide,
Know—for the fault, if fault there be,
Was mine, then fall thy frowns on me—
So lovelily the morning shone,
That—let the old and weary sleep—
I could not; and to view alone
The fairest scenes of land and deep,
With none to listen and reply
To thoughts with which my heart beat high
Were irksome—for whate'er my mood,
In sooth I love not solitude;
I on Zuleika's slumber broke,
And, as thou knowest that for me
Soon turns the Haram's grating key,
Before the guardian slaves awoke
We to the cypress groves had flown,
And made earth, main, and heaven our own!
There linger'd we, beguiled too long
With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song;[3]
Till I, who heard the deep tambour[4]
Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,
To thee and to my duty true,
Warn'd by the sound, to greet thee flew:
But there Zuleika wanders yet—
Nay, father, rage not—nor forget
That none can pierce that secret bower
But those who watch the women's tower.»

IV.

«Son of a slave»—the Pacha said—
«From unbelieving mother bred,
Vain were a father's hope to see
Aught that beseems a man in thee.
Thou, when thine arm should bend the bow,
And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,
Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,
Must pore where babbling waters flow,
And watch unfolding roses blow.
Would that yon orb, whose matin glow
Thy listless eyes so much admire,
Would lend thee something of his fire!
Thou, who wouldst see this battlement
By Christian cannon piecemeal rent;
Nay, tamely view old Stambol's wall
Before the dogs of Moscow fall,
Nor strike one stroke for life and death
Against the curs of Nazareth!
Go—let thy less than woman's hand
Assume the distaff—not the brand.
But, Haroun!—to my daughter speed:
And hark—of thine own head take heed—
If thus Zuleika oft takes wing—
Thou see'st yon bow—it hath a string!»

V.

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,
At least that met old Giaffir's ear,
But every frown and every word
Pierced keener than a Christian's sword.
«Son of a slave!—reproach'd with fear!
Those gibes had cost another dear.
Son of a slave!—and *who* my sire?»
Thus held his thoughts their dark career,
And glances even of more than ire
Flash forth, then faintly disappear.
Old Giaffir gazed upon his son
And started; for within his eye
He read how much his wrath had done;
He saw rebellion there begun:
«Come hither, boy—what, no reply?
I mark thee—and I know thee too;
But there be deeds thou darest not do:
But if thy beard had manlier length,
And if thy hand had skill and strength,
I'd joy to see thee break a lance,
Albeit against my own perchance.»

As sneeringly these accents fell,
On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed:
That eye return'd him glance for glance,
And proudly to his sire's was raised,
Till Giaffir's quail'd and shrunk askance—
And why—he felt, but durst not tell.

«Much I misdoubt this wayward boy
Will one day work me more annoy;
I never loved him from his birth,
And—but his arm is little worth,
And scarcely in the chase could cope
With timid fawn or antelope,
Far less would venture into strife
Where man contends for fame and life—
I would not trust that look or tone:
No—nor the blood so near my own.
That blood—he hath not heard—no more—
I'll watch him closer than before.
He is an Arab[5] to my sight,
Or Christian crouching in the fight—
But hark!—I hear Zuleika's voice;
Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear:
She is the offspring of my choice;
O! more than even her mother dear,
With all to hope, and nought to fear—
My Peri! ever welcome here!
Sweet, as the desert-fountain's wave
To lips just cool'd in time to save—
Such to my longing sight art thou;
Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine
More thanks for life, than I for thine,
Who blest thy birth, and bless thee now.»

VI.

Fair, as the first that fell of womankind,
When on that dread yet lovely serpent smiling,
Whose image then was stamp'd upon her mind—
But once beguiled—and ever more beguiling;
Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendant vision
To sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber given,
When heart meets heart again in dreams Elysian,
And paints the lost on earth revived in heaven;
Soft, as the memory of buried love;
Pure, as the prayer which childhood wafts above:

Was she—the daughter of that rude old chief,
Who met the maid with tears—but not of grief.

Who hath not proved how feebly words essay
To fix one spark of beauty's heavenly ray?
Who doth not feel, until his failing sight
Faints into dimness with its own delight,
His changing cheek, his sinking heart confess
The might—the majesty of loveliness?
Such was Zuleika—such around her shone
The nameless charms unmark'd by her alone;
The light of love, the purity of grace,
The mind, the music breathing from her face,[6]
The heart whose softness harmonized the whole—
And, oh! that eye was in itself a soul!

Her graceful arms in meekness bending
Across her gently-budding breast;
At one kind word those arms extending
To clasp the neck of him who blest
His child caressing and carest,
Zuleika came—and Giaffir felt
His purpose half within him melt:
Not that against her fancied weal
His heart though stern could ever feel;
Affection chain'd her to that heart;
Ambition tore the links apart.

VII.

« Zuleika! child of gentleness!
How dear this very day must tell,
When I forget my own distress,
In losing what I love so well,
To bid thee with another dwell.
Another! and a braver man
Was never seen in battle's van.
We Moslem reck not much of blood;
But yet the line of Carasman[7]
Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood
First of the bold Timariot bands
That won and well can keep their lands.
Enough that he who comes to woo
Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou:
His years need scarce a thought employ:
I would not have thee wed a boy.
And thou shalt have a noble dower:
And his and my united power
Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,
Which others tremble but to scan,
And teach the messenger[8] what fate
The bearer of such boon may wait.
And now thou know'st thy father's will;
All that thy sex hath need to know:
'Twas mine to teach obedience still—
The way to love, thy lord may show.»

VIII.

In silence bow'd the virgin's head;
And if her eye was fill'd with tears
That stifled feeling dare not shed,
And changed her cheek from pale to red,
And red to pale, as through her ears
Those winged words like arrows sped,
What could such be but maiden fears?
So bright the tear in beauty's eye,
Love half regrets to kiss it dry;
So sweet the blush of bashfulness,
Even Pity scarce can wish it less!
Whate'er it was the sire forgot;
Or if remember'd, mark'd it not;
Thrice clapp'd his hands, and call'd his steed,[9]
Resign'd his gem-adorn'd Chibouque,[10]
And mounting featly for the mead,
With Maugrabee[11] and Mamaluke
His way amid his Delis took,[12]
To witness many an active deed
With sabre keen, or blunt jereed.
The Kislar only and his Moors
Watch well the Haram's massy doors.

IX.

His head was leant upon his hand,
His eye look'd o'er the dark blue water
That swiftly glides and gently swells
Between the winding Dardanelles;
But yet he saw nor sea nor strand
Nor even his Pacha's turban'd band
Mix in the game of mimic slaughter.
Careering cleave the folded felt[13]
With sabre stroke right sharply dealt;
Nor mark'd the javelin-darting crowd,
Nor heard their Ollahs[14] wild and loud—
He thought but of old Giaffir's daughter!

X.

No word from Selim's bosom broke;
One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke:
Still gazed he through the lattice grate,
Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.
To him Zuleika's eye was turn'd,
But little from his aspect learn'd:
Equal her grief, yet not the same;
Her heart confess'd a gentler flame:
But yet that heart alarm'd or weak,
She knew not why, forbade to speak.
Yet speak she must—but when essay?
« How strange he thus should turn away!
Not thus we e'er before have met;
Not thus shall be our parting yet.»
Thrice paced she slowly through the room,
And watch'd his eye—it still was fix'd:
She snatch'd the urn wherein was mix'd
The Persian Atar-gul's[15] perfume,
And sprinkled all its odours o'er
The pictured roof[16] and marble floor:
The drops, that through his glittering vest
The playful girl's appeal addrest,
Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,
As if that breast were marble too.
« What, sullen yet? it must not be—
Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee! »
She saw in curious order set
The fairest flowers of Eastern land—
« He loved them once; may touch them yet,
If offer'd by Zuleika's hand.»
The childish thought was hardly breathed
Before the rose was pluck'd and wreathed;
The next fond moment saw her seat
Her fairy form at Selim's feet:
« This rose to calm my brother's cares
A message from the Bulbul[17] bears;
It says to-night he will prolong
For Selim's ear his sweetest song;

And though his note is somewhat sad,
He 'll try for once a strain more glad,
With some faint hope his alter'd lay
May sing these gloomy thoughts away.»

XI.

« What! not receive my foolish flower?
Nay then I am indeed unblest:
On me can thus thy forehead lower?
And know'st thou not who loves thee best?
Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!
Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest?
Come, lay thy head upon my breast,
And I will kiss thee into rest,
Since words of mine, and songs must fail
Even from my fabled nightingale.
I knew our sire at times was stern,
But this from thee had yet to learn:
Too well I know he loves thee not;
But is Zuleika's love forgot?
Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan—
This kinsman Bey of Carasman
Perhaps may prove some foe of thine.
If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine,
If shrines that ne'er approach allow
To woman's step admit her vow,
Without thy free consent, command,
The Sultan should not have my hand!
Think'st thou that I could bear to part
With thee, and learn to halve my heart?
Ah! were I sever'd from thy side,
Where were thy friend—and who my guide?
Years have not seen, time shall not see,
The hour that tears my soul from thee:
Even Azrael,[18] from his deadly quiver
When flies that shaft, and fly it must,
That parts all else, shall doom for ever
Our hearts to undivided dust!»

XII.

He lived—he breathed—he moved—he felt;
He raised the maid from where she knelt:
His trance was gone—his keen eye shone
With thoughts that long in darkness dwelt;
With thoughts that burn—in rays that melt
As the stream late conceal'd
By the fringe of its willows;
When it rushes reveal'd
In the light of its billows;
As the bolt bursts on high
From the black cloud that bound it,
Flash'd the soul of that eye
Through the long lashes round it.
A war-horse at the trumpet's sound,
A lion roused by heedless hound,
A tyrant waked to sudden strife
By graze of ill-directed knife,
Starts not to more convulsive life
Than he, who heard that vow, display'd,
And all, before repress'd, betray'd:
« Now thou art mine, for ever mine,
With life to keep, and scarce with life resign;
Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,
Though sworn by one, hath bound us both.
Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done;
That vow hath saved more heads than one
But blench not thou—thy simplest tress
Claims more from me than tenderness;
I would not wrong the slenderest hair
That clusters round thy forehead fair,
For all the treasures buried far
Within the caves of Istakar.[19]
This morning clouds upon me lower'd,
Reproaches on my head were shower'd,
And Giaffir almost called me coward!
Now I have motive to be brave;
The son of his neglected slave,
Nay, start not, 't was the term he gave,
May show, though little apt to vaunt,
A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.
His son, indeed!—yet, thanks to thee,
Perchance I am, at least shall be;
But let our plighted secret vow
Be only known to us as now.
I know the wretch who dares demand
From Giaffir thy reluctant hand;
More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul,
Holds not a Musselim's[20] control:
Was he not bred in Egripo?[21]
A viler race let Israel show!
But let that pass—to none be told
Our oath; the rest shall time unfold.
To me and mine leave Osman Bey;
I 've partisans for peril's day:
Think not I am what I appear;
I 've arms, and friends, and vengeance near »

XIII.

« Think not thou art what thou appearest!
My Selim, thou art sadly changed:
This morn I saw thee gentlest, dearest;
But now thou 'rt from thyself estranged.
My love thou surely knew'st before,
It ne'er was less, nor can be more.
To see thee, hear thee, near thee stay,
And hate the night I know not why,
Save that we meet not but by day;
With thee to live, with thee to die,
I dare not to my hope deny:
Thy cheek, thine eyes, thy lips to kiss,
Like this—and this—no more than this;
For, Alla! sure thy lips are flame:
What fever in thy veins is flushing?
My own have nearly caught the same,
At least I feel my cheek too blushing.
To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,
Partake, but never waste, thy wealth,
Or stand with smiles unmurmuring by,
And lighten half thy poverty;
Do all but close thy dying eye,
For that I could not live to try;
To these alone my thoughts aspire:
More can I do? or thou require?
But, Selim, thou must answer why
We need so much of mystery?
The cause I cannot dream nor tell,
But be it, since thou say'st 't is well;
Yet what thou mean'st by 'arms' and 'friends,
Beyond my weaker sense extends.
I meant that Giaffir should have heard
The very vow I plighted thee;
His wrath would not revoke my word:
But surely he would leave me free.
Can this fond wish seem strange in me,

To be what I have ever been?
What other hath Zuleika seen
From simple childhood's earliest hour?
What other can she seek to see
Than thee, companion of her bower,
The partner of her infancy?
These cherish'd thoughts with life begun,
Say, why must I no more avow?
What change is wrought to make me shun
The truth; my pride, and thine till now?
To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes
Our law, our creed, our God denies;
Nor shall one wandering thought of mine
At such, our Prophet's will, repine:
No! happier made by that decree!
He left me all in leaving thee.
Deep were my anguish, thus compell'd
To wed with one I ne'er beheld:
This wherefore should I not reveal?
Why wilt thou urge me to conceal?
I know the Pacha's haughty mood
To thee hath never boded good;
And he so often storms at nought,
Allah! forbid that e'er he ought!
And why I know not, but within
My heart concealment weighs like sin.
If then such secrecy be crime,
And such it feels while lurking here;
Oh, Selim! tell me yet in time,
Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.
Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar,[22]
My father leaves the mimic war;
I tremble now to meet his eye—
Say, Selim, can'st thou tell me why?»

XIV.

« Zuleika! to thy tower's retreat
Betake thee—Giaffir I can greet:
And now with him I fain must prate
Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.
There's fearful news from Danube's banks;
Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks,
For which the Giaour may give him thanks!
Our Sultan hath a shorter way
Such costly triumph to repay.
But, mark me, when the twilight drum
Hath warn'd the troops to food and sleep,
Unto thy cell will Selim come:
Then softly from the Haram creep
Where we may wander by the deep:
Our garden-battlements are steep;
Nor these will rash intruder climb
To list our words, or stint our time,
And if he doth, I want not steel
Which some have felt, and more may feel.
Then shalt thou learn of Selim more
Than thou hast heard or thought before;
Trust me, Zuleika—fear not me!
Thou know'st I hold a Haram key.»
« Fear thee, my Selim! ne'er till now
Did word like this—»
« Delay not thou;
I keep the key—and Haroun's guard
Have *some*, and hope of *more* reward.
To night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear
My tale, my purpose, and my fear:
I am not, love! what I appear.»

CANTO II.

I.

The winds are high on Helle's wave,
As on that night of stormy water
When love, who sent, forgot to save
The young, the beautiful, the brave,
The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
Oh! when alone along the sky
Her turret-torch was blazing high,
Though rising gale, and breaking foam,
And shrieking sea-birds warn'd him home;
And clouds aloft and tides below,
With signs and sounds, forbade to go,
He could not see, he would not hear
Or sound or sign foreboding fear;
His eye but saw that light of love,
The only star it hail'd above;
His ear but rang with Hero's song,
« Ye waves, divide not lovers long!»—
That tale is old, but love anew
May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

II.

The winds are high, and Helle's tide
Rolls darkly heaving to the main;
And night's descending shadows hide
That field with blood bedew'd in vain,
The desert of old Priam's pride;
The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
All—save immortal dreams that could beguile
The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

III.

Oh! yet—for there my steps have been;
These feet have press'd the sacred shore,
These limbs that buoyant wave hath borne—
Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn,
To trace again those fields of yore,
Believing every hillock green
Contains no fabled hero's ashes,
And that around the undoubted scene
Thine own « broad Hellespont»[23] still dashes,
Be long my lot! and cold were he
Who there could gaze denying thee!

IV.

The night hath closed on Helle's stream,
Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill
That moon, which shone on his high theme:
No warrior chides her peaceful beam,
But conscious shepherds bless it still.
Their flocks are grazing on the mound
Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow:
That mighty heap of gather'd ground
Which Ammon's[24] son ran proudly round,
By nations raised, by monarchs crown'd,
Is now a lone and nameless barrow!
Within—thy dwelling-place how narrow!
Without—can only strangers breathe
The name of him that *was* beneath:
Dust long outlasts the storied stone;
But Thou—thy very dust is gone!

V.

Late, late to night will Dian cheer
The swain, and chase the boatman's fear;
Till then—no beacon on the cliff
May shape the course of struggling skiff;
The scatter'd lights that skirt the bay,
All, one by one, have died away;
The only lamp of this lone hour
Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.

Yes! there is light in that lone chamber,
And o'er her silken Ottoman
Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,
O'er which her fairy fingers ran;[25]
Near these, with emerald rays beset,
(How could she thus that gem forget?)
Her mother's sainted amulet,[26]
Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,
Could smooth this life, and win the next;
And by her Comboloio[27] lies
A Koran of illumined dyes;
And many a bright emblazon'd rhyme
By Persian scribes redeem'd from time;
And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,
Reclines her now neglected lute;
And round her lamp of fretted gold
Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould;
The richest work of Iran's loom,
And Sheeraz' tribute of perfume;
All that can eye or sense delight
Are gather'd in that gorgeous room:
But yet it hath an air of gloom.
She, of this Peri cell the sprite,
What doth she hence, and on so rude a night?

VI.

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,
Which none save noblest Moslem wear,
To guard from winds of heaven the breast
As heaven itself to Selim dear,
With cautious steps the thicket threading,
And starting oft, as through the glade
The gust its hollow moanings made,
Till on the smoother pathway treading,
More free her timid bosom beat,
The maid pursued her silent guide;
And though her terror urged retreat,
How could she quit her Selim's side?
How teach her tender lips to chide?

VII.

They reach'd at length a grotto, hewn
By nature, but enlarged by art,
Where oft her lute she wont to tune
And oft her Koran conn'd apart;
And oft in youthful reverie
She dream'd what Paradise might be:
Where woman's parted soul shall go
Her prophet had disdain'd to show;
But Selim's mansion was secure,
Nor deem'd she, could he long endure
His bower in other worlds of bliss,
Without *her*, most beloved in this!
Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?
What Houri soothe him half so well?

VIII.

Since last she visited the spot
Some change seem'd wrought within the grot:
It might be only that the night
Disguised things seen by better light:
That brazen lamp but dimly threw
A ray of no celestial hue;
But in a nook within the cell
Her eye on stranger objects fell.
There arms were piled, not such as wield
The turban'd Delis in the field;
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,
And one was red—perchance with guilt!
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?
A cup too on the board was set
That did not seem to hold sherbet.
What may this mean? she turn'd to see
Her Selim—«Oh! can this be he?»

IX.

His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crown'd turban bore,
But in its stead a shawl of red,
Wreathed lightly round, his temples wore:
That dagger, on whose hilt the gem
Were worthy of a diadem,
No longer glitter'd at his waist,
Where pistols unadorn'd were braced;
And from his belt a sabre swung,
And from his shoulder loosely hung
The cloak of white, the thin capote
That decks the wandering Candiote:
Beneath—his golden plated vest
Clung like a cuirass to his breast;
The greaves below his knee that wound
With silvery scales were sheathed and bound.
But were it not that high command
Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,
All that a careless eye could see
In him was some young Galiongée.[28]

X.

«I said I was not what I seem'd;
And now thou seest my words were true:
I have a tale thou hast not dream'd,
If sooth—its truth must others rue.
My story now 't were vain to hide,
I must not see thee Osman's bride:
But had not thine own lips declared
How much of that young heart I shared,
I could not, must not, yet have shown
The darker secret of my own.
In this I speak not now of love;
That, let time, truth, and peril prove:
But first—Oh! never wed another—
Zuleika! I am not thy brother!»

XI.

«Oh! not my brother!—yet unsay—
God! am I left alone on earth
To mourn—I dare not curse—the day
That saw my solitary birth?
Oh! thou wilt love me now no more!
My sinking heart foreboded ill;
But know me all I was before,

Thy sister—friend—Zuleika still.
Thou led'st me here perchance to kill;
If thou hast cause for vengeance, see!
My breast is offer'd—take thy fill!
Far better with the dead to be
Than live thus nothing now to thee:
Perhaps far worse, for now I know
Why Giaffir always seem'd thy foe;
And I, alas! am Giaffir's child,
For whom thou wert contemn'd, reviled.
If not thy sister—wouldst thou save
My life, Oh! bid me be thy slave!»

XII.

« My slave, Zuleika!—nay, I 'm thine:
But, gentle love, this transport calm,
Thy lot shall yet be link'd with mine;
I swear it by our Prophet's shrine,
And be that thought thy sorrow's balm.
So may the Koran [29] verse display'd
Upon its steel direct my blade,
In danger's hour to guard us both,
As I preserve that awful oath!
The name in which thy heart hath prided
Must change; but, my Zuleika, know,
That tie is widen'd, not divided,
Although thy sire 's my deadliest foe.
My Father was to Giaffir all
That Selim late was deem'd to thee;
That brother wrought a brother's fall,
But spared, at least, my infancy;
And lull'd me with a vain deceit
That yet a like return may meet.
He rear'd me, not with tender help,
But like the nephew of a Cain; [30]
He watch'd me like a lion's whelp,
That gnaws and yet may break his chain.
My father's blood in every vein
Is boiling; but for thy dear sake
No present vengeance will I take;
Though here I must no more remain.
But first, beloved Zuleika! hear
How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

XIII.

« How first their strife to rancour grew,
If love or envy made them foes,
It matters little if I knew;
In fiery spirits, slights, though few
And thoughtless, will disturb repose.
In war Abdallah's arm was strong,
Remember'd yet in Bosniac song,
And Paswan's [31] rebel hordes attest
How little love they bore such guest:
His death is all I need relate,
The stern effect of Giaffir's hate;
And how my birth disclosed to me,
Whate'er beside it makes, hath made me free.

XIV.

« When Paswan, after years of strife,
At last for power, but first for life,
In Widin's walls too proudly sate,
Our Pachas rallied round the state;
Nor last nor least in high command
Each brother led a separate band;
They gave their horsetails [32] to the wind,
And mustering in Sophia's plain
Their tents were pitch'd, their post assign'd;
To one, alas! assign'd in vain!
What need of words? the deadly bowl,
By Giaffir's order drugg'd and given,
With venom subtle as his soul,
Dismiss'd Abdallah's hence to heaven.
Reclined and feverish in the bath,
He, when the hunter's sport was up,
But little deem'd a brother's wrath
To quench his thirst had such a cup:
The bowl a bribed attendant bore;
He drank one draught, [33] nor needed more!
If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt,
Call Haroun—he can tell it out.

XV.

« The deed once done, and Paswan's feud
In part suppress'd, though ne'er subdued,
Abdallah's pachalick was gain'd:
Thou know'st not what in our Divan
Can wealth procure for worse than man—
Abdallah's honours were obtain'd
By him a brother's murder stain'd;
'T is true, the purchase nearly drain'd
His ill-got treasure, soon replaced.
Would'st question whence? Survey the waste,
And ask the squalid peasant how
His gains repay his broiling brow?
Why me the stern usurper spared,
Why thus with me his palace shared,
I know not. Shame, regret, remorse,
And little fear from infant's force;
Besides, adoption as a son
By him whom Heaven accorded none,
Or some unknown cabal, caprice,
Preserved me thus;—but not in peace:
He cannot curb his haughty mood,
Nor I forgive a father's blood.

XVI.

« Within thy father's house are foes;
Not all who break his bread are true:
To these should I my birth disclose,
His days, his very hours were few.
They only want a heart to lead,
A hand to point them to the deed.
But Haroun only knows, or knew
This tale, whose close is almost nigh:
He in Abdallah's palace grew,
And held that post in his Serai
Which holds he here—he saw him die:
But what could single slavery do?
Avenge his lord! alas! too late;
Or save his son from such a fate?
He chose the last, and when elate
With foes subdued, or friends betray'd,
Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,
He led me helpless to his gate,
And not in vain it seems essay'd
To save the life for which he pray'd.
The knowledge of my birth secured
From all and each, but most from me;
Thus Giaffir's safety was ensured.
Removed he too from Roumelie

To this our Asiatic side,
Far from our seats by Danube's tide,
With none but Haroun, who retains
Such knowledge—and that Nubian feels
A tyrant's secrets are but chains
From which the captive gladly steals,
And this and more to me reveals:
Such still to guilt just Alla sends
Slaves, tools, accomplices—no friends!

XVII.

« All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds;
But harsher still my tale must be:
However my tongue thy softness wounds,
Yet I must prove all truth to thee.
I saw thee start this garb to see,
Yet is it one I oft have worn,
And long must wear: this Galiongee,
To whom thy plighted vow is sworn,
Is leader of those pirate hordes,
Whose laws and lives are on their swords;
To hear whose desolating tale
Would make thy waning cheek more pale:
Those arms thou see'st my band have brought,
The hands that wield are not remote;
This cup too for the rugged knaves
Is fill'd—once quaff'd, they ne'er repine:
Our Prophet might forgive the slaves;
They're only infidels in wine.

XVIII.

« What could I be? Proscribed at home,
And taunted to a wish to roam;
And listless left—for Giaffir's fear
Denied the courser and the spear—
Though oft—Oh, Mahomet! how oft!—
In full Divan the despot scoff'd,
As if *my* weak unwilling hand
Refused the bridle or the brand:
He ever went to war alone,
And pent me here untried, unknown;
To Haroun's care with women left,
By hope unblest, of fame bereft.
While thou—whose softness long endear'd,
Though it unmann'd me, still had cheer'd—
To Brusa's walls for safety sent,
Awaited'st there the field's event.
Haroun, who saw my spirit pining
Beneath inaction's sluggish yoke,
His captive, though with dread resigning,
My thraldom for a season broke,
On promise to return before
The day when Giaffir's charge was o'er.
'Tis vain—my tongue cannot impart
My almost drunkenness of heart,
When first this liberated eye
Survey'd earth, ocean, sun, and sky,
As if my spirit pierced them through,
And all their inmost wonders knew!
One word alone can paint to thee
That more than feeling—I was Free!
E'en for thy presence ceased to pine;
The world—nay—heaven itself was mine!

XIX.

« The shallop of a trusty Moor
Convey'd me from this idle shore;
I long'd to see the isles that gem
Old Ocean's purple diadem:
I sought by turns, and saw them all;[34]
But when and where I join'd the crew,
With whom I' m pledged to rise or fall,
When all that we design to do
Is done, 't will then be time more meet
To tell thee when the tale 's complete.

XX.

« 'Tis true, they are a lawless brood,
But rough in form, nor mild in mood;
And every creed, and every race,
With them hath found—may find a place:
But open speech, and ready hand,
Obedience to their chief's command;
A soul for every enterprise
That never sees with terror's eyes;
Friendship for each, and faith to all,
And vengeance vow'd for those who fall,
Have made them fitting instruments
For more than even my own intents.
And some—and I have studied all
Distinguish'd from the vulgar rank,
But chiefly to my council call
The wisdom of the cautious Frank—
And some to higher thoughts aspire,
The last of Lambro's[35] patriots there
Anticipated freedom share;
And oft around the cavern fire
On visionary schemes debate,
To snatch the Rayahs[36] from their fate.
So let them ease their hearts with prate
Of equal rights, which man ne'er knew;
I have a love for freedom too.
Ay! let me like the ocean-patriarch[37] roam,
Or only know on land the Tartar's home![38]
My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,
Are more than cities and serais to me:
Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,
Across the desert, or before the gale,
Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or glide, my prow!
But be the star that guides the wanderer, thou!
Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my bark;
The dove of peace and promise to mine ark!
Or, since that hope denied in worlds of strife,
Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!
Blest—as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's wall
To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call:
Soft—as the melody of youthful days,
That steals the trembling tear of speechless praise;
Dear—as his native song to exile's ears,
Shall sound each tone thy long-loved voice endears.
For thee in those bright isles is built a bower
Blooming as Aden[39] in its earliest hour.
A thousand swords, with Selim's heart and hand,
Wait—wave—defend—destroy—at thy command!
Girt by my band, Zuleika at my side,
The spoil of nations shall bedeck my bride.
The haram's languid years of listless ease
Are well resign'd for cares—for joys like these:
Not blind to fate, I see, where'er I rove,
Unnumber'd perils—but one only love!

Yet well my toils shall that fond breast repay,
Though fortune frown, or falser friends betray.
How dear the dream in darkest hours of ill,
Should all be changed, to find thee faithful still!
Be but thy soul, like Selim's, firmly shown;
To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;
To soothe each sorrow, share in each delight,
Blend every thought, do all—but disunite!
Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to guide;
Friends to each other, foes to aught beside:
Yet there we follow but the bent assign'd
By fatal nature to man's warring kind:
Mark! where his carnage and his conquests cease!
He makes a solitude, and calls it—peace!
I like the rest must use my skill or strength,
But ask no land beyond my sabre's length:
Power sways but by division—her resource
The blest alternative of fraud or force!
Ours be the last; in time deceit may come
When cities cage us in a social home:
There even thy soul might err—how oft the heart
Corruption shakes which peril could not part!
And woman, more than man, when death or woe
Or even disgrace would lay her lover low,
Sunk in the lap of luxury will shame—
Away suspicion!—*not* Zuleika's name!
But life is hazard at the best; and here
No more remains to win, and much to fear:
Yes, fear!—the doubt, the dread of losing thee,
By Osman's power and Giaffir's stern decree.
That dread shall vanish with the favouring gale,
Which love to-night hath promised to my sail:
No danger daunts the pair his smile hath blest,
Their steps still roving, but their hearts at rest.
With thee all toils are sweet, each clime hath charms;
Earth—sea alike—our world within our arms!
Ay—let the loud winds whistle o'er the deck,
So that those arms cling closer round my neck:
The deepest murmur of this lip shall be
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!
The war of elements no fears impart
To love, whose deadliest bane is human art:
There lie the only rocks our course can check;
Here moments menace—*there* are years of wreck!
But hence ye thoughts that rise in horror's shape!
This hour bestows, or ever bars escape.
Few words remain of mine my tale to close;
Of thine but *one* to waft us from our foes;
Yea—foes—to me will Giaffir's hate decline?
And is not Osman, who would part us, thine?

XXI.

«His head and faith from doubt and death
Return'd in time my guard to save;
Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave
From isle to isle I roved the while:
And since, though parted from my band
Too seldom now I leave the land,
No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,
Ere I have heard and doom'd it too:
I form the plan, decree the spoil,
'Tis fit I oftener share the toil.
But now too long I've held thine ear;
Time presses, floats my bark, and here
We leave behind but hate and fear.
To-morrow Osman with his train
Arrives—to-night must break thy chain:
And would'st thou save that haughty Bey,
Perchance *his* life who gave thee thine,
With me this hour away—away!
But yet, though thou art plighted mine,
Would'st thou recal thy willing vow,
Appall'd by truths imparted now,
Here rest I—not to see thee wed:
But be that peril on *my* head!»

XXII.

Zuleika, mute and motionless,
Stood like that statue of distress,
When, her last hope for ever gone,
The mother harden'd into stone;
All in the maid that eye could see
Was but a younger Niobé.
But ere her lip, or even her eye,
Essay'd to speak, or look reply,
Beneath the garden's wicket porch
Far flash'd on high a blazing torch!
Another—and another—and another—
«Oh! fly—no more—yet now my more than brother!»
Far, wide, through every thicket spread,
The fearful lights are gleaming red;
Nor these alone—for each right hand
Is ready with a sheathless brand.
They part, pursue, return, and wheel
With searching flambeau, shining steel;
And last of all, his sabre waving,
Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:
And now almost they touch the cave—
Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

XXIII.

Dauntless he stood—«'Tis come—soon past—
One kiss, Zuleika—'tis my last:
But yet my band not far from shore
May hear this signal, see the flash;
Yet now too few—the attempt were rash:
No matter—yet one effort more.»
Forth to the cavern mouth he stept;
His pistol's echo rang on high.
Zuleika started not, nor wept,
Despair benumb'd her breast and eye!—
«They hear me not, or if they ply
Their oars, 't is but to see me die;
That sound hath drawn my foes more nigh.
Then forth my father's scimitar,
Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!
Farewell, Zuleika!—Sweet! retire:
Yet stay within—here linger safe,
At thee his rage will only chafe.
Stir not—lest even to thee perchance
Some erring blade or ball should glance.
Fear'st thou for him?—may I expire
If in this strife I seek thy sire!
No—though by him that poison pour'd;
No—though again he call me coward!
But tamely shall I meet their steel?
No—as each crest save *his* may feel!»

XXIV.

One bound he made, and gain'd the sand:
Already at his feet hath sunk

The foremost of the prying band,
A gasping head, a quivering trunk:
Another falls—but round him close
A swarming circle of his foes;
From right to left his path he cleft,
And almost met the meeting wave:
His boat appears—not five oars' length—
His comrades strain with desperate strength—
Oh! are they yet in time to save?
His feet the foremost breakers lave;
His hand are plunging in the bay,
Their sabres glitter through the spray;
Wet—wild—unwearied to the strand
They struggle—now they touch the land!
They come—'tis but to add to slaughter—
His heart's best blood is on the water!

XXV.

Escaped from shot, unharm'd by steel,
Or scarcely grazed it's force to feel,
Had Selim won, betray'd, beset,
To where the strand and billows met.
There as his last step left the land,
And the last death-blow dealt his hand—
Ah! wherefore did he turn to look
For her his eye but sought in vain?
That pause, that fatal gaze he took,
Hath doom'd his death, or fix'd his chain.
Sad proof, in peril and in pain,
How late will lover's hope remain!
His back was to the dashing spray;
Behind, but close, his comrades lay,
When, at the instant, hiss'd the ball—
«So may the foes of Giaffir fall!»
Whose voice is heard? whose carbine rang?
Whose bullet through the night-air sang,
Too nearly, deadly aim'd to err?
'Tis thine—Abdallah's murderer!
The father slowly rued thy hate,
The son hath found a quicker fate:
Fast from his breast the blood is bubbling,
The whiteness of the sea-foam troubling—
If aught his lips essay'd to groan,
The rushing billows choak'd the tone!

XXVI.

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away;
Few trophies of the fight are there:
The shouts that shook the midnight-bay
Are silent; but some signs of fray
That strand of strife may bear,
And fragments of each shiver'd brand;
Steps stamp'd; and dash'd into the sand
The print of many a struggling hand
May there be mark'd; nor far remote
A broken torch, an oarless boat;
And tangled on the weeds that heap
The beach where shelving to the deep
There lies a white capote!
'Tis rent in twain—one dark-red stain
The wave yet ripples o'er in vain:
But where is he who wore?
Ye! who would o'er his relics weep
Go, seek them where the surges sweep
Their burthen round Sigæum's steep
And cast on Lemnos' shore.

The sea-birds shriek above the prey,
O'er which their hungry beaks delay,
As shaken on his restless pillow,
His head heaves with the heaving billow;
That hand, whose motion is not life,
Yet feebly seems to menace strife,
Flung by the tossing tide on high,
Then levell'd with the wave—
What recks it, though that corse shall lie
Within a living grave?
The bird that tears that prostrate form
Hath only robb'd the meaner worm;
The only heart, the only eye
Had bled or wept to see him die,
Had seen those scatter'd limbs composed,
And mourn'd above his turban-stone,[40]
That heart hath burst—that eye was closed—
Yea—closed before his own!

XXVII.

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!
And woman's eye is wet—man's cheek is pale:
Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,
Thy destined lord is come too late;
He sees not—ne'er shall see thy face!
Can he not hear
The loud Wul-wulleh[41] warn his distant ear?
Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,
The Koran-chanters of the hymn of fate,
The silent slaves with folded arms that wait,
Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the gale,
Tell him thy tale!
Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!
That fearful moment when he left the cave
Thy heart grew chill:
He was thy hope—thy joy—thy love—thine all—
And that last thought on him thou could'st not save
Sufficed to kill;
Burst forth in one wild cry—and all was still.
Peace to thy broken heart; and virgin grave!
Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst!
That grief—though deep—though fatal—was thy first!
Thrice happy! ne'er to feel nor fear the force
Of absence, shame, pride, hate, revenge, remorse!
And, oh! that pang where more than madness lies!
The worm that will not sleep—and never dies;
Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,
That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light,
That winds around, and tears the quivering heart:
Ah! wherefore not consume it—and depart!
Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting chief!
Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy head,
Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs dost spread:
By that same hand Abdallah—Selim bled.
Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief:
Thy pride of heart; thy bride for Osman's bed;
She, whom thy sultan had but seen to wed,
Thy daughter's dead!
Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely beam,
The Star hath set that shone on Helle's stream.
What quench'd its ray?—the blood that thou hast shed!
Hark! to the hurried question of despair:
«Where is my child?» an echo answers—«Where?»[42]

XXVIII.

Within the place of thousand tombs
That shine beneath, while dark above

The sad but living cypress glooms
And withers not, though branch and leaf
Are stamp'd with an eternal grief,
Like early unrequited love,
One spot exists, which ever blooms,
Even in that deadly grove—
A single rose is shedding there
It's lonely lustre, meek and pale:
It looks as planted by despair—
So white—so faint—the slightest gale
Might whirl the leaves on high;
And yet, though storms and blight assail,
And hands more rude than wintry sky
May wring it from the stem—in vain—
To-morrow sees it bloom again!
The stalk some spirit gently rears,
And waters with celestial tears;
For well may maids of Helle deem
That this can be no earthly flower,
Which mocks the tempest's withering hour,
And buds unsheltered by a bower;
Nor droops, though spring refuse her shower,
Nor woos the summer beam:
To it the livelong night there sings
A bird unseen—but not remote:
Invisible his airy wings,
But soft as harp that Houri strings
His long entrancing note!
It were the bulbul; but his throat,
Though mournful, pours not such a strain:
For they who listen cannot leave
The spot, but linger there and grieve
As if they loved in vain!
And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
'Tis sorrow so unmix'd with dread,
They scarce can bear the morn to break
That melancholy spell,
And longer yet would weep and wake,
He sings so wild and well!
But when the day-blush bursts from high
Expires that magic melody.
And some have been who could believe
(So fondly youthful dreams deceive,
Yet harsh be they that blame)
That note so piercing and profound
Will shape and syllable its sound
Into Zuleika's name.[43]
'Tis from her cypress' summit heard,
That melts in air the liquid word:
'Tis from her lowly virgin earth
That white rose takes its tender birth.
There late was laid a marble stone;
Eve saw it placed—the morrow gone!
It was no mortal arm that bore
That deep-fix'd pillar to the shore;
For there, as Helle's legends tell,
Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell;
Lash'd by the tumbling tide, whose wave
Denied his bones a holier grave:
And there, by night, reclined, 'tis said,
Is seen a ghastly turban'd head:
And hence extended by the billow,
'Tis named the «Pirate-phantom's pillow!»
Where first it lay that mourning flower
Hath flourished; flourisheth this hour,
Alone and dewy, coldly pure and pale;
As weeping beauty's cheek at sorrow's tale!

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 146, line 8.

Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gul in her bloom.

«Gúl,» the rose,

Note 2. Page 146, line 17.

Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?

«Souls made of fire, and children of the sun,
«With whom revenge is virtue.»

YOUNG'S REVENGE.

Note 3. Page 147, line 31.

With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song.

Mejnoun and Leila, the Romeo and Juliet of the East. Sadi, the moral poet of Persia.

Note 4. Page 147, line 32.

Till I, who heard the deep tambour.

Tambour, Turkish drum, which sounds at sunrise, noon, and twilight.

Note 5. Page 147, line 103.

He is an Arab to my sight.

The Turks abhor the Arabs (who return the compliment a hundred fold) even more than they hate the Christians.

Note 6. Page 148, line 12.

The mind, the music breathing from her face.

This expression has met with objections. I will not refer to «him who hath not Music in his soul,» but merely request the reader to recollect, for ten seconds, the features of the woman whom he believes to be the most beautiful; and if he then does not comprehend fully what is feebly expressed in the above line, I shall be sorry for us both. For an eloquent passage in the latest work of the first female writer of this, perhaps, of any age, on the analogy (and the immediate comparison excited by that analogy) between «painting and music,» see vol. iii. cap. 10. DE L'ALLEMAGNE. And is not this connexion still stronger with the original than the copy? With the colouring of nature than of art? After all, this is rather to be felt than described; still I think there are some who will understand it, at least they would have done had they beheld the countenance whose speaking harmony suggested the idea; for this passage is not drawn from imagination but memory, that mirror which affliction dashes to the earth, and looking down upon the fragments, only beholds the reflection multiplied!

Note 7. Page 148, line 34.

But yet the line of Carasman.

Carasman Oglou, or Kara Osman Oglou, is the principal landholder in Turkey; he governs Magnesia: those who, by a kind of feudal tenure, possess land on condition of service, are called Timariots: they serve as Spahis, according to the extent of territory, and bring a certain number into the field, generally cavalry.

Note 8. Page 148, line 46.

And teach the messenger what fate.

When a Pacha is sufficiently strong to resist, the single messenger, who is always the first bearer of the order for his death, is strangled instead, and sometimes five or six, one after the other, on the same errand, by command of the refractory patient; if, on the contrary, he is weak or loyal, he bows, kisses the

Sultan's respectable signature, and is bowstrung with great complacency. In 1810, several of these presents were exhibited in the niche of the Seraglio gate; among others, the head of the Pacha of Bagdat, a brave young man, cut off by treachery, after a desperate resistance.

Note 9. Page 148, line 65.

Thrice clapp'd his hands, and call'd his steed.

Clapping of the hands calls the servants. The Turks hate a superfluous expenditure of voice, and they have no bells.

Note 10. Page 148, line 66.

Resign'd his gem-adorn'd Chibouque.

Chibouque, the Turkish pipe, of which the amber mouth-piece, and sometimes the ball which contains the leaf, is adorned with precious stones, if in possession of the wealthier orders.

Note 11. Page 148, line 68.

With Maugrabee and Mamaluke.

Maugrabee, Moorish mercenaries.

Note 12. Page 148, line 69.

His way amid his Delis took.

Deli, bravos who form the forlorn hope of the cavalry, and always begin the action.

Note 13. Page 148, line 81.

Careering cleave the folded felt.

A twisted fold of *felt* is used for scimitar practice by the Turks, and few but Mussulman arms can cut through it at a single stroke: sometimes a tough turban is used for the same purpose. The jerreed is a game of blunt javelins, animated and graceful.

Note 14. Page 148, line 84.

Nor heard their Ollahs wild and loud—

« Ollahs,» Alla il Allah, the « Leilies,» as the Spanish poets call them, the sound is Ollah; a cry of which the Turks, for a silent people, are somewhat profuse, particularly during the jerreed, or in the chase, but mostly in battle. Their animation in the field, and gravity in the chamber, with their pipes and comboloios, form an amusing contrast.

Note 15. Page 148, line 103.

The Persian Atar-gul's perfume.

« Atar-gul,» ottar of roses. The Persian is the finest.

Note 16. Page 148, line 105.

The pictured roof and marble floor.

The ceiling and wainscots, or rather walls, of the Mussulman apartments are generally painted, in great houses, with one eternal and highly coloured view of Constantinople, wherein the principal feature is a noble contempt of perspective; below, arms, scimitars, etc. are in general fancifully and not inelegantly disposed.

Note 17. Page 148, line 121.

A message from the Bulbul bears.

It has been much doubted whether the notes of this « Lover of the rose,» are sad or merry; and Mr Fox's remarks on the subject have provoked some learned controversy as to the opinions of the ancients on the subject. I dare not venture a conjecture on the point, though a little inclined to the « errare mallem,» etc. *if* Mr Fox *was* mistaken.

Note 18. Page 149, line 34.

Even Azrael, from his deadly quiver.

« Azrael »—the angel of death.

Note 19. Page 149, line 67.

Within the caves of Istakar.

The treasures of the Preadamite Sultans. See D'Herbelot, article *Istakar*.

Note 20. Page 149, line 83.

Holds not a Musselim's control.

Musselim, a governor, the next in rank after a Pacha; a Waywode is the third; and then come the Agas.

Note 21. Page 149, line 84.

Was he not bred in Egripo?

Egripo—the Negropont. According to the proverb, the Turks of Egripo, the Jews of Salonica, and the Greeks of Athens, are the worst of their respective races.

Note 22. Page 150, line 31.

Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar.

« Tchocadar»—one of the attendants who precedes a man of authority.

Note 23. Page 150, line 101.

Thine own « broad Hellespont » still dashes,

The wrangling about this epithet, « the broad Hellespont» or the « boundless Hellespont,» whether it means one or the other, or what it means at all, has been beyond all possibility of detail. I have even heard it disputed on the spot; and not foreseeing a speedy conclusion to the controversy, amused myself with swimming across it in the mean time, and probably may again, before the point is settled. Indeed, the question as to the truth of « the tale of Troy divine» still continues, much of it resting upon the talismanic word « απειρος: » probably Homer had the same notion of distance that a coquette has of time, and when he talks of boundless, means half a mile; as the latter, by a like figure, when she says *eternal* attachment, simply specifies three weeks.

Note 24. Page 150, line 112.

Which Ammon's son ran proudly round.

Before his Persian invasion, and crowned the altar with laurel, etc. He was afterwards imitated by Caracalla in his race. It is believed that the last also poisoned a friend, named Festus, for the sake of new Patroclan games. I have seen the sheep feeding on the tombs of Æsietes and Antilochus; the first is in the centre of the plain.

Note 25. Page 151, line 12.

O'er which her fairy fingers ran.

When rubbed, the amber is susceptible of a perfume, which is slight, but not disagreeable.

Note 26. Page 151, line 15.

Her mother's sainted amulet.

The belief in amulets engraved on gems, or enclosed in gold boxes, containing scraps from the Koran, worn round the neck, wrist, or arm, is still universal in the East. The Koorsee (throne) verse in the second cap. of the Koran describes the attributes of the Most High, and is engraved in this manner, and worn by the pious, as the most esteemed and sublime of all sentences.

Note 27. Page 151, line 18.

And by her Comboloio lies.

«Comboloio»—a Turkish rosary. The MSS., particularly those of the Persians, are richly adorned and illuminated. The Greek females are kept in utter ignorance; but many of the Turkish girls are highly accomplished, though not actually qualified for a Christian coterie; perhaps some of our own «*blues*» might not be the worse for *bleaching*.

Note 28. Page 151, line 96.

In him was some young Galiongée.

«Galiongée»—or Galiongi, a sailor, that is, a *Turkish* sailor; the Greeks navigate, the Turks work the guns. Their dress is picturesque; and I have seen the Captain Pacha more than once wearing it as a kind of *incog*. Their legs, however, are generally naked. The buskins described in the text as sheathed behind with silver, are those of an Arnaut robber, who was my host (he had quitted the profession), at his Pyrgo, near Gastouni in the Morea; they were plated in scales one over the other, like the back of an armadillo.

Note 29. Page 152, line 18.

So may the Koran verse display'd.

The characters on all Turkish scimitars contain sometimes the name of the place of their manufacture, but more generally a text from the Koran, in letters of gold. Amongst those in my possession is one with a blade of singular construction; it is very broad, and the edge notched into serpentine curves like the ripple of water, or the wavering of flame. I asked the Armenian who sold it, what possible use such a figure could add: he said, in Italian, that he did not know; but the Mussulmans had an idea that those of this form gave a severer wound; and liked it because it was «piu feroce.» I did not much admire the reason, but bought it for its peculiarity.

Note 30. Page 152, line 33.

But like the nephew of a Cain.

It is to be observed, that every allusion to any thing or personage in the Old Testament, such as the Ark, or Cain, is equally the privilege of Mussulman and Jew; indeed the former profess to be much better acquainted with the lives, true and fabulous, of the patriarchs, than is warranted by our own Sacred writ, and not content with Adam, they have a biography of Pre-Adamites. Solomon is the monarch of all necromancy, and Moses a prophet inferior only to Christ and Mahomet. Zuleika is the Persian name of Potiphar's wife, and her amour with Joseph constitutes one of the finest poems in their language. It is therefore no violation of costume to put the names of Cain, or Noah, into the mouth of a Moslem.

Note 31. Page 152, line 49.

And Paswan's rebel hordes attest.

Paswan Oglou, the rebel of Widin, who for the last years of his life set the whole power of the Porte at defiance.

Note 32. Page 152, line 61.

They gave their horsetails to the wind.

Horsetail, the standard of a Pacha.

Note 33. Page 152, line 74.

He drank one draught, nor needed more!

Giaffir, Pacha of Argyro Castro, or Scutari, I am not sure which, was actually taken off by the Albanian Ali, in the manner described in the text. Ali Pacha, while I was in the country, married the daughter of his victim, some years after the event had taken place at a bath in Sophia, or Adrianople. The poison was mixed in the cup of coffee, which is presented before the sherbet by the bath-keeper, after dressing.

Note 34. Page 153, line 64.

I sought by turns, and saw them all.

The Turkish notions of almost all islands are confined to the Archipelago, the sea alluded to.

Note 35. Page 153, line 87.

The last of Lambro's patriots there.

Lambro Canzani, a Greek, famous for his efforts in 1789-90 for the independence of his country: abandoned by the Russians, he became a pirate, and the Archipelago was the scene of his enterprises. He is said to be still alive at Petersburgh. He and Riga are the two most celebrated of the Greek revolutionists.

Note 36. Page 153, line 91.

To snatch the Rayahs from their fate.

«Rayahs,» all who pay the capitation tax, called the «Haratch.»

Note 37. Page 153, line 95.

Ay! let me like the ocean-patriarch roam.

This first of voyages is one of the few with which the Mussulmans profess much acquaintance.

Note 38. Page 153, line 96.

Or only know on land the Tartar's home.

The wandering life of the Arabs, Tartars, and Turkomans, will be found well detailed in any book of Eastern travels. That it possesses a charm peculiar to itself cannot be denied. A young French renegado confessed to Chateaubriand, that he never found himself alone, galloping in the desert, without a sensation approaching to rapture, which was indescribable.

Note 39. Page 153, line 116.

Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour.

«Jannat al Aden,» the perpetual abode, the Mussulman Paradise.

Note 40. Page 155, line 78.

And mourn'd above his turban-stone.

A turban is carved in stone above the graves of *men* only.

Note 41. Page 155, line 87.

The loud Wul-wulleh warn his distant ear.

The death-song of the Turkish women. The «silent slaves» are the men whose notions of decorum forbid complaint in *public*.

Note 42. Page 155, line 123.

«Where is my child?»—an echo answers—«Where?»

«I came to the place of my birth and cried, 'the friends of my youth, where are they?' and an Echo answered, 'where are they?'»

From an Arabic MS.

The above quotation (from which the idea in the text is taken) must be already familiar to every reader—it is given in the first annotation, page 67, of «The Pleasures of Memory;» a poem so well known as to render a reference almost superfluous; but to whose pages all will be delighted to recur.

Note 43. Page 156, line 47.

Into Zuleika's name.

«And airy tongues that *syllable* men's names.»
MILTON.

For a belief that the souls of the dead inhabit the form of birds, we need not travel to the East. Lord Lyttleton's ghost story; the belief of the Duchess of Kendal, that George I. flew into her window in the shape of a raven (see Orford's Reminiscences), and many other instances, bring this superstition nearer home. The most singular was the whim of a Worcester lady, who believing her daughter to exist in the shape of a singing bird, literally furnished her pew in the Cathedral with cages-full of the kind; and as she was rich, and a benefactress in beautifying the church, no objection was made to her harmless folly.—For this anecdote, see Orford's Letters.

The Corsair,

A TALE.

«——— I suoi pensieri in lui dormir non ponno.»
TASSO, *Canto decimo, Gerusalemme Liberata.*

TO

THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

MY DEAR MOORE,

I DEDICATE to you the last production with which I shall trespass on public patience, and your indulgence, for some years; and I own that I feel anxious to avail myself of this latest and only opportunity of adorning my pages with a name, consecrated by unshaken public principle, and the most undoubted and various talents. While Ireland ranks you among the firmest of her patriots; while you stand alone the first of her bards in her estimation, and Britain repeats and ratifies the decree, permit one, whose only regret, since our first acquaintance, has been the years he had lost before it commenced, to add the humble but sincere suffrage of friendship, to the voice of more than one nation. It will at least prove to you, that I have neither forgotten the gratification derived from your society, nor abandoned the prospect of its renewal, whenever your leisure or inclination allows you to atone to your friends for too long an absence. It is said among those friends, I trust truly, that you are engaged in the composition of a poem whose scene will be laid in the East; none can do those scenes so much justice. The wrongs of your own country, the magnificent and fiery spirit of her sons, the beauty and feeling of her daughters, may there be found; and Collins, when he denominated his Oriental his Irish Eclogues, was not aware how true, at least, was a part of his parallel. Your imagination will create a warmer sun, and less clouded sky; but wildness, tenderness, and originality are part of your national claim of oriental descent, to which you have already thus far proved your title more clearly than the most zealous of your country's antiquarians.

May I add a few words on a subject on which all men are supposed to be fluent, and none agreeable?—Self. I have written much, and published more than enough to demand a longer silence than I now meditate; but for some years to come it is my intention to tempt no further the award of «Gods, men, nor columns.» In the present composition I have attempted not the most difficult, but, perhaps, the best adapted measure to our language, the good old and now neglected heroic couplet. The stanza of Spenser is perhaps too slow and dignified for narrative; though I confess, it is the measure most after my own heart: Scott alone, of the present generation, has hitherto completely triumphed over the fatal facility of the octo-syllabic verse; and this is not the least victory of his fertile and mighty genius: in blank verse, Milton, Thomson, and our dramatists, are the beacons that shine along the deep, but warn us from the rough and barren rock on which they are kindled. The heroic couplet is not the most popular measure certainly; but as I did not deviate into the other from a wish to flatter what is called public opinion, I shall quit it without further apology, and take my chance once more with that versification, in which I have hitherto published nothing but compositions whose former circulation is part of my present and will be of my future regret.

With regard to my story, and stories in general, I should have been glad to have rendered my personages more perfect and amiable, if possible, inasmuch as I have been sometimes criticised, and considered no less responsible for their deeds and qualities than if all had been personal. Be it so—if I have deviated into the gloomy vanity of «drawing from self,» the pictures are probably like, since they are unfavourable; and if not, those who know me are undeceived, and those who do not, I have little interest in undeceiving. I have no particular desire that any but my acquaintance should think the author better than the beings of his imagining; but I cannot help a little surprise, and perhaps amusement, at some odd critical exceptions in the present instance, when I see several bards (far more deserving, I allow), in very reputable plight, and quite exempted from all participation in the faults of those heroes, who, nevertheless, might be found with little more morality than «The Giaour,» and perhaps—but no—I must admit Childe Harold to be a very repulsive personage; and as to his identity, those who like it must give him whatever «alias» they please.

If, however, it were worth while to remove the impression, it might be of some service to me, that the man who is alike the delight of his readers and his friends, the poet of all circles, and the idol of his own, permits me here and elsewhere to subscribe myself,

most truly, and affectionately,
his obedient servant,
BYRON.

January 2, 1814.

CANTO I.

"———nessun maggior dolore,
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria, ———"

DANTE.

I.

« O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
Our thoughts as boundless, and our souls as free,
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
Survey our empire and behold our home!
These are our realms, no limits to their sway—
Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.
Ours the wild life in tumult still to range
From toil to rest, and joy in every change.
Oh, who can tell? not thou, luxurious slave!
Whose soul would sicken o'er the heaving wave;
Not thou, vain lord of wantonness and ease!
Whom slumber soothes not—pleasure cannot please—
Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart hath tried,
And danced in triumph o'er the waters wide,
The exulting sense—the pulse's maddening play,
That thrills the wanderer of that trackless way?
That for itself can woo the approaching fight,
And turn what some deem danger to delight;
That seeks what cravens shun with more than zeal,
And where the feebler faint—can only feel—
Feel—to the rising bosom's inmost core,
Its hope awaken and its spirit soar?
No dread of death—if with us die our foes—
Save that it seems even duller than repose:
Come when it will—we snatch the life of life;
When lost—what recks it—by disease or strife?
Let him who crawls enamoured of decay,
Cling to his couch, and sicken years away;
Heave his thick breath; and shake his palsied head;
Ours—the fresh turf, and not the feverish bed.
While gasp by gasp he faulters forth his soul,
Ours with one pang—one bou[illegible]—escapes control.
His corse may boast its urn and [illegible]rrow cave,
And they who loathed his life m[illegible]gild his grave:
Ours are the tears, though few, sincerely shed,
When ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead.
For us, even banquets fond regret supply
In the red cup that crowns our memory;
And the brief epitaph in danger's day,
When those who win at length divide the prey,
And cry, remembrance saddening o'er each brow,
How had the brave who fell exulted *now!*»

II.

Such were the notes that from the Pirate's isle,
Around the kindling watch-fire rang the while;
Such were the sounds that thrilled the rocks along,
And unto ears as rugged seemed a song!
In scattered groups upon the golden sand,
They game—carouse—converse—or whet the brand;
Select the arms—to each his blade assign,
And careless eye the blood that dims its shine:
Repair the boat, replace the helm or oar,
While others straggling muse along the shore;
For the wild bird the busy springes set,
Or spread beneath the sun the dripping net;
Gaze where some distant sail a speck supplies,
With all the thirsting eye of enterprise;
Tell o'er the tales of many a night of toil,
And marvel where they next shall seize a spoil:
No matter where—their chief's allotment this,
Theirs, to believe no prey nor plan amiss.
But who that Chief? his name on every shore
Is famed and fear'd—they ask and know no more.
With these he mingles not but to command;
Few are his words, but keen his eye and hand.
Ne'er seasons he with mirth their jovial mess,
But they forgive his silence for success.
Ne'er for his lip the purpling cup they fill,
That goblet passes him untasted still—
And for his fare—the rudest of his crew
Would that, in turn, have pass'd untasted too;
Earth's coarsest bread, the garden's homeliest roots,
And scarce the summer luxury of fruits,
His short repast in humbleness supply
With all a hermit's board would scarce deny.
But while he shuns the grosser joys of sense,
His mind seems nourish'd by that abstinence.
« Steer to that shore!»—they sail. « Do this!»—'tis done:
« Now form and follow me!»—the spoil is won.
Thus prompt his accents and his actions still,
And all obey and few inquire his will;
To such, brief answer and contemptuous eye
Convey reproof, nor further deign reply.

III.

« A sail!—a sail!»—a promised prize to hope!
Her nation—flag—how speaks the telescope?
No prize, alas!—but yet a welcome sail:
The blood-red signal glitters in the gale.
Yes—she is ours—a home returning bark—
Blow fair, thou breeze!—she anchors ere the dark.
Already doubled is the cape—our bay
Receives that prow which proudly spurns the spray.
How gloriously her gallant course she goes!
Her white wings flying—never from her foes—
She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife.
Who would not brave the battle-fire—the wreck—
To move the monarch of her peopled deck?

IV.

Hoarse o'er her side the rustling cable rings;
The sails are furl'd; and anchoring round she swings:
And gathering loiterers on the land discern
Her boat descending from the latticed stern.
'Tis mann'd—the oars keep concert to the strand,
Till grates her keel upon the shallow sand.
Hail to the welcome shout!—the friendly speech!
When hand grasps hand uniting on the beach;
The smile, the question, and the quick reply,
And the heart's promise of festivity!

V.

The tidings spread, and gathering grows the crowd:
The hum of voices, and the laughter loud,
And woman's gentler anxious tone is heard—
Friends'—husbands'—lovers' names in each dear word:
« Oh! are they safe? we ask not of success—
But shall we see them? will their accents bless?
From where the battle roars—the billows chafe—
They doubtless boldly did—but who are safe?

Here let them haste to gladden and surprise,
And kiss the doubt from these delighted eyes!»—

VI.

Where is our chief? for him we bear report—
And doubt that joy—which hails our coming—short;
Yet thus sincere—'tis cheering, though so brief;
But, Juan! instant guide us to our chief:
Our greeting paid, we'll feast on our return,
And all shall hear what each may wish to learn.»
Ascending slowly by the rock-hewn way,
To where his watch-tower beetles o'er the bay,
By bushy brake, and wild flowers blossoming,
And freshness breathing from each silver spring,
Whose scatter'd streams from granite basins burst,
Leap into life, and sparkling woo your thirst;
From crag to cliff they mount—Near yonder cave,
What lonely straggler looks along the wave?
In pensive posture leaning on the brand,
Not oft a resting staff to that red hand.
«'Tis he—'tis Conrad—here—as wont—alone;
On—Juan! on—and make our purpose known.
The bark he views—and tell him we would greet
His ear with tidings he must quickly meet:
We dare not yet approach—thou know'st his mood,
When strange or uninvited steps intrude.»

VII.

Him Juan sought, and told of their intent—
He spake not—but a sign express'd assent.
These Juan calls—they come—to their salute
He bends him slightly, but his lips are mute.
«These letters, Chief, are from the Greek—the spy,
Who still proclaims our spoil or peril nigh:
Whate'er his tidings, we can well report,
Much that»—«Peace, peace!»—He cuts their prating short.
Wondering they turn, abash'd, while each to each
Conjecture whispers in his muttering speech:
They watch his glance with many a stealing look,
To gather how that eye the tidings took;
But, this as if he guess'd, with head aside,
Perchance from some emotion, doubt, or pride,
He read the scroll—«My tablets, Juan, hark—
Where is Gonsalvo?»
«In the anchor'd bark.»
«There let him stay—to him this order bear.
Back to your duty—for my course prepare:
Myself this enterprise to-night will share.»
«To-night, Lord Conrad?»
«Ay! at set of sun:
The breeze will freshen when the day is done.
My corslet—cloak—one hour—and we are gone.
Sling on thy bugle—see that, free from rust,
My carbine-lock springs worthy of my trust;
Be the edge sharpen'd of my boarding-brand,
And give its guard more room to fit my hand.
This let the Armourer with speed dispose;
Last time, it more fatigued my arm than foes:
Mark that the signal-gun be duly fired
To tell us when the hour of stay 's expired.»

VIII.

They make obeisance, and retire in haste,
Too soon to seek again the watery waste:
Yet they repine not—so that Conrad guides;
And who dare question aught that he decides?
That man of loneliness and mystery,
Scarce seen to smile, and seldom heard to sigh;
Whose name appals the fiercest of his crew,
And tints each swarthy cheek with sallower hue;
Still sways their souls with that commanding art
That dazzles, leads, yet chills the vulgar heart.
What is that spell, that thus his lawless train
Confess and envy, yet oppose in vain?
What should it be? that thus their faith can bind?
The power of Thought—the magic of the Mind!
Link'd with success, assumed and kept with skill,
That moulds another's weakness to its will;
Wields with their hands, but, still to these unknown,
Makes even their mightiest deeds appear his own.
Such hath it been—shall be—beneath the sun
The many still must labour for the one!
'Tis Nature's doom—but let the wretch who toils
Accuse not, hate not *him* who wears the spoils.
Oh! if he knew the weight of splendid chains,
How light the balance of his humbler pains!

IX.

Unlike the heroes of each ancient race,
Demons in act, but Gods at least in face,
In Conrad's form seems little to admire,
Though his dark eye-brow shades a glance of fire:
Robust, but not Herculean—to the sight
No giant frame sets forth his common height;
Yet, in the whole, who paused to look again,
Saw more than marks the crowd of vulgar men;
They gaze and marvel how—and still confess
That thus it is, but why they cannot guess.
Sun-burnt his cheek, his forehead high and pale
The sable curls in wild profusion veil;
And oft perforce his rising lip reveals
The haughtier thought it curbs, but scarce conceals.
Though smooth his voice, and calm his general mien,
Still seems there something he would not have seen:
His features' deepening lines and varying hue
At times attracted, yet perplex'd the view,
As if within that murkiness of mind
Work'd feelings fearful, and yet undefined;
Such might it be—that none could truly tell—
Too close inquiry his stern glance would quell.
There breathe but few whose aspect might defy
The full encounter of his searching eye;
He had the skill, when Cunning's gaze would seek
To probe his heart and watch his changing cheek,
At once the observer's purpose to espy,
And on himself roll back his scrutiny,
Lest he to Conrad rather should betray
Some secret thought than drag that chief's to day.
There was a laughing Devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled—and Mercy sigh'd farewell!

X.

Slight are the outward signs of evil thought,
Within—within—'twas there the spirit wrought!
Love shows all changes—Hate, ambition, guile,
Betray no further than the bitter smile;
The lip's least curl, the lightest paleness thrown
Along the govern'd aspect, speak alone
Of deeper passions; and to judge their mien,
He, who would see, must be himself unseen.

Then—with the hurried tread, the upward eye,
The clenched hand, the pause of agony,
That listens, starting, lest the step too near
Approach intrusive on that mood of fear:
Then—with each feature working from the heart,
With feelings loosed to strengthen—not depart:
That rise—convulse—contend—that freeze, or glow,
Flush in the cheek, or damp upon the brow;
Then—Stranger! if thou canst, and tremblest not,
Behold his soul—the rest that soothes his lot!
Mark—how that lone and blighted bosom sears
The scathing thought of execrated years!
Behold—but who hath seen, or e'er shall see,
Man as himself—the secret spirit free?

XI.

Yet was not Conrad thus by nature sent
To lead the guilty—guilt's worst instrument;—
His soul was changed, before his deeds had driven
Him forth to war with man and forfeit heaven.
Warp'd by the world in Disappointment's school,
In words too wise, in conduct *there* a fool;
Too firm to yield, and far too proud to stoop,
Doom'd by his very virtues for a dupe,
He cursed those virtues as the cause of ill,
And not the traitors who betray'd him still;
Nor deem'd that gifts bestow'd on better men
Had left him joy, and means to give again.
Fear'd—shunn'd—belied—ere youth had lost her force,
He hated man too much to feel remorse,
And thought the voice of wrath a sacred call,
To pay the injuries of some on all.
He knew himself a villain—but he deem'd
The rest no better than the thing he seem'd;
And scorn'd the best as hypocrites who hid
Those deeds the bolded spirit plainly did.
He knew himself detested, but he knew
The hearts that loathed him, crouch'd and dreaded too.
Lone, wild, and strange, he stood alike exempt
From all affection and from all contempt:
His name could sadden, and his acts surprise;
But they that fear'd him dared not to despise:
Man spurns the worm, but pauses ere he wake
The slumbering venom of the folded snake:
The first may turn—but not avenge the blow;
The last expires—but leaves no living foe;
Fast to the doom'd offender's form it clings,
And he may crush—not conquer—still it stings!

XII.

None are all evil—quickening round his heart,
One softer feeling would not yet depart;
Oft could he sneer at others as beguiled
By passions worthy of a fool or child;
Yet 'gainst that passion vainly still he strove,
And even in him it asks the name of love!
Yes, it was love—unchangeable—unchanged,
Felt but for one from whom he never ranged;
Though fairest captives daily met his eye,
He shunn'd, nor sought, but coldly pass'd them by;
Though many a beauty droop'd in prison'd bower,
None ever soothed his most unguarded hour.
Yes—it was love—if thoughts of tenderness,
Tried in temptation, strengthen'd by distress,
Unmoved by absence, firm in every clime,
And yet—Oh more than all!—untired by time;
Which nor defeated hope, nor baffled wile
Could render sullen were she near to smile,
Nor rage could fire, nor sickness fret to vent
On her one murmur of his discontent;
Which still would meet with joy, with calmness part,
Lest that his look of grief should reach her heart;
Which nought removed, nor menaced to remove—
If there be love in mortals—this was love!
He was a villain—ay—reproaches shower
On him—but not the passion, nor its power,
Which only proved, all other virtues gone,
Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one!

XIII.

He paused a moment—till his hastening men
Pass'd the first winding downward to the glen.
« Strange tidings!—many a peril have I past,
Nor know I why this next appears the last!
Yet so my heart forebodes, but must not fear,
Nor shall my followers find me falter here.
'T is rash to meet, but surer death to wait
Till here they hunt us to undoubted fate;
And, if my plan but hold, and fortune smile,
We'll furnish mourners for our funeral-pile.
Ay—let them slumber—peaceful be their dreams!
Morn ne'er awoke them with such brilliant beams
As kindle high to-night (but blow, thou breeze!)
To warm these slow avengers of the seas.
Now to Medora—Oh! my sinking heart,
Long may her own be lighter than thou art!
Yet was I brave—mean boast where all are brave!
Even insects sting for aught they seek to save.
This common courage which with brutes we share,
That owes its deadliest efforts to despair,
Small merit claims—but 't was my nobler hope
To teach my few with numbers still to cope;
Long have I led them—not to vainly bleed;
No medium now—we perish or succeed!
So let it be—it irks not me to die;
But thus to urge them whence they cannot fly.
My lot hath long had little of my care,
But chafes my pride thus baffled in the snare;
Is this my skill? my craft? to set at last
Hope, power, and life upon a single cast?
Oh, fate!—accuse thy folly, not thy fate—
She may redeem thee still—nor yet too late.»

XIV.

Thus with himself communion held he, till
He reach'd the summit of his tower-crown'd hill:
There at the portal paused—for wild and soft
He heard those accents never heard too oft;
Through the high lattice far yet sweet they rung,
And these the notes his bird of beauty sung:

1.

« Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells,
Lonely and lost to light for evermore,
Save when to thine my heart responsive swells,
Then trembles into silence as before.

2.

« There, in its centre, a sepulchral lamp
Burns the slow flame, eternal—but unseen;
Which not the darkness of despair can damp,
Though vain its ray as it had never been.

3.

« Remember me—Oh! pass not thou my grave
Without one thought whose relics there recline:
The only pang my bosom dare not brave,
Must be to find forgetfulness in thine.

4.

« My fondest—faintest—latest—accents hear:
Grief for the dead not virtue can reprove;
Then give me all I ever asked—a tear,
The first—last—sole reward of so much love!»

He pass'd the portal—cross'd the corridore,
And reach'd the chamber as the strain gave o'er:
« My own Medora! sure thy song is sad—»

« In Conrad's absence wouldst thou have it glad?
Without thine ear to listen to my lay,
Still must my song my thoughts, my soul betray:
Still must each accent to my bosom suit,
My heart unhush'd—although my lips were mute!
Oh! many a night on this lone couch reclined,
My dreaming fear with storms hath wing'd the wind,
And deem'd the breath that faintly fann'd thy sail
The murmuring prelude of the ruder gale;
Though soft, it seem'd the low prophetic dirge,
That mourn'd thee floating on the savage surge:
Still would I rise to rouse the beacon fire,
Lest spies less true should let the blaze expire;
And many a restless hour outwatch'd each star,
And morning came—and still thou wert afar.
Oh! how the chill blast on my bosom blew,
And day broke dreary on my troubled view,
And still I gazed and gazed—and not a prow
Was granted to my tears—my truth—my vow!
At length—'t was noon—I hail'd and blest the mast
That met my sight—it near'd—Alas! it past!
Another came—Oh God! 't was thine at last!
Would that those days were over! wilt thou ne'er,
My Conrad! learn the joys of peace to share?
Sure thou hast more than wealth; and many a home
As bright as this invites us not to roam:
Thou know'st it is not peril that I fear,
I only tremble when thou art not here;
Then not for mine, but that far dearer life,
Which flies from love and languishes for strife—
How strange that heart, to me so tender still,
Should war with nature and its better will!»

« Yea, strange indeed, that heart hath long been changed;
Worm-like 't was trampled—adder-like avenged,
Without one hope on earth beyond thy love,
And scarce a glimpse of mercy from above.
Yet the same feeling which thou dost condemn,
My very love to thee is hate to them,
So closely mingling here, that disentwined,
I cease to love thee when I love mankind.
Yet dread not this—the proof of all the past
Assures the future that my love will last;
But—Oh, Medora! nerve thy gentler heart,
This hour again—but not for long—we part.»

« This hour we part!—my heart foreboded this
Thus ever fade my fairy dreams of bliss.
This hour—it cannot be—this hour away!
Yon bark hath hardly anchored in the bay
Her consort still is absent, and her crew
Have need of rest before they toil anew;
My love! thou mock'st my weakness: and would'st steel
My breast before the time when it must feel;
But trifle now no more with my distress,
Such mirth hath less of play than bitterness.
Be silent, Conrad!—dearest! come and share
The feast these hands delighted to prepare;
Light toil! to cull and dress thy frugal fare!
See, I have pluck'd the fruit that promised best,
And where not sure, perplex'd, but pleased, I guess'd
At such as seem'd the fairest: thrice the hill
My steps have wound to try the coolest rill;
Yes! thy sherbet to-night will sweetly flow,
See how it sparkles in its vase of snow!
The grape's gay juice thy bosom never cheers;
Thou more than Moslem when the cup appears:
Think not I mean to chide—for I rejoice
What others deem a penance is thy choice.
But come, the board is spread: our silver lamp
Is trimm'd, and heeds not the Sirocco's damp:
Then shall my handmaids while the time along,
And join with me the dance, or wake the song;
Or my guitar, which still thou lovest to hear,
Shall soothe or lull—or, should it vex thine ear,
We 'll turn the tale, by Ariosto told,
Of fair Olympia loved and left of old.[4]
Why—thou wert worse than he who broke his vow
To that lost damsel, shouldst thou leave me now;
Or even that traitor chief—I 've seen thee smile,
When the clear sky show'd Ariadne's Isle,
Which I have pointed from these cliffs the while:
And thus, half sportive, half in fear, I said,
Lest Time should raise that doubt to more than dread,
Thus Conrad, too, will quit me for the main:
And he deceived me—for—he came again!»

« Again—again—and oft again—my love!
If there be life below, and hope above,
He will return—but now, the moments bring
The time of parting with redoubled wing:
The why—the where—what boots it now to tell?
Since all must end in that wild word—farewell!
Yet would I fain—did time allow—disclose—
Fear not—these are no formidable foes;
And here shall watch a more than wonted guard,
For sudden siege and long defence prepared:
Nor be thou lonely—though thy lord 's away,
Our matrons and thy handmaids with thee stay;
And this thy comfort—that, when next we meet,
Security shall make repose more sweet:
List!—'t is the bugle—Juan shrilly blew—
One kiss—one more—another—Oh! Adieu!»

She rose—she sprung—she clung to his embrace,
Till his heart heaved beneath her hidden face.
He dared not raise to his that deep-blue eye,
Which downcast droop'd in tearless agony.
Her long fair hair lay floating o'er his arms,
In all the wildness of dishevell'd charms;
Scarce beat that bosom where his image dwelt
So full—*that* feeling seem'd almost unfelt!
Hark—peals the thunder of the signal-gun!
It told 't was sunset—and he cursed that sun.
Again—again—that form he madly press'd;
Which mutely clasp'd, imploringly caress'd!

And tottering to the couch his bride he bore,
One moment gazed—as if to gaze no more;
Felt—that for him earth held but her alone,
Kiss'd her cold forehead—turn'd—is Conrad gone?

XV.

« And is he gone?»—on sudden solitude
How oft that fearful question will intrude!
« 'T was but an instant past—and here he stood!
And now»—without the portal's porch she rush'd,
And then at length her tears in freedom gush'd;
Big—bright—and fast, unknown to her they fell;
But still her lips refused to send—« Farewell!»
For in that word—that fatal word—howe'er
We promise—hope—believe—there breathes despair.
O'er every feature of that still, pale face,
Had sorrow fix'd what time can ne'er erase:
The tender blue of that large loving eye
Grew frozen with its gaze on vacancy,
Till—Oh, how far!—it caught a glimpse of him,
And then it flow'd—and phrensied seem'd to swim
Through those long, dark, and glistening lashes dewed
With drops of sadness oft to be renew'd.
« He's gone!»—against her heart that hand is driven,
Convulsed and quick—then gently raised to heaven;
She look'd and saw the heaving of the main;
The white sail set—she dared not look again;
But turn'd with sickening soul within the gate—
« It is no dream—and I am desolate!»

XVI.

From crag to crag descending—swiftly sped
Stern Conrad down, nor once he turn'd his head;
But shrunk whene'er the windings of his way
Forced on his eye what he would not survey,
His lone, but lovely dwelling on the steep,
That hail'd him first when homeward from the deep:
And she—the dim and melancholy star,
Whose ray of beauty reach'd him from afar,
On her he must not gaze, he must not think,
There he might rest—but on destruction's brink:
Yet once almost he stopp'd—and nearly gave
His fate to chance, his projects to the wave;
But no—it must not be—a worthy chief
May melt, but not betray to woman's grief.
He sees his bark, he notes how fair the wind,
And sternly gathers all his might of mind:
Again he hurries on—and as he hears
The clang of tumult vibrate on his ears,
The busy sounds, the bustle of the shore,
The shout, the signal, and the dashing oar;
As marks his eye the seaboy on the mast,
The anchor's rise, the sails unfurling fast,
The waving kerchiefs of the crowd that urge
That mute adieu to those who stem the surge;
And more than all, his blood-red flag aloft,
He marvell'd how his heart could seem so soft.
Fire in his glance, and wildness in his breast,
He feels of all his former self possest;
He bounds,—he flies—until his footsteps reach
The verge where ends the cliff, begins the beach,
There checks his speed; but pauses less to breathe
The breezy freshness of the deep beneath,
Than there his wonted statelier step renew;
Nor rush disturbed by haste, to vulgar view:
For well had Conrad learn'd to curb the crowd,
By arts that veil, and oft preserve the proud;
His was the lofty port, the distant mien,
That seems to shun the sight—and awes if seen:
The solemn aspect, and the high-born eye,
That checks low mirth, but lacks not courtesy;
All these he wielded to command assent:
But where he wish'd to win, so well unbent,
That kindness cancell'd fear in those who heard,
And others' gifts show'd mean beside his word,
When echoed to the heart as from his own
His deep yet tender melody of tone:
But such was foreign to his wonted mood,
He cared not what he soften'd, but subdued;
The evil passions of his youth had made
Him value less who loved—than what obey'd.

XVII.

Around him mustering ranged his ready guard.
Before him Juan stands—« Are all prepared?»

« They are—nay more—embark'd: the latest boat
Waits but my chief——»

« My sword, and my capote.»

Soon firmly girded on, and lightly slung,
His belt and cloak were o'er his shoulders flung;
« Call Pedro here!» He comes—and Conrad bends,
With all the courtesy he deign'd his friends;
« Receive these tablets, and peruse with care,
Words of high trust and truth are graven there;
Double the guard, and when Anselmo's bark
Arrives, let him alike these orders mark:
In three days (serve the breeze) the sun shall shine
On our return—till then all peace be thine!»
This said, his brother Pirate's hand he wrung,
Then to his boat with haughty gesture sprung.
Flash'd the dipt oars, and sparkling with the stroke
Around the waves phosphoric[2] brightness broke;
They gain the vessel—on the deck he stands;
Shrieks the shrill whistle—ply the busy hands—
He marks how well the ship her helm obeys,
How gallant all her crew—and deigns to praise.
His eyes of pride to young Gonsalvo turn—
Why doth he start, and inly seem to mourn?
Alas! those eyes beheld his rocky tower,
And live a moment o'er the parting hour;
She—his Medora—did she mark the prow?
Ah! never loved he half so much as now!
But much must yet be done ere dawn of day—
Again he mans himself and turns away;
Down to the cabin with Gonsalvo bends,
And there unfolds his plan—his means—and ends;
Before them burns the lamp, and spreads the chart,
And all that speaks and aids the naval art;
They to the midnight watch protract debate;
To anxious eyes what hour is ever late?
Mean time, the steady breeze serenely blew,
And fast and Falcon-like the vessel flew;
Pass'd the high headlands of each clustering isle,
To gain their port—long—long ere morning smile:
And soon the night-glass through the narrow bay
Discovers where the Pacha's galleys lay.
Count they each sail—and mark how there supine
The lights in vain o'er heedless Moslem shine.
Secure, unnoted, Conrad's prow pass'd by,
And anchor'd where his ambush meant to lie;

Screen'd from espial by the jutting cape,
That rears on high its rude fantastic shape.
Then rose his band to duty—not from sleep—
Equipp'd for deeds alike on land or deep;
While lean'd their leader o'er the fretting flood,
And calmly talk'd—and yet he talk'd of blood!

CANTO II.

"Conoscente i dubiosi desiri?
DANTE.

I.

In Coron's bay floats many a galley light,
Through Coron's lattices the lamps are bright,
For Seyd, the Pacha, makes a feast to-night:
A feast for promised triumph yet to come,
When he shall drag the fetter'd Rovers home;
This hath he sworn by Alla and his sword,
And faithful to his firman and his word,
His summon'd prows collect along the coast,
And great the gathering crews, and loud the boast;
Already shared the captives and the prize,
Though far the distant foe they thus despise;
'Tis but to sail—no doubt to-morrow's Sun
Will see the Pirates bound—their haven won!
Mean time the watch may slumber, if they will,
Nor only wake to war, but dreaming kill,
Though all, who can, disperse on shore and seek
To flesh their glowing valour on the Greek;
How well such deed becomes the turban'd brave—
To bare the sabre's edge before a slave!
Infest his dwelling—but forbear to slay—
Their arms are strong, yet merciful to-day,
And do not deign to smite because they may!
Unless some gay caprice suggests the blow,
To keep in practice for the coming foe.
Revel and rout the evening hours beguile,
And they who wish to wear a head must smile;
For Moslem mouths produce their choicest cheer,
And hoard their curses, till the coast is clear.

II.

High in his hall reclines the turban'd Seyd;
Around—the bearded chiefs he came to lead.
Removed the banquet, and the last pilaff—
Forbidden draughts, 'tis said, he dared to quaff,
Though to the rest the sober berry's juice,[3]
The slaves bear round for rigid Moslem's use;
The long Chibouque's[4] dissolving cloud supply,
While dance the Almas[5] to wild minstrelsy.
The rising morn will view the chiefs embark;
But waves are somewhat treacherous in the dark:
And revellers may more securely sleep
On silken couch than o'er the rugged deep;
Feast there who can—nor combat till they must,
And less to conquest than to Korans trust;
And yet the numbers crowded in his host
Might warrant more than even the Pacha's boast.

III.

With cautious reverence from the outer gate,
Slow stalks the slave, whose office there to wait,
Bows his bent head—his hand salutes the floor,
Ere yet his tongue the trusted tidings bore:
"A captive dervise, from the pirate's nest
Escaped, is here—himself would tell the rest."
He took the sign from Seyd's assenting eye,
And led the holy man in silence nigh.
His arms were folded on his dark green vest,
His step was feeble, and his look deprest;
Yet worn he seem'd of hardship more than years,
And pale his cheek with penance, not from fears.
Vow'd to his God—his sable locks he wore,
And these his lofty cap rose proudly o'er:
Around his form his loose long robe was thrown,
And wrapt a breast bestow'd on heaven alone;
Submissive, yet with self-possession mann'd,
He calmly met the curious eyes that scann'd;
And question of his coming fain would seek,
Before the Pacha's will allow'd to speak.

IV.

"Whence com'st thou, dervise?"
"From the outlaw's den,
A fugitive—"
"Thy capture where and when?"
From Scalanovo's port to Scio's isle,
The Saick was bound; but Alla did not smile
Upon our course—the Moslem merchant's gains
The Rovers won: our limbs have worn their chains.
I had no death to fear, nor wealth to boast,
Beyond the wandering freedom which I lost;
At length a fisher's humble boat by night
Afforded hope, and offer'd chance of flight:
I seized the hour, and find my safety here—
With thee—most mighty Pacha! who can fear?"

"How speed the outlaws? stand they well prepared,
Their plunder'd wealth, and robber's rock, to guard?
Dream they of this our preparation, doom'd
To view with fire their scorpion nest consumed?"

"Pacha! the fetter'd captive's mourning eye
That weeps for flight, but ill can play the spy;
I only heard the reckless waters roar,
Those waves that would not bear me from the shore;
I only mark'd the glorious sun and sky,
Too bright—too blue—for my captivity;
And felt—that all which Freedom's bosom cheers,
Must break my chain before it dried my tears.
This may'st thou judge, at least, from my escape,
They little deem of aught in peril's shape;
Else vainly had I pray'd or sought the chance
That leads me here—if eyed with vigilance:
The careless guard that did not see me fly,
May watch as idly when thy power is nigh:
Pacha!—my limbs are faint—and nature craves
Food for my hunger, rest from tossing waves;
Permit my absence—peace be with thee! Peace
With all around!—now grant repose—release."

"Stay, dervise! I have more to question—stay,
I do command thee—sit—dost hear?—obey!
More I must ask, and food the slaves shall bring;
Thou shalt not pine where all are banqueting:
The supper done—prepare thee to reply,
Clearly and full—I love not mystery."

'Twere vain to guess what shook the pious man,
Who look'd not lovingly on that Divan;

Nor show'd high relish for the banquet prest,
And less respect for every fellow guest.
'Twas but a moment's peevish hectic past
Along his cheek, and tranquillized as fast:
He sate him down in silence, and his look
Resumed the calmness which before forsook:
The feast was usher'd in—but sumptuous fare
He shunn'd as if some poison mingled there.
For one so long condemn'd to toil and fast,
Methinks he strangely spares the rich repast.
«What ails thee, Dervise? eat—dost thou suppose
This feast a Christian's? or my friends thy foes?
Why dost thou shun the salt? that sacred pledge,
Which once partaken, blunts the sabre's edge,
Makes even contending tribes in peace unite,
And hated hosts seem brethren to the sight!»

«Salt seasons dainties—and my food is still
The humblest root, my drink the simplest rill;
And my stern vow and order's[6] laws oppose
To break or mingle bread with friends or foes;
It may seem strange—if there be aught to dread,
That peril rests upon my single head;
But for thy sway—nay more—thy Sultan's throne,
I taste nor bread, nor banquet—save alone;
Infringed our order's rule, the Prophet's rage
To Mecca's dome might bar my pilgrimage.»

«Well—as thou wilt—ascetic as thou art—
One question answer; then in peace depart.
How many?—Ha! it cannot sure be day?
What star—what sun is bursting on the bay?
It shines a lake of fire!—away!—away!
Ho! treachery! my guards! my scimitar!
The galleys feed the flames—and I afar!
Accursed Dervise!—these thy tidings—thou
Some villain spy—seize—cleave him—slay him now!»

Up rose the Dervise with that burst of light,
Nor less his change of form appall'd the sight:
Up rose that Dervise—not in saintly garb,
But like a warrior bounding on his barb,
Dash'd his high cap, and tore his robe away—
Shone his mail'd breast, and flash'd his sabre's ray!
His close but glittering casque, and sable plume,
More glittering eye, and black brow's sabler gloom,
Glared on the Moslems' eyes some Afrit sprite,
Whose demon death-blow left no hope for fight.
The wild confusion, and the swarthy glow
Of flames on high, and torches from below;
The shriek of terror, and the mingling yell—
For swords began to clash, and shouts to swell,
Flung o'er that spot of earth the air of hell!
Distracted, to and fro, the flying slaves
Behold but bloody shore and fiery waves;
Nought heeded they the Pacha's angry cry,
They seize that Dervise! seize on Zatanai![7]
He saw their terror—check'd the first despair
That urged him but to stand and perish there,
Since far too early and too well obey'd,
The flame was kindled ere the signal made;
He saw their terror—from his baldric drew
His bugle—brief the blast—but shrilly blew;
'Tis answer'd—«Well ye speed, my gallant crew!
Why did I doubt their quickness of career?
And deem design had left me single here?»
Sweeps his long arm—that sabre's whirling sway,
Sheds fast atonement for its first delay;
Completes his fury, what their fear begun,
And makes the many basely quail to one.
The cloven turbans o'er the chamber spread,
And scarce an arm dare rise to guard its head:
Even Seyd, convulsed, o'erwhelm'd with rage, surprise,
Retreats before him, though he still defies.
No craven he—and yet he dreads the blow,
So much Confusion magnifies his foe!
His blazing galleys still distract his sight,
He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight;[8]
For now the pirates pass'd the Haram gate,
And burst within—and it were death to wait;
Where wild amazement shrieking—kneeling—throws
The sword aside—in vain—the blood o'erflows!
The Corsairs pouring, haste to where within
Invited Conrad's bugle, and the din
Of groaning victims, and wild cries for life,
Proclaim'd how well he did the work of strife.
They shout to find him grim and lonely there,
A glutted tyger mangling in his lair!
But short their greeting—shorter his reply—
«'Tis well—but Seyd escapes—and he must die.
Much hath been done—but more remains to do—
Their galleys blaze—why not their city too?»

V.

Quick at the word—they seized him each a torch,
And fire the dome from minaret to porch.
A stern delight was fix'd in Conrad's eye,
But sudden sunk—for on his ear the cry
Of women struck, and like a deadly knell
Knock'd at that heart unmoved by battle's yell.
«Oh! burst the Haram—wrong not on your lives
One female form—remember—we have wives.
On them such outrage vengeance will repay;
Man is our foe, and such 'tis ours to slay:
But still we spared—must spare the weaker prey.
Oh! I forgot—but Heaven will not forgive
If at my word the helpless cease to live;
Follow who will—I go—we yet have time
Our souls to lighten of at least a crime.»
He climbs the crackling stair—he bursts the door,
Nor feels his feet glow scorching with the floor;
His breath choked gasping with the volumed smoke
But still from room to room his way he broke.
They search—they find—they save: with lusty arms
Each bears a prize of unregarded charms:
Calm their loud fears; sustain their sinking frames
With all the care defenceless beauty claims:
So well could Conrad tame their fiercest mood,
And check the very hands with gore imbrued.
But who is she? whom Conrad's arms convey
From reeking pile and combat's wreck—away—
Who but the love of him he dooms to bleed!
The Haram queen—but still the slave of Seyd!

VI.

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare,[9]
Few words to reassure the trembling fair;
For in that pause compassion snatch'd from war,
The foe before retiring fast and far,
With wonder saw their footsteps unpursued,
First slowlier fled—then rallied—then withstood.

This Seyd perceives, then first perceives how few,
Compared with his, the Corsair's roving crew,
And blushes o'er his error, as he eyes
The ruin wrought by panic and surprise.
Alla il Alla! Vengeance swells the cry—
Shame mounts to rage that must atone or die!
And flame for flame and blood for blood must tell,
The tide of triumph ebbs that flow'd too well—
When wrath returns to renovated strife,
And those who fought for conquest strike for life.
Conrad beheld the danger—he beheld
His followers faint by freshening foes repell'd:
«One effort—one—to break the circling host!»
They form—unite—charge—waver—all is lost!
Within a narrower ring compress'd, beset,
Hopeless not heartless, strive and struggle yet—
Ah! now they fight in firmest file no more
Hemm'd in—cut off—cleft down—and trampled o'er;
But each strikes singly, silently, and home,
And sinks outwearied rather than o'ercome,
His last faint quittance rendering with his breath,
Till the blade glimmers in the grasp of death!

VII.

But first ere came the rallying host to blows,
And rank to rank and hand to hand oppose,
Gulnare and all her Haram handmaids freed,
Safe in the dome of one who held their creed,
By Conrad's mandate safely were bestow'd,
And dried those tears for life and fame that flow'd:
And when that dark-eyed lady, young Gulnare,
Recall'd those thoughts late wandering in despair,
Much did she marvel o'er the courtesy
That smoothed his accents; soften'd in his eye:
'Twas strange—*that* robber thus with gore bedew'd,
Seem'd gentler then than Seyd in fondest mood.
The Pacha woo'd as if he deem'd the slave
Must seem delighted with the heart he gave;
The Corsair vow'd protection, soothed affright,
As if his homage were a woman's right.
«The wish is wrong—nay worse for female, vain:
Yet much I long to view that chief again;
If but to thank for, what my fear forgot,
The life—my loving lord remember'd not!»

VIII.

And him she saw, where thickest carnage spread,
But gather'd breathing from the happier dead;
Far from his band, and battling with a host
That deem right dearly won the field he lost,
Fell'd—bleeding—baffled of the death he sought,
And snatch'd to expiate all the ills he wrought;
Preserved to linger and to live in vain,
While Vengeance ponder'd o'er new plans of pain,
And staunch'd the blood she saves to shed again—
But drop by drop, for Seyd's unglutted eye
Would doom him ever dying—ne'er to die!
Can this be he? triumphant late she saw,
When his red hand's wild gesture waved, a law!
'Tis he indeed—disarm'd but undeprest,
His sole regret the life he still possest;
His wounds too slight, though taken with that will,
Which would have kiss'd the hand that then could kill.
Oh! were there none, of all the many given,
To send his soul—he scarcely ask'd to heaven?
Must he alone of all retain his breath,
Who more than all had striven and struck for death?
He deeply felt—what mortal hearts must feel,
When thus reversed on faithless fortune's wheel,
For crimes committed, and the victor's threat
Of lingering tortures to repay the debt—
He deeply, darkly felt; but evil pride
That led to perpetrate—now serves to hide.
Still in his stern and self-collected mien
A conqueror's more than captive's air is seen;
Though faint with wasting toil and stiffening wound,
But few that saw—so calmly gazed around:
Though the far shouting of the distant crowd,
Their tremors o'er, rose insolently loud,
The better warriors who beheld him near,
Insulted not the foe who taught them fear;
And the grim guards that to his durance led,
In silence eyed him with a secret dread.

IX.

The Leech was sent—but not in mercy—there
To note how much the life yet left could bear;
He found enough to load with heaviest chain,
And promise feeling for the wrench of pain:
To-morrow—yea—to-morrow's evening sun
Will sinking see impalement's pangs begun.
And rising with the wonted blush of morn
Behold how well or ill those pangs are borne.
Of torments this the longest and the worst,
Which adds all other agony to thirst,
That day by day death still forbears to slake,
While famish'd vultures flit around the stake.
«Oh! water—water!»—smiling hate denies
The victim's prayer—for if he drinks—he dies.
This was his doom:—the Leech, the guard were gone,
And left proud Conrad fetter'd and alone.

X.

'T were vain to paint to what his feelings grew—
It even were doubtful if their victim knew.
There is a war, a chaos of the mind,
When all its elements convulsed—combined—
Lie dark and jarring with perturbed force,
And gnashing with impenitent remorse;
That juggling fiend—who never spake before—
But cries, «I warn'd thee!» when the deed is o'er.
Vain voice! the spirit burning but unbent,
May writhe—rebel—the weak alone repent!
Even in that lonely hour when most it feels,
And, to itself, all—all that self reveals,
No single passion, and no ruling thought
That leaves the rest as once unseen, unsought;
But the wild prospect when the soul reviews—
All rushing through their thousand avenues,
Ambition's dreams expiring, love's regret,
Endanger'd glory, life itself beset;
The joy untasted, the contempt or hate
'Gainst those who fain would triumph in our fate;
The hopeless past, the hasting future driven
Too quickly on to guess if hell or heaven;
Deeds, thoughts, and words, perhaps remember'd not
So keenly till that hour, but ne'er forgot;
Things light or lovely in their acted time,
But now to stern reflection each a crime;

The withering sense of evil unreveal'd,
Not cankering less because the more conceal'd—
All, in a word, from which all eyes must start,
That opening sepulchre—the naked heart
Bares with its buried woes, till pride awake,
To snatch the mirror from the soul—and break.
Ay—pride can veil, and courage brave it all,
All—all—before—beyond—the deadliest fall.
Each hath some fear, and he who least betrays,
The only hypocrite deserving praise:
Not the loud recreant wretch who boasts and flies;
But he who looks on death—and silent dies.
So steel'd by pondering o'er his far career,
He halfway meets him should he menace near!

XI.

In the high chamber of his highest tower,
Sate Conrad, fetter'd in the Pacha's power.
His palace perish'd in the flame—this fort
Contain'd at once his captive and his court.
Not much could Conrad of his sentence blame,
His foe, if vanquish'd, had but shared the same:—
Alone he sate—in solitude had scann'd
His guilty bosom, but that breast he mann'd:
One thought alone he could not—dared not meet.
«Oh, how these tidings will Medora greet?»
Then—only then—his clanking hands he raised,
And strain'd with rage the chain on which he gazed;
But soon he found—or feign'd—or dream'd relief,
And smiled in self-derision of his grief,
«And now come torture when it will—or may,
More need of rest to nerve me for the day?»
This said, with langour to his mat he crept,
And, whatsoe'er his visions, quickly slept.

'T was hardly midnight when that fray begun,
For Conrad's plans matured, at once were done;
And Havoc loathes so much the waste of time,
She scarce had left an uncommitted crime.
One hour beheld him since the tide he stemm'd—
Disguised, discovered, conquering, ta'en, condemn'd—
A chief on land—an outlaw on the deep—
Destroying—saving—prison'd—and asleep!

XII.

He slept in calmest seeming—for his breath
Was hush'd so deep—Ah! happy if in death!
He slept—Who o'er his placid slumber bends?
His foes are gone—and here he hath no friends;
Is it some seraph sent to grant him grace?
No, 't is an earthly form with heavenly face!
Its white arm raised a lamp—yet gently hid,
Lest the ray flash abruptly on the lid
Of that closed eye, which opens but to pain,
And once unclosed—but once may close again.
That form, with eye so dark, and cheek so fair,
And auburn waves of gemm'd and braided hair;
With shape of fairy lightness—naked foot,
That shines like snow, and falls on earth as mute—
Through guards and dunnest night how came it there?
Ah! rather ask what will not woman dare?
Whom youth and pity lead like thee, Gulnare!
She could not sleep—and while the Pacha's rest
In muttering dreams yet saw his pirate-guest,
She left his side—his signet ring she bore,
Which oft in sport adorn'd her hand before—
And with it, scarcely question'd, won her way
Through drowsy guards that must that sign obey.
Worn out with toil, and tired with changing blows,
Their eyes had envied Conrad his repose;
And chill and nodding at the turret door,
They stretch their listless limbs, and watch no more;
Just raised their heads to hail the signet-ring,
Nor ask or what or who the sign may bring.

XIII.

She gazed in wonder, «Can he calmly sleep,
While other eyes his fall or ravage weep?
And mine in restlessness are wandering here—
What sudden spell hath made this man so dear?
True—'t is to him my life, and more I owe,
And me and mine he spared from worse than woe:
'T is late to think—but soft—his slumber breaks—
How heavily he sighs!—he starts—awakes!»
He raised his head—and dazzled with the light,
His eye seem'd dubious if it saw aright:
He moved his hand—the grating of his chain
Too harshly told him that he lived again.
«What is that form? if not a shape of air,
Methinks my jailor's face shows wondrous fair!»

«Pirate! thou know'st me not—but I am one
Grateful for deeds thou hast too rarely done;
Look on me—and remember her, thy hand
Snatch'd from the flames, and thy more fearful band.
I come through darkness—and I scarce know why—
Yet not to hurt—I would not see thee die.»

«If so, kind lady! thine the only eye
That would not here in that gay hope delight:
Theirs is the chance—and let them use their right.
But still I thank their courtesy or thine,
That would confess me at so fair a shrine?»

Strange though it seem—yet with extremest grief
Is link'd a mirth—it doth not bring relief—
That playfulness of sorrow ne'er beguiles,
And smiles in bitterness—but still it smiles;
And sometimes with the wisest and the best,
Till even the scaffold[10] echoes with their jest!
Yet not the joy to which it seems akin—
It may deceive all hearts, save that within.
Whate'er it was that flash'd on Conrad, now
A laughing wildness half unbent his brow:
And these his accents had a sound of mirth,
As if the last he could enjoy on earth;
Yet 'gainst his nature—for through that short life,
Few thoughts had he to spare from gloom and strife.

XIV.

«Corsair! thy doom is named—but I have power
To soothe the Pacha in his weaker hour.
Thee would I spare—nay more—would save thee now,
But this—time—hope—nor even thy strength allow;
But all I can, I will: at least, delay
The sentence that remits thee scarce a day.
More now were ruin—even thyself were loth
The vain attempt should bring but doom to both.»

«Yes!—loth indeed:—my soul is nerved to all,
Or fall'n too low to fear a further fall:
Tempt not thyself with peril; me with hope,
Of flight from foes with whom I could not cope:

Unfit to vanquish—shall I meanly fly,
The one of all my band that would not die?
Yet there is one—to whom my memory clings,
Till to these eyes her own wild softness springs.
My sole resources in the path I trod
Were these—my bark—my sword—my love—my God!
The last I left in youth—he leaves me now—
And man but works his will to lay me low.
I have no thought to mock his throne with prayer
Wrung from the coward crouching of despair;
It is enough—I breathe—and I can bear.
My sword is shaken from the worthless hand
That might have better kept so true a brand;
My bark is sunk or captive—but my love—
For her in sooth my voice would mount above:
Oh! she is all that still to earth can bind—
And this will break a heart so more than kind,
And blight a form—till thine appeared, Gulnare!
Mine eye ne'er ask'd if others were as fair?»

«Thou lovest another then?—but what to me
Is this—'t is nothing—nothing e'er can be:
But yet—thou lovest—and—Oh! I envy those
Whose hearts on hearts as faithful can repose,
Who never feel the void—the wandering thought
That sighs o'er visions—such as mine hath wrought.»

«Lady—methought thy love was his, for whom
This arm redeem'd thee from a fiery tomb.»

«My love stern Seyd's! Oh—No—No—not my love—
Yet much this heart, that strives no more, once strove
To meet his passion—but it would not be.
I felt—I feel—love dwells with—with the free.
I am a slave, a favour'd slave at best,
To share his splendour, and seem very blest!
Oft must my soul the question undergo,
Of—'Dost thou love?' and burn to answer 'No!'
Oh! hard it is that fondness to sustain,
And struggle not to feel averse in vain;
But harder still the heart's recoil to bear,
And hide from one—perhaps another there.
He takes the hand I give not—nor withhold—
Its pulse nor check'd—nor quicken'd—calmly cold:
And when resign'd, it drops a lifeless weight
From one I never loved enough to hate.
No warmth these lips return by his imprest,
And chill'd remembrance shudders o'er the rest.
Yes—had I ever proved that passion's zeal,
The change to hatred were at least to feel:
But still—he goes unmourn'd—returns unsought—
And oft when present—absent from my thought.
Or when reflection comes, and come it must—
I fear that henceforth 't will but bring disgust;
I am his slave—but, in despite of pride,
'T were worse than bondage to become his bride.
Oh! that this dotage of his breast would cease!
Or seek another and give mine release.
But yesterday—I could have said, to peace!
Yes—if unwonted fondness now I feign,
Remember—captive! 't is to break thy chain;
Repay the life that to thy hand I owe;
To give thee back to all endear'd below,
Who share such love as I can never know.
Farewell—morn breaks—and I must now away:
'T will cost me dear—but dread no death to-day!»

XV.

She press'd his fetter'd fingers to her heart,
And bow'd her head, and turn'd her to depart,
And noiseless as a lovely dream is gone.
And was she here? and is he now alone?
What gem hath dropp'd and sparkles o'er his chain?
The tear most sacred, shed for other's pain,
That starts at once—bright—pure—from pity's mine,
Already polish'd by the hand divine!

Oh! too convincing—dangerously dear—
In woman's eye the unanswerable tear!
That weapon of her weakness she can wield,
To save, subdue—at once her spear and shield:
Avoid it—virtue ebbs and wisdom errs,
Too fondly gazing on that grief of hers!
What lost a world, and bade a hero fly?
The timid tear in Cleopatra's eye.
Yet be the soft triumvir's fault forgiven,
By this—how many lose not earth—but heaven!
Consign their souls to man's eternal foe,
And seal their own to spare some wanton's woe!

XVI.

'T is morn—and o'er his alter'd features play
The beams—without the hope of yesterday.
What shall he be ere night? perchance a thing
O'er which the raven flaps her funeral wing:
By his closed eye unheeded and unfelt,
While sets that sun, and dews of evening melt,
Chill—wet—and misty round each stiffen'd limb,
Refreshing earth—reviving all but him!—

CANTO III.

«Come vedi—ancor non m' abbandona.»
DANTE.

I.

SLOW sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea's hills, the setting sun;
Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light!
O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows.
On old Ægina's rock, and Idra's isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
O'er his own regions lingering, loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulf, unconquer'd Salamis!
Their azure arches through the long expanse
More deeply purpled meet his mellowing glance,
And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,
Mark his gay course and own the hues of heaven;
Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve, his palest beam he cast,
When—Athens! here thy wisest look'd his last.
How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd sage's latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill—
The precious hour of parting lingers still;

But sad his light to agonising eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes:
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
The land, where Phœbus never frown'd before,
But ere he sunk below Citharon's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled;
The soul of him who scorn'd to fear or fly—
Who lived and died, as none can live or die!

But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of night asserts her silent reign.[12]
No murky vapour, herald of the storm,
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form;
With cornice glimmering as the moon-beams play,
There the white column greets her grateful ray,
And, bright around with quivering beams beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret:
The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide
Where meek Cephisus pours his scanty tide,
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk,[13]
And, dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,
All tinged with varied hues arrest the eye—
And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war;
Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
Mixt with the shades of many a distant isle,
That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.[14]

II.

Not now my theme—why turn my thoughts to thee?
Oh! who can look along thy native sea,
Nor dwell upon thy name, whate'er the tale,
So much its magic must o'er all prevail?
Who that beheld that Sun upon thee set,
Fair Athens! could thine evening face forget?
Not he—whose heart nor time nor distance frees,
Spell-bound within the clustering Cyclades!
Nor seems this homage foreign to his strain,
His Corsair's isle was once thine own domain—
Would that with freedom it were thine again!

III.

The sun hath sunk—and, darker than the night,
Sinks with its beam upon the beacon height
Medora's heart—the third day's come and gone—
With it he comes not—sends not—faithless one!
The wind was fair though light; and storms were none.
Last eve Anselmo's bark return'd, and yet
His only tidings that they had not met!
Though wild, as now, far different were the tale
Had Conrad waited for that single sail.

The night-breeze freshens—she that day had past
In watching all that hope proclaim'd a mast;
Sadly she sate—on high—Impatience bore
At last her footsteps to the midnight shore,
And there she wander'd heedless of the spray
That dash'd her garments oft, and warn'd away:
She saw not—felt not this—nor dared depart,
Nor deem'd it cold—her chill was at her heart;
Till grew such certainty from that suspense—
His very sight had shock'd from life or sense!

It came at last—a sad and shatter'd boat,
Whose inmates first beheld whom first they sought,
Some bleeding—all most wretched—these the few—
Scarce knew they how escaped—*this* all they knew.
In silence, darkling, each appear'd to wait
His fellow's mournful guess at Conrad's fate:
Something they would have said; but seem'd to fear
To trust their accents to Medora's ear.
She saw at once, yet sunk not—trembled not—
Beneath that grief, that loneliness of lot,
Within that meek fair form were feelings high,
That deem'd not till they found their energy.
While yet was Hope—they soften'd—flutter'd—wept—
All lost—that softness died not—but it slept;
And o'er its slumber rose that Strength which said,
« With nothing left to love—there 's nought to dread.»
'T is more than nature's; like the burning might
Delirium gathers from the fever's height.

« Silent you stand—nor would I hear you tell
What—speak not—breathe not—for I know it well—
Yet would I ask—almost my lip denies
The—quick your answer—tell me where he lies?»

« Lady! we know not—scarce with life we fled;
But here is one denies that he is dead:
He saw him bound; and bleeding—but alive.»

She heard no further—'t was in vain to strive—
So throbb'd each vein—each thought—till then withstood;
Her own dark soul—these words at once subdued:
She totters—falls—and senseless had the wave
Perchance but snatch'd her from another grave;
But that with hands though rude, yet weeping eyes,
They yield such aid as Pity's haste supplies:
Dash o'er her deathlike cheek the ocean dew,
Raise—fan—sustain till life returns anew;
Awake her handmaids, with the matrons leave
That fainting form o'er which they gaze and grieve;
Then seek Anselmo's cavern, to report
The tale too tedious—when the triumph short.

IV.

In that wild council words wax'd warm and strange,
With thoughts of ransom, rescue, and revenge;
All, save repose or flight: still lingering there
Breathed Conrad's spirit, and forbade despair;
Whate'er his fate—the breasts he form'd and led,
Will save him living, or appease him dead.
Woe to his foes! there yet survive a few,
Whose deeds are daring, as their hearts are true.

V.

Within the Haram's secret chamber sate
Stern Seyd, still pondering o'er his captive's fate;
His thoughts on love and hate alternate dwell,
Now with Gulnare, and now in Conrad's cell;
Here at his feet the lovely slave reclined
Surveys his brow—would soothe his gloom of mind,
While many an anxious glance her large dark eye
Sends in its idle search for sympathy,
His only bends in seeming o'er his beads,[15]
But inly views his victim as he bleeds.

« Pacha! the day is thine; and on thy crest
Sits Triumph—Conrad taken—fall'n the rest!

His doom is fix'd—he dies: and well his fate
Was earn'd—yet much too worthless for thy hate:
Methinks, a short release, for ransom told
With all his treasure, not unwisely sold;
Report speaks largely of his pirate-hoard—
Would that of this my Pacha were the lord!
While baffled, weaken'd by this fatal fray—
Watch'd—follow'd—he were then an easier prey;
But once cut off—the remnant of his band
Embark their wealth, and seek a safer strand.»

« Gulnare!—If for each drop of blood a gem
Were offer'd rich as Stamboul's diadem;
If for each hair of his a massy mine
Of virgin ore should supplicating shine;
If all our Arab tales divulge or dream
Of wealth were here—that gold should not redeem!
It had not now redeem'd a single hour,
But that I know him fetter'd, in my power;
And, thirsting for revenge, I ponder still
On pangs that longest rack and latest kill.»

« Nay,—Seyd!—I seek not to restrain thy rage,
Too justly moved for mercy to assuage;
My thoughts were only to secure for thee
His riches—thus released, he were not free:
Disabled, shorn of half his might and band,
His capture could but wait thy first command.»

« His capture *could!*—and shall I then resign
One day to him—the wretch already mine?
Release my foe!—at whose remonstrance?—thine!
Fair suitor!—to thy virtuous gratitude,
That thus repays this Giaour's relenting mood,
Which thee and thine alone of all could spare,
No doubt—regardless if the prize were fair,
My thanks and praise alike are due—now hear!
I have a counsel for thy gentler ear:
I do mistrust thee, woman! and each word
Of thine stamps truth on all suspicion heard.
Borne in his arms through fire from yon Serai—
Say, wert thou lingering there with him to fly?
Thou need'st not answer—thy confession speaks,
Already reddening on thy guilty cheeks;
Then, lovely dame, bethink thee! and beware:
'T is not *his* life alone may claim such care!
Another word and—nay—I need no more.
Accursed was the moment when he bore
Thee from the flames, which better far—but—no—
I then had mourn'd thee with a lover's woe—
Now 't is thy lord that warns—deceitful thing!
Know'st thou that I can clip thy wanton wing?
In words alone I am not wont to chafe:
Look to thyself—nor deem thy falsehood safe!»

He rose—and slowly, sternly thence withdrew,
Rage in his eye, and threats in his adieu:
Ah! little reck'd that chief of womanhood—
Which frowns ne'er quelled, nor menaces subdued;
And little deem'd he what thy heart, Gulnare!
When soft could feel, and when incensed could dare.
His doubts appear'd to wrong—nor yet she knew
How deep the root from whence compassion grew—
She was a slave—from such may captives claim
A fellow-feeling, differing but in name;
Still half unconscious—heedless of his wrath,
Again she ventured on the dangerous path,
Again his rage repell'd—until arose
That strife of thought, the source of woman's woes!

VI.

Meanwhile—long-anxious—weary—still—the same
Roll'd day and night—his soul could terror tame—
This fearful interval of doubt and dread,
When every hour might doom him worse than dead,
When every step that echo'd by the gate,
Might entering lead where axe and stake await:
When every voice that grated on his ear
Might be the last that he could ever hear;
Could terror tame—that spirit stern and high
Had proved unwilling as unfit to die;
'T was worn—perhaps decay'd—yet silent bore
That conflict deadlier far than all before:
The heat of fight, the hurry of the gale,
Leave scarce one thought inert enough to quail;
But bound and fix'd in fetter'd solitude,
To pine, the prey of every changing mood;
To gaze on thine own heart; and meditate
Irrevocable faults, and coming fate—
Too late the last to shun—the first to mend—
To count the hours that struggle to thine end,
With not a friend to animate, and tell
To other ears that death became thee well;
Around thee foes to forge the ready lie,
And blot life's latest scene with calumny;
Before thee tortures, which the soul can dare,
Yet doubts how well the shrinking flesh may bear;
But deeply feels a single cry would shame,
To valour's praise thy last and dearest claim;
The life thou leavest below, denied above
By kind monopolists of heavenly love;
And more than doubtful paradise—thy heaven
Of earthly hope—thy loved one from thee riven.
Such were the thoughts that outlaw must sustain,
And govern pangs surpassing mortal pain:
And those sustain'd he—boots it well or ill?
Since not to sink beneath, is something still!

VII.

The first day pass'd—he saw not her—Gulnare—
The second—third—and still she came not there;
But what her words avouch'd, her charms had done,
Or else he had not seen another sun.
The fourth day roll'd along, and with the night
Came storm and darkness in their mingling might;
Oh! how he listen'd to the rushing deep,
That ne'er till now so broke upon his sleep;
And his wild spirit wilder wishes sent,
Roused by the roar of his own element!
Oft had he ridden on that winged wave,
And loved its roughness for the speed it gave;
And now its dashing echo'd on his ear,
A long known voice—alas! too vainly near!
Loud sung the wind above; and, doubly loud,
Shook o'er his turret cell the thunder-cloud;
And flash'd the lightning by the latticed bar,
To him more genial than the midnight star:
Close to the glimmering grate he dragg'd his chain,
And hoped *that* peril might not prove in vain.
He raised his iron hand to Heaven, and pray'd
One pitying flash to mar the form it made:
His steel and impious prayer attract alike—
The storm roll'd onward and disdain'd to strike;

Its peal wax'd fainter—ceased—he felt alone,
As if some faithless friend had spurn'd his groan!

VIII.

The midnight pass'd—and to the massy door,
A light step came—it paused—it moved once more;
Slow turns the grating bolt and sullen key:
'T is as his heart foreboded—that fair she!
Whate'er her sins, to him a guardian saint,
And beauteous still as hermit's hope can paint;
Yet changed since last within that cell she came,
More pale her cheek, more tremulous her frame:
On him she cast her dark and hurried eye,
Which spoke before her accents—«thou must die!
Yes, thou must die—there is but one resource,
The last—the worst—if torture were not worse.»

« Lady! I look to none—my lips proclaim
What last proclaim'd they—Conrad still the same:
Why shouldst thou seek an outlaw's life to spare,
And change the sentence I deserve to bear?
Well have I earn'd—nor here alone—the meed
Of Seyd's revenge, by many a lawless deed.»

« Why should I seek? because—Oh! didst thou not
Redeem my life from worse than slavery's lot?
Why should I seek?—hath misery made thee blind
To the fond workings of a woman's mind?
And must I say? albeit my heart rebel
With all that woman feels, but should not tell—
Because—despite thy crimes—that heart is moved:
It fear'd thee—thank'd thee—pitied—madden'd—loved.
Reply not, tell not now thy tale again,
Thou lovest another—and I love in vain;
Though fond as mine her bosom, form more fair,
I rush through peril which she would not dare.
If that thy heart to hers were truly dear,
Were I thine own—thou wert not lonely here:
An outlaw's spouse—and leave her lord to roam!
What hath such gentle dame to do with home?
But speak not now—o'er thine and o'er my head
Hangs the keen sabre by a single thread;
If thou hast courage still, and wouldst be free,
Receive this poignard—rise and follow me!»

« Ay—in my chains! my steps will gently tread,
With these adornments, o'er each slumbering head!
Thou hast forgot—is this a garb for flight?
Or is that instrument more fit for fight?»

« Misdoubting Corsair! I have gain'd the guard,
Ripe for revolt, and greedy for reward.
A single word of mine removes that chain:
Without some aid how here could I remain?
Well, since we met, hath sped my busy time,
If in aught evil, for thy sake the crime:
The crime—'t is none to punish those of Seyd.
That hated tyrant, Conrad—he must bleed!
I see thee shudder—but my soul is changed—
Wrong'd—spurn'd—reviled—and it shall be avenged—
Accused of what till now my heart disdain'd—
Too faithful, though to bitter bondage chain'd
Yes, smile!—but he had little cause to sneer,
I was not treacherous then—nor thou too dear:
But he has said it—and the jealous well,
Those tyrants, teasing, tempting to rebel,
Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell.
I never loved—he bought me—somewhat high—
Since with me came a heart he could not buy.
I was a slave unmurmuring; he hath said,
But for his rescue I with thee had fled.
'T was false thou know'st—but let such augurs rue,
Their words are omens insult renders true.
Nor was thy respite granted to my prayer;
This fleeting grace was only to prepare
New torments for thy life, and my despair.
Mine too he threatens; but his dotage still
Would fain reserve me for his lordly will:
When wearier of these fleeting charms and me,
There yawns the sack—and yonder rolls the sea!
What, am I then a toy for dotard's play,
To wear but till the gilding frets away?
I saw thee—loved thee—owe thee all—would save,
If but to show how grateful is a slave.
But had he not thus menaced fame and life
(And well he keeps his oaths pronounced in strife),
I still had saved thee—but the Pacha spared.
Now I am all thine own—for all prepared:
Thou lovest me not—nor know'st—or but the worst.
Alas! this love—that hatred are the first—
Oh! could'st thou prove my truth, thou wouldst not start,
Nor fear the fire that lights an eastern heart;
'T is now the beacon of thy safety—now
It points within the port a Mainote prow:
But in one chamber, where our path must lead,
There sleeps—he must not wake—the oppressor Seyd!»

« Gulnare—Gulnare—I never felt till now
My abject fortune, wither'd fame so low:
Seyd is mine enemy: had swept my band
From earth with ruthless but with open hand,
And therefore came I, in my bark of war,
To smite the smiter with the scimitar;
Such is my weapon—not the secret knife—
Who spares a woman's seeks not slumber's life.
Thine saved I gladly, lady, not for this—
Let me not deem that mercy shown amiss.
Now fare thee well—more peace be with thy breast!
Night wears apace—my last of earthly rest!»

«Rest! Rest! by sunrise must thy sinews shake,
And thy limbs writhe around the ready stake.
I heard the order—saw—I will not see—
If thou wilt perish, I will fall with thee.
My life—my love—my hatred—all below
Are on this cast—Corsair! 'tis but a blow!
Without it flight were idle—how evade
His sure pursuit? my wrongs too unrepaid,
My youth disgraced—the long, long wasted years,
One blow shall cancel with our future fears;
But since the dagger suits thee less than brand,
I'll try the firmness of a female hand.
The guards are gain'd—one moment all were o'er—
Corsair! we meet in safety or no more;
If errs my feeble hand, the morning cloud
Will hover o'er thy scaffold, and my shroud.»

IX.

She turn'd, and vanish'd ere he could reply,
But his glance follow'd far with eager eye;
And gathering, as he could, the links that bound
His form, to curl their length, and curb their sound,

Since bar and bolt no more his steps preclude,
He, fast as fetter'd limbs allow, pursued:
'Twas dark and winding, and he knew not where
That passage led; nor lamp nor guard were there:
He sees a dusky glimmering—shall he seek
Or shun that ray so indistinct and weak?
Chance guides his steps—a freshness seems to bear
Full on his brow, as if from morning air—
He reach'd an open gallery—on his eye
Gleam'd the last star of night, the clearing sky:
Yet scarcely heeded these—another light
From a lone chamber struck upon his sight.
Towards it he moved, a scarcely closing door
Reveal'd the ray within, but nothing more.
With hasty step a figure outward past,
Then paused—and turn'd—and paused—'tis she at last!
No poniard in that hand—nor sign of ill—
«Thanks to that softening heart—she could not kill!»
Again he look'd, the wildness of her eye
Starts from the day abrupt and fearfully.
She stopp'd—threw back her dark far-floating hair,
That nearly veil'd her face and bosom fair:
As if she late had bent her leaning head
Above some object of her doubt or dread.
They meet—upon her brow—unknown—forgot—
Her hurrying hand had left—'twas but a spot—
Its hue was all he saw, and scarce withstood—
Oh! slight but certain pledge of crime—'tis blood!

X.

He had seen battle—he had brooded lone
O'er promised pangs to sentenced guilt foreshown;
He had been tempted—chasten'd—and the chain
Yet on his arms might ever there remain:
But ne'er from strife—captivity—remorse—
From all his feelings in their inmost force—
So thrill'd—so shudder'd every creeping vein,
As now they froze before that purple stain.
That spot of blood, that light but guilty streak
Had banish'd all the beauty from her cheek!
Blood he had view'd—could view unmoved—but then
It flow'd in combat, or was shed by men!

XI.

«'Tis done—he nearly waked—but it is done.
Corsair! he perish'd—thou art dearly won.
All words would now be vain—away—away!
Our bark is tossing—'tis already day.
The few gain'd over, now are wholly mine,
And these thy yet surviving band shall join:
Anon my voice shall vindicate my hand,
When once our sail forsakes this hated strand.»

XII.

She clapp'd her hands—and through the gallery pour,
Equipp'd for flight, her vassals—Greek and Moor;
Silent but quick they stoop, his chains unbind;
Once more his limbs are free as mountain wind!
But on his heavy heart such sadness sate,
As if they there transferr'd that iron weight.
No words are utter'd—at her sign, a door
Reveals the secret passage to the shore;
The city lies behind—they speed, they reach
The glad waves dancing on the yellow beach;
And Conrad following, at her beck, obey'd,
Nor cared he now if rescued or betray'd;
Resistance were as useless as if Seyd
Yet lived to view the doom his ire decreed.

XIII.

Embark'd, the sail unfurl'd, the light breeze blew—
How much had Conrad's memory to review!
Sunk he in contemplation, till the cape
Where last he anchor'd rear'd its giant shape.
Ah!—since that fatal night, though brief the time,
Had swept an age of terror, grief, and crime.
As its far shadow frown'd above the mast,
He veil'd his face, and sorrow'd as he past;
He thought of all—Gonsalvo and his band,
His fleeting triumph and his failing hand,
He thought on her afar, his lonely bride:
He turn'd and saw—Gulnare, the homicide!

XIV.

She watch'd his features till she could not bear
Their freezing aspect and averted air,
And that strange fierceness foreign to her eye,
Fell quench'd in tears, too late to shed or dry.
She knelt beside him, and his hand she prest—
«Thou may'st forgive though Alla's self detest;
But for that deed of darkness what wert thou?
Reproach me—but not yet—Oh! spare me *now!*
I am not what I seem—this fearful night
My brain bewilder'd—do not madden quite!
If I had never loved—though less my guilt,
Thou hadst not lived to—hate me—if thou wilt.»

XV.

She wrongs his thoughts, they more himself upbraid
Than her, though undesign'd, the wretch he made;
But speechless all, deep, dark, and unexprest,
They bleed within that silent cell—his breast.
Still onward, fair the breeze, nor rough the surge,
The blue waves sport around the stern they urge;
Far on the horizon's verge appears a speck,
A spot—a mast—a sail—an armed deck!
Their little bark her men of watch descry,
And ampler canvas woos the wind from high;
She bears her down majestically near,
Speed on her prow, and terror in her tier;
A flash is seen—the ball beyond their bow
Booms harmless, hissing to the deep below.
Up rose keen Conrad from his silent trance,
A long, long absent gladness in his glance;
«'Tis mine—my blood-red flag! again—again—
I am not all deserted on the main!»
They own the signal, answer to the hail,
Hoist out the boat at once, and slacken sail.
«'Tis Conrad! Conrad!» shouting from the deck,
Command nor duty could their transport check!
With light alacrity and gaze of pride,
They view him mount once more his vessel's side;
A smile relaxing in each rugged face,
Their arms can scarce forbear a rough embrace.
He, half forgetting danger and defeat,
Returns their greeting as a chief may greet,
Wrings with a cordial grasp Anselmo's hand,
And feels he yet can conquer and command!

XVI.

These greetings o'er, the feelings that o'erflow,
Yet grieve to win him back without a blow;

They sail'd prepared for vengeance—had they known
A woman's hand secured that deed her own,
She were their queen—less scrupulous are they
Than haughty Conrad how they win their way.
With many an asking smile, and wondering stare,
They whisper round, and gaze upon Gulnare;
And her, at once above—beneath her sex,
Whom blood appall'd not, their regards perplex.
To Conrad turns her faint imploring eye,
She drops her veil, and stands in silence by;
Her arms are meekly folded on that breast,
Which—Conrad safe—to fate resign'd the rest.
Though worse than phrensy could that bosom fill,
Extreme in love or hate, in good or ill,
The worst of crimes had left her woman still!

XVII.

This Conrad mark'd, and felt—ah! could he less?
Hate of that deed—but grief for her distress;
What she has done no tears can wash away,
And heaven must punish on its angry day:
But—it was done: he knew, whate'er her guilt,
For him that poniard smote, that blood was spilt;
And he was free!—and she for him had given
Her all on earth, and more than all in heaven!
And now he turn'd him to that dark-eyed slave
Whose brow was bow'd beneath the glance he gave,
Who now seem'd changed and humbled:—faint and meek,
But varying oft the colour of her cheek
To deeper shades of paleness—all its red
That fearful spot which stain'd it from the dead!
He took that hand—it trembled—now too late—
So soft in love—so wildly nerved in hate;
He clasp'd that hand—it trembled—and his own
Had lost its firmness, and his voice its tone.
«Gulnare!»—but she replied not—«dear Gulnare!»
She raised her eye—her only answer there—
At once she sought and sunk in his embrace:
If he had driven her from that resting place,
His had been more or less than mortal heart,
But—good or ill—it bade her not depart.
Perchance, but for the bodings of his breast,
His latest virtue then had join'd the rest.
Yet even Medora might forgive the kiss
That ask'd from form so fair no more than this,
The first, the last that frailty stole from faith—
To lips where love had lavish'd all his breath,
To lips—whose broken sighs such fragrance fling,
As he had fann'd them freshly with his wing!

XVIII.

They gain by twilight's hour their lonely isle:
To them the very rocks appear to smile;
The haven hums with many a cheering sound,
The beacons blaze their wonted stations round,
The boats are darting o'er the curly bay,
And sportive dolphins bend them through the spray;
Even the hoarse sea-bird's shrill, discordant shriek,
Greets like the welcome of his tuneless beak!
Beneath each lamp that through its lattice gleams,
Their fancy paints the friends that trim the beams.
Oh! what can sanctify the joys of home,
Like hope's gay glance from ocean's troubled foam?

XIX.

The lights are high on beacon and from bower,
And midst them Conrad seeks Medora's tower:
He looks in vain—'tis strange—and all remark,
Amid so many, hers alone is dark.
'Tis strange—of yore its welcome never fail'd,
Nor now, perchance, extinguish'd, only veil'd.
With the first boat descends he for the shore,
And looks impatient on the lingering oar.
Oh! for a wing beyond the falcon's flight,
To bear him like an arrow to that height!
With the first pause the resting rowers gave,
He waits not—looks not—leaps into the wave,
Strives through the surge, bestrides the beach, and high
Ascends the path familiar to his eye.

He reach'd his turret door—he paused—no sound
Broke from within; and all was night around.
He knock'd, and loudly—footstep nor reply
Announced that any heard or deem'd him nigh;
He knock'd—but faintly—for his trembling hand
Refused to aid his heavy heart's demand.
The portal opens—'tis a well known face—
But not the form he panted to embrace;
Its lips are silent—twice his own essay'd,
And fail'd to frame the question they delay'd;
He snatch'd the lamp—its light will answer all—
It quits his grasp, expiring in the fall.
He would not wait for that reviving ray—
As soon could he have linger'd there for day;
But, glimmering through the dusky corridore,
Another chequers o'er the shadow'd floor;
His steps the chamber gain—his eyes behold
All that his heart believed not—yet foretold!

XX.

He turn'd not—spoke not—sunk not—fix'd his look,
And set the anxious frame that lately shook:
He gazed—how long we gaze despite of pain,
And know, but dare not own, we gaze in vain!
In life itself she was so still and fair,
That death with gentler aspect wither'd there;
And the cold flowers [16] her colder hand contain'd,
In that last grasp as tenderly were strain'd
As if she scarcely felt, but feign'd a sleep,
And made it almost mockery yet to weep:
The long dark lashes fringed her lids of snow,
And veil'd—thought shrinks from all that lurk'd below—
Oh! o'er the eye death most exerts his might,
And hurls the spirit from her throne of light!
Sinks those blue orbs in that long last eclipse,
But spares, as yet, the charm around her lips—
Yet, yet they seem as they forbore to smile,
And wish'd repose—but only for a while;
But the white shroud, and each extended tress,
Long—fair—but spread in utter lifelessness,
Which, late the sport of every summer wind,
Escaped the baffled wreath that strove to bind;
These—and the pale pure cheek, became the bier—
But she is nothing—wherefore is he here?

XXI.

He ask'd no question—all were answer'd now
By the first glance on that still—marble brow.
It was enough—she died—what reck'd it how?
The love of youth, the hope of better years,
The source of softest wishes, tenderest fears,
The only living thing he could not hate,
Was reft at once—and he deserved his fate,
But did not feel it less;—the good explore,
For peace, those realms where guilt can never soar:

The proud—the wayward—who have fix'd below
Their joy—and find this earth enough for woe,
Lose in that one their all—perchance a mite—
But who in patience parts with all delight?
Full many a stoic eye and aspect stern
Mask hearts where grief hath little left to learn;
And many a withering thought lies hid, not lost
In smiles that least befit who wear them most.

XXII.

By those, that deepest feel, is ill exprest
The indistinctness of the suffering breast;
Where thousand thoughts begin to end in one,
Which seeks from all the refuge found in none;
No words suffice the secret soul to show,
For Truth denies all eloquence to Woe.
On Conrad's stricken soul exhaustion prest,
And stupor almost lull'd it into rest;
So feeble now—his mother's softness crept
To those wild eyes, which like an infant's wept:
It was the very weakness of his brain,
Which thus confess'd without relieving pain.
None saw his trickling tears—perchance, if seen,
That useless flood of grief had never been:
Nor long they flow'd—he dried them to depart,
In helpless—hopeless—brokenness of heart:
The sun goes forth—but Conrad's day is dim;
And the night cometh—ne'er to pass from him.
There is no darkness like the cloud of mind,
On Grief's vain eye—the blindest of the blind!
Which may not—dare not see—but turns aside
To blackest shade—nor will endure a guide!

XXIII.

His heart was form'd for softness—warp'd to wrong;
Betray'd too early, and beguiled too long;
Each feeling pure—as falls the dropping dew
Within the grot; like that had harden'd too;
Less clear, perchance, its earthly trials pass'd,
But sunk, and chill'd, and petrified at last.
Yet tempests wear, and lightning cleaves the rock;
If such his heart, so shatter'd it the shock.
There grew one flower beneath its rugged brow,
Though dark the shade—it shelter'd,—saved till now.
The thunder came—that bolt hath blasted both,
The Granite's firmness, and the Lily's growth:
The gentle plant hath left no leaf to tell
Its tale, but shrunk and wither'd where it fell,
And of its cold protector, blacken round
But shiver'd fragments on the barren ground!

XXIV.

'Tis morn—to venture on his lonely hour
Few dare; though now Anselmo sought his tower.
He was not there—nor seen along the shore;
Ere night, alarm'd, their isle is traversed o'er:
Another morn—another bids them seek,
And shout his name till echo waxeth weak;
Mount—grotto—cavern—valley search'd in vain,
They find on shore a sea-boat's broken chain:
Their hope revives—they follow o'er the main.
'Tis idle all—moons roll on moons away,
And Conrad comes not—came not since that day:
Nor trace, nor tidings of his doom declare
Where lives his grief, or perish'd his despair!
Long mourn'd his band whom none could mourn beside;
And fair the monument they gave his bride:
For him they raise not the recording stone—
His death yet dubious, deeds too widely known;
He left a Corsair's name to other times,
Link'd with one virtue, and a thousand crimes.

NOTES.

The time in this poem may seem too short for the occurrences, but the whole of the Ægean isles are within a few hours' sail of the continent, and the reader must be kind enough to take the *wind* as I have often found it.

Note 1. Page 163, line 86.

Of fair Olympia loved and left of old.

Orlando, Canto 10.

Note 2. Page 164, line 96.

Around the waves' phosphoric brightness broke.

By night, particularly in a warm latitude, every stroke of the oar, every motion of the boat or ship, is followed by a slight flash like sheet lightning from the water.

Note 3. Page 165, line 39.

Though to the rest the sober berry's juice.

Coffee.

Note 4. Page 165, line 41.

The long Chibouque's dissolving cloud supply.

Pipe.

Note 5. Page 165, line 42.

While dance the Almas to wild minstrelsy.

Dancing-girls.

Note to Canto II. Page 165, line 55.

It has been objected that Conrad's entering disguised as a spy is out of nature.—Perhaps so.—I find something not unlike it in history.

«Anxious to explore with his own eyes the state of the Vandals, Majorian ventured, after disguising the colour of his hair, to visit Carthage in the character of his own ambassador; and Genseric was afterwards mortified by the discovery, that he had entertained and dismissed the Emperor of the Romans. Such an anecdote may be rejected as an improbable fiction; but it is a fiction which would not have been imagined unless in the life of a hero.» *Gibbon, D. and F.* Vol. VI. p. 180.

That Conrad is a character not altogether out of nature I shall attempt to prove by some historical coincidences which I have met with since writing «The Corsair.»

«Eccelin prisonnier,» dit Rolandini, «s'enfermoit dans un silence menaçant, il fixoit sur la terre son visage féroce, et ne donnoit point d'essor à sa profonde indignation.—De toutes parts cependant les soldats et les peuples accouroient, ils vouloient voir cet homme, jadis si puissant, et la joie universelle éclatoit de toutes parts.

* * * * * * *

«Eccelin étoit d'une petite taille; mais tout l'aspect de sa personne, tous ses mouvements indiquoient un soldat.—Son langage étoit amer, son déportement superbe—et par son seul regard, il faisoit trembler les plus hardis.» *Sismondi*, tome iii, pp. 219, 220.

«Gizericus (Genseric, king of the Vandals, the conqueror of both Carthage and Rome), statura mediocris,

et equi casu claudicans, animo profundus, sermone rarus, luxuriæ contemptor, irâ turbidus, habendi cupidus, ad sollicitandas gentes providentissimus,» etc. etc. *Jornandes de Rebus Geticis*, c. 33.

I beg leave to quote these gloomy realities to keep in countenance my Giaour and Corsair.

Note 6. Page 166, line 19.

And my stern vow and order's laws oppose.

The Dervises are in colleges, and of different orders, as the monks.

Note 7. Page 166, line 54.

They seize that Dervise!—seize on Zatanai!

Satan.

Note 8. Page 166, line 75.

He tore his beard, and foaming fled the fight.

A common and not very novel effect of Mussulman anger. See Prince Eugene's Memoirs, page 24. «The Seraskier received a wound in the thigh; he plucked up his beard by the roots, because he was obliged to quit the field.»

Note 9. Page 166, line 119.

Brief time had Conrad now to greet Gulnare.

Gulnare, a female name; it means, literally, the flower of the pomegranate.

Note 10. Page 168, line 100.

Till even the scaffold echoes with their jest!

In Sir Thomas More, for instance, on the scaffold, and Anne Boleyn in the Tower, when grasping her neck, she remarked, that «it was too slender to trouble the headsman much.» During one part of the French Revolution, it became a fashion to leave some «mot» as a legacy; and the quantity of facetious last words spoken during that period would form a melancholy jest-book of a considerable size.

Note 11. Page 169, line 113.

That closed their murder'd sage's latest day!

Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset (the hour of execution), notwithstanding the entreaties of his disciples to wait till the sun went down.

Note 12. Page 170, line 19.

The queen of night asserts her silent reign.

The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our own country; the days in winter are longer, but in summer of shorter duration.

Note 13. Page 170, line 20.

The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk.

The kiosk is a Turkish summer house; the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the temple of Theseus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes.—Cephisus' stream is indeed scanty, and Ilissus has no stream at all.

Note 14. Page 170, line 30.

That frown where gentler ocean seems to smile.

The opening lines as far as Section II. have, perhaps, little business here, and were annexed to an unpublished (though printed) poem; but they were written on the spot in the spring of 1811, and—I scarce know why—the reader must excuse their appearance here if he can.

Note 15. Page 170, line 116.

His only beads in seeming o'er his beads.

The comboloio, or Mahometan rosary; the beads are in number ninety-nine.

Note 16. Page 174, line 98.

And the cold flowers her colder hand contain'd.

In the Levant it is the custom to strew flowers on the bodies of the dead, and in the hands of young persons to place a nosegay.

Note 17. Page 175, line 65.

Link'd with one virtue, and a thousand crimes.

That the point of honour which is represented in one instance of Conrad's character has not been carried beyond the bounds of probability may perhaps be in some degree confirmed by the following anecdote of a brother buccaneer in the present year, 1814.

Our readers have all seen the account of the enterprise against the pirates of Barrataria; but few, we believe, were informed of the situation, history, or nature of that establishment. For the information of such as were unacquainted with it, we have procured from a friend the following interesting narrative of the main facts, of which he has personal knowledge, and which cannot fail to interest some of our readers.

Barrataria is a bay, or a narrow arm of the gulph of Mexico; it runs through a rich but very flat country, until it reaches within a mile of the Mississippi river, fifteen miles below the city of New-Orleans. The bay has branches almost innumerable, in which persons can lie concealed from the severest scrutiny. It communicates with three lakes which lie on the southwest side, and these, with the lake of the same name, and which lies contiguous to the sea, where there is an island formed by the two arms of this lake and the sea. The east and west points of this island were fortified in the year 1811, by a band of pirates, under the command of one Monsieur La Fitte. A large majority of these outlaws are of that class of the population of the state of Louisiana who fled from the island of St Domingo during the troubles there, and took refuge in the island of Cuba: and when the last war between France and Spain commenced, they were compelled to leave that island with the short notice of a few days. Without ceremony, they entered the United States, the most of them the State of Louisiana, with all the negroes they had possessed in Cuba. They were notified by the Governor of that State of the clause in the constitution which forbad the importation of slaves; but, at the same time, received the assurance of the Governor that he would obtain, if possible, the approbation of the general Government for their retaining this property.

The Island of Barrataria is situated about lat. 29. deg. 15 min. lon. 92. 30. and is as remarkable for its health as for the superior scale and shell fish with which its waters abound. The chief of this horde, like Charles de Moor, had mixed with his many vices some virtues. In the year 1813, this party had, from its turpitude and boldness, claimed the attention of the Governor of Louisiana; and to break up the establishment, he thought proper to strike at the head. He therefore offered a reward of 500 dollars for the head of Monsieur La Fitte, who was well known to the inhabitants of the city of New Orleans, from his immediate connexion, and his once having been a fencing-master in that city of great reputation, which art he learnt in Buonaparte's army, where he was a Captain. The reward which was offered by the Governor for the head of La Fitte was answered by the offer of a reward from the latter of 15,000 for the head of the Governor. The Governor ordered out a company to

march from the city to La Fitte's island, and to burn and destroy all the property, and to bring to the city of New Orleans all his banditti. This company, under the command of a man who had been the intimate associate of this bold Captain, approached very near to the fortified island, before he saw a man, or heard a sound, until he heard a whistle, not unlike a boatswain's call. Then it was he found himself surrounded by armed men, who had emerged from the secret avenues which led into Bayou. Here it was that the modern Charles de Moor developed his few noble traits; for to this man, who had come to destroy his life and all that was dear to him, he not only spared his life, but offered him that which would have made the honest soldier easy for the remainder of his days, which was indignantly refused. He then, with the approbation of his captor, returned to the city. This circumstance, and some concomitant events, proved that this band of pirates was not to be taken by land. Our naval force having always been small in that quarter, exertions for the destruction of this illicit establishment could not be expected from them until augmented; for an officer of the navy, with most of the gun-boats on that station, had to retreat from an overwhelming force of La Fitte's. So soon as the augmentation of the navy authorised an attack, one was made; the overthrow of this banditti has been the result; and now this almost invulnerable point and key to New Orleans is clear of an enemy, it is to be hoped the government will hold it by a strong military force.—*From an American Newspaper.*

In Noble's continuation of Granger's Biographical Dictionary, there is a singular passage in his account of archbishop Blackbourne, and as in some measure connected with the profession of the hero of the foregoing poem, I cannot resist the temptation of extracting it.

«There is something mysterious in the history and character of Dr Blackbourne. The former is but imperfectly known; and report has even asserted he was a buccaneer: and that one of his brethren in that profession having asked, on his arrival in England, what had become of his old chum, Blackbourne, was answered, he is Archbishop of York. We are informed, that Blackbourne was installed sub-dean of Exeter in 1694, which office he resigned in 1702: but after his successor, Lewis Barnet's death, in 1704, he regained it. In the following year he became dean; and, in 1714, held with it the archdeanery of Cornwall. He was consecrated bishop of Exeter, February 24, 1716; and translated to York, November 28, 1724, as a reward, according to court scandal, for uniting George I to the Duchess of Munster. This, however, appears to have been an unfounded calumny. As archbishop he behaved with great prudence, and was equally respectable as the guardian of the revenues of the see. Rumour whispered he retained the vices of his youth, and that a passion for the fair sex formed an item in the list of his weaknesses; but so far from being convicted by seventy witnesses, he does not appear to have been directly criminated by one. In short, I look upon these aspersions as the effects of mere malice. How is it possible a buccaneer should have been so good a scholar as Blackbourne certainly was? he who had so perfect a knowledge of the classics (particularly of the Greek tragedians), as to be able to read them with the same ease as he could Shakspeare, must have taken great pains to acquire the learned languages; and have had both leisure and good masters. But he was undoubtedly educated at Christ-church College, Oxford. He is allowed to have been a pleasant man: this, however, was turned against him, by its being said, 'he gained more hearts than souls.'»

«The only voice that could soothe the passions of the savage (Alphonso 3d) was that of an amiable and virtuous wife, the sole object of his love: the voice of Donna Isabella, the daughter of the duke of Savoy, and the grand-daughter of Philip 2d, King of Spain.—Her dying words sunk deep into his memory; his fierce spirit melted into tears; and after the last embrace, Alphonso retired into his chamber to bewail his irreparable loss, and to meditate on the vanity of human life.»—*Miscellaneous Works of Gibbon, new edition, 8vo. vol. 3, page 473.*

Lara,

A TALE.

CANTO I.

I.

The serfs are glad through Lara's wide domain,
And slavery half forgets her feudal chain;
He, their unhoped, but unforgotten lord,
The long self-exiled chieftain is restored:
There be bright faces in the busy hall,
Bowls on the board, and banners on the wall;
Far checkering o'er the pictured window, plays
The unwonted faggots' hospitable blaze;
And gay retainers gather round the hearth,
With tongues all loudness, and with eyes all mirth.

II.

The chief of Lara is return'd again:
And why had Lara cross'd the bounding main?
Left by his sire, too young such loss to know,
Lord of himself;—that heritage of woe—
That fearful empire which the human breast
But holds to rob the heart within of rest!—
With none to check, and few to point in time
The thousand paths that slope the way to crime;
Then, when he most required commandment, then
Had Lara's daring boyhood govern'd men.
It skills not, boots not step by step to trace
His youth through all the mazes of its race;
Short was the course his restlessness had run,
But long enough to leave him half undone.

III.

And Lara left in youth his father-land;
But from the hour he waved his parting hand
Each trace wax'd fainter of his course, till all
Had nearly ceased his memory to recal.
His sire was dust, his vassals could declare,
'T was all they knew, that Lara was not there;
Nor sent, nor came he, till conjecture grew
Cold in the many, anxious in the few.
His hall scarce echoes with his wonted name,
His portrait darkens in its fading frame,
Another chief consoled his destined bride,
The young forgot him, and the old had died;
« Yet doth he live! » exclaims the impatient heir,
And sighs for sables which he must not wear.
A hundred 'scutcheons deck with gloomy grace
The Lara's last and longest dwelling-place;
But one is absent from the mouldering file,
That now were welcome in that gothic pile.

IV.

He comes at last in sudden loneliness,
And whence they know not, why they need not guess;
They more might marvel, when the greeting 's o'er,
Not that he came, but came not long before:
No train is his beyond a single page,
Of foreign aspect, and of tender age.
Years had roll'd on, and fast they speed away
To those that wander as to those that stay;
But lack of tidings from another clime
Had lent a flagging wing to weary Time.
They see, they recognise, yet almost deem
The present dubious, or the past a dream.

He lives, nor yet is past his manhood's prime,
Though sear'd by toil, and something touch'd by time;
His faults, whate'er they were, if scarce forgot,
Might be untaught him by his varied lot;
Nor good nor ill of late were known, his name
Might yet uphold his patrimonial fame:
His soul in youth was haughty, but his sins
No more than pleasure from the stripling wins;
And such, if not yet harden'd in their course,
Might be redeem'd, nor ask a long remorse.

V.

And they indeed were changed—'t is quickly seen
Whate'er he be, 't was not what he had been:
That brow in furrow'd lines had fix'd at last,
And spake of passions, but of passion past:
The pride, but not the fire, of early days,
Coldness of mien, and carelessness of praise;
A high demeanour, and a glance that took
Their thoughts from others by a single look;
And that sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world hath stung,
That darts in seeming playfulness around,
And makes those feel that will not own the wound;
All these seem'd his, and something more beneath,
Than glance could well reveal, or accent breathe.
Ambition, glory, love, the common aim,
That some can conquer, and that all would claim,
Within his breast appear'd no more to strive,
Yet seem'd as lately they had been alive;
And some deep feeling it were vain to trace
At moments lighten'd o'er his livid face.

VI.

Not much he loved long question of the past,
Nor told of wondrous wilds, and deserts vast,
In those far lands where he had wander'd lone,
And—as himself would have it seem—unknown:
Yet these in vain his eye could scarcely scan,
Nor glean experience from his fellow man;
But what he had beheld he shunn'd to show,
As hardly worth a stranger's care to know;
If still more prying such inquiry grew,
His brow fell darker, and his words more few.

VII.

Not unrejoiced to see him once again,
Warm was his welcome to the haunts of men;
Born of high lineage, link'd in high command,
He mingled with the Magnates of his land;
Join'd the carousals of the great and gay,
And saw them smile or sigh their hours away;
But still he only saw, and did not share
The common pleasure or the general care;
He did not follow what they all pursued
With hope still baffled, still to be renew'd;
Nor shadowy honour, nor substantial gain,
Nor beauty's preference, and the rival's pain:
Around him some mysterious circle thrown
Repell'd approach, and show'd him still alone;
Upon his eye sate something of reproof,
That kept at least frivolity aloof;
And things more timid that beheld him near,
In silence gazed, or whisper'd mutual fear;
And they the wiser, friendlier few confest
They deem'd him better than his air exprest.

VIII.

'T was strange—in youth all action and all life,
Burning for pleasure, not averse from strife;
Woman—the field—the ocean—all that gave
Promise of gladness, peril of a grave,
In turn he tried—he ransack'd all below,
And found his recompense in joy or woe,
No tame, trite medium; for his feelings sought
In that intenseness an escape from thought:
The tempest of his heart in scorn had gazed
On that the feebler elements hath raised;
The rapture of his heart had look'd on high,
And ask'd if greater dwelt beyond the sky:
Chain'd to excess, the slave of each extreme,
How woke he from the wildness of that dream?
Alas! he told not—but he did awake
To curse the wither'd heart that would not break.

IX.

Books, for his volume heretofore was Man,
With eye more curious he appear'd to scan,
And oft, in sudden mood, for many a day
From all communion he would start away:
And then, his rarely call'd attendants said,
Through night's long hours would sound his hurried tread
O'er the dark gallery, where his fathers frown'd
In rude but antique portraiture around:
They heard, but whisper'd, « *that* must not be known—
The sound of words less earthly than his own.
Yes, they who chose might smile, but some had seen
They scarce knew what, but more than should have
been.

Why gazed he so upon the ghastly head
Which hands profane had gather'd from the dead,
That still beside his open'd volume lay,
As if to startle all save him away?
Why slept he not when others were at rest?
Why heard no music and received no guest?
All was not well they deem'd—but where the wrong?
Some knew perchance—but 't were a tale too long;
And such besides were too discreetly wise,
To more than hint their knowledge in surmise;
But if they would—they could »—around the board,
Thus Lara's vassals prattled of their lord.

X.

It was the night—and Lara's glassy stream
The stars are studding, each with imaged beam:
So calm, the waters scarcely seem to stray,
And yet they glide like happiness away;
Reflecting far and fairy-like from high
The immortal lights that live along the sky:
Its banks are fringed with many a goodly tree,
And flowers the fairest that may feast the bee;
Such in her chaplet infant Dian wove,
And Innocence would offer to her love,
These deck the shore; the waves their channel make
In windings bright and mazy like the snake.
All was so still, so soft in earth and air,
You scarce would start to meet a spirit there;
Secure that nought of evil could delight
To walk in such a scene, on such a night!
It was a moment only for the good:
So Lara deem'd, nor longer there he stood,
But turn'd in silence to his castle-gate;
Such scene his soul no more could contemplate:
Such scene reminded him of other days,
Of skies more cloudless, moons of purer blaze,
Of nights more soft and frequent, hearts that now—
No—no—the storm may beat upon his brow,
Unfelt—unsparing—but a night like this,
A night of beauty, mock'd such breast as his.

XI.

He turn'd within his solitary hall,
And his high shadow shot along the wall;
There were the painted forms of other times,
'T was all they left of virtues or of crimes,
Save vague tradition; and the gloomy vaults
That hid their dust, their foibles, and their faults;
And half a column of the pompous page,
That speeds the specious tale from age to age;
Where history's pen its praise or blame supplies,
And lies like truth, and still most truly lies.
He wandering mused, and as the moonbeam shone
Through the dim lattice o'er the floor of stone,
And the high fretted roof, and saints, that there
O'er Gothic windows knelt in pictured prayer,
Reflected in fantastic figures grew,
Like life, but not like mortal life, to view;
His bristling locks of sable, brow of gloom,
And the wide waving of his shaken plume,
Glanced like a spectre's attributes, and gave
His aspect all that terror gives the grave.

XII.

'T was midnight—all was slumber; the lone light
Dimm'd in the lamp, as loth to break the night.
Hark! there be murmurs heard in Lara's hall—
A sound—a voice—a shriek—a fearful call!
A long, loud, shriek—and silence—did they hear
That frantic echo burst the sleeping ear?
They heard and rose, and, tremulously brave,
Rush where the sound invoked their aid to save;
They come with half-lit tapers in their hands,
And snatch'd in startled haste unbelted brands.

XIII.

Cold as the marble where his length was laid,
Pale as the beam that o'er his features play'd,
Was Lara stretch'd; his half-drawn sabre near,
Dropp'd it should seem in more than nature's fear;
Yet he was firm, or had been firm till now,
And still defiance knit his gather'd brow;
Though mix'd with terror, senseless as he lay,
There lived upon his lip the wish to slay;
Some half-form'd threat in utterance there had died,
Some imprecation of despairing pride;
His eye was almost seal'd, but not forsook,
Even in its trance, the gladiator's look,
That oft awake his aspect could disclose,
And now was fix'd in horrible repose.
They raise him—bear him; hush! he breathes, he speaks,
The swarthy blush recolours in his cheeks,
His lip resumes its red, his eye, though dim,
Rolls wide and wild, each slowly-quivering limb.
Recals its function, but his words are strung
In terms that seem not of his native tongue;
Distinct, but strange, enough they understand
To deem them accents of another land;
And such they were, and meant to meet an ear
That hears him not—alas! that cannot hear!

XIV.

His page approach'd, and he alone appear'd
To know the import of the words they heard;
And, by the changes of his cheek and brow,
They were not such as Lara should avow,
Nor he interpret, yet with less surprise
Than those around their chieftain's state he eyes:
But Lara's prostrate form he bent beside,
And in that tongue which seem'd his own replied;
And Lara heeds those tones that gently seem
To soothe away the horrors of his dream,
If dream it were, that thus could overthrow
A breast that needed not ideal woe.

XV.

Whate'er his phrenzy dream'd or eye beheld,
If yet remember'd ne'er to be reveal'd,
Rests at his heart.—The custom'd morning came,
And breathed new vigour in his shaken frame;
And solace sought he none from priest nor leech,
And soon the same in movement and in speech
As heretofore he fill'd the passing hours,
Nor less he smiles, nor more his forehead lours
Than these were wont; and if the coming night
Appear'd less welcome now to Lara's sight,
He to his marvelling vassals show'd it not,
Whose shuddering proved *their* fear was less forgot.
In trembling pairs (alone they dare not) crawl
The astonish'd slaves, and shun the fated hall;
The waving banner, and the clapping door,
The rustling tapestry, and the echoing floor;

The long dim shadows of surrounding trees,
The flapping bat, the night song of the breeze;
Aught they behold or hear their thought appals,
As evening saddens o'er the dark grey walls.

XVI.

Vain thought! that hour of ne'er unravell'd gloom
Came not again, or Lara could assume
A seeming of forgetfulness, that made
His vassals more amazed nor less afraid—
Had memory vanish'd then with sense restored?
Since word, nor look, nor gesture of their lord
Betray'd a feeling that recall'd to these
That fever'd moment of his mind's disease.
Was it a dream? was his the voice that spoke
Those strange wild accents? his the cry that broke
Their slumber? his the oppress'd o'erlabour'd heart
That ceased to beat, the look that made them start?
Could he who thus had suffer'd, so forget,
When such as saw that suffering shudder yet?
Or did that silence prove his memory fix'd
Too deep for words, indelible, unmix'd
In that corroding secrecy which gnaws
The heart to show the effect, but not the cause?
Not so in him; his breast had buried both,
Nor common gazers could discern the growth
Of thoughts that mortal lips must leave half told;
They choke the feeble words that would unfold.

XVII.

In him inexplicably mix'd appear'd
Much to be loved and hated, sought and fear'd;
Opinion varying o'er his hidden lot,
In praise or railing ne'er his name forgot;
His silence form'd a theme for others' prate—
They guess'd—they gazed—they fain would know his fate.
What had he been? what was he, thus unknown,
Who walk'd their world, his lineage only known?
A hater of his kind? yet some would say,
With them he could seem gay amidst the gay;
But own'd, that smile if oft observed and near,
Waned in its mirth, and wither'd to a sneer;
That smile might reach his lip, but pass'd not by,
None e'er could trace its laughter to his eye:
Yet there was softness too in his regard,
At times, a heart as not by nature hard,
But once perceived, his spirit seem'd to chide
Such weakness, as unworthy of its pride,
And steel'd itself, as scorning to redeem
One doubt from others' half withheld esteem;
In self-inflicted penance of a breast
Which tenderness might once have wrung from rest;
In vigilance of grief that would compel
The soul to hate for having loved too well.

XVIII.

There was in him a vital scorn of all:
As if the worst had fall'n which could befall,
He stood a stranger in this breathing world,
An erring spirit from another hurl'd;
A thing of dark imaginings, that shaped
By choice the perils he by chance escaped;
But 'scaped in vain, for in their memory yet
His mind would half exult and half regret:
With more capacity for love than earth
Bestows on most of mortal mould and birth,
His early dreams of good outstripp'd the truth,
And troubled manhood follow'd baffled youth;
With thought of years in phantom chase mispent,
And wasted powers for better purpose lent;
And fiery passions that had pour'd their wrath
In hurried desolation o'er his path,
And left the better feelings all at strife
In wild reflection o'er his stormy life;
But haughty still, and loth himself to blame,
He call'd on nature's self to share the shame,
And charged all faults upon the fleshly form
She gave to clog the soul, and feast the worm;
'Till he at last confounded good and ill,
And half mistook for fate the acts of will:
Too high for common selfishness, he could
At times resign his own for others' good,
But not in pity, not because he ought,
But in some strange perversity of thought,
That sway'd him onward with a secret pride
To do what few or none would do beside;
And this same impulse would, in tempting time,
Mislead his spirit equally to crime;
So much he soar'd beyond, or sunk beneath
The men with whom he felt condemn'd to breathe,
And long'd by good or ill to separate
Himself from all who shared his mortal state;
His mind abhorring this had fix'd her throne
Far from the world, in regions of her own:
Thus coldly passing all that pass'd below,
His blood in temperate seeming now would flow:
Ah! happier if it ne'er with guilt had glow'd,
But ever in that icy smoothness flow'd!
'T is true, with other men their path he walk'd,
And like the rest in seeming did and talk'd,
Nor outraged reason's rules by flaw nor start,
His madness was not of the head, but heart;
And rarely wander'd in his speech, or drew
His thoughts so forth as to offend the view.

XIX.

With all that chilling mystery of mien,
And seeming gladness to remain unseen,
He had (if 't were not nature's boon) an art
Of fixing memory on another's heart:
It was not love perchance—nor hate—nor aught
That words can image to express the thought;
But they who saw him did not see in vain,
And once beheld, would ask of him again:
And those to whom he spake remember'd well,
And on the words, however light, would dwell:
None knew, nor how, nor why, but he entwined
Himself perforce around the hearer's mind;
There he was stamp'd in liking, or in hate,
If greeted once; however brief the date
That friendship, pity, or aversion knew,
Still there within the inmost thought he grew.
You could not penetrate his soul, but found,
Despite your wonder, to your own he wound;
His presence haunted still; and from the breast
He forced an all-unwilling interest:
Vain was the struggle in that mental net,
His spirits seem'd to dare you to forget!

XX.

There is a festival, where knights and dames,
And aught that wealth or lofty lineage claims

Appear—a highborn and a welcome guest
To Otho's hall came Lara with the rest.
The long carousal shakes the illumined hall,
Well speeds alike the banquet and the ball;
And the gay dance of bounding beauty's train
Links grace and harmony in happiest chain:
Blest are the early hearts and gentle hands
That mingle there in well according bands;
It is a sight the careful brow might smooth,
And make age smile, and dream itself to youth,
And youth forget such hour was past on earth,
So springs the exulting bosom to that mirth!

XXI.

And Lara gazed on these, sedately glad,
His brow belied him if his soul was sad;
And his glance follow'd fast each fluttering fair,
Whose steps of lightness woke no echo there:
He lean'd against the lofty pillar nigh,
With folded arms and long attentive eye,
Nor mark'd a glance so sternly fix'd on his,
Ill brook'd high Lara scrutiny like this:
At length he caught it, 'tis a face unknown,
But seems as searching his, and his alone;
Prying and dark, a stranger's by his mien,
Who still till now had gazed on him unseen;
At length encountering meets the mutual gaze
Of keen inquiry, and of mute amaze;
On Lara's glance emotion gathering grew,
As if distrusting that the stranger threw;
Along the stranger's aspect fix'd and stern,
Flash'd more than thence the vulgar eye could learn.

XXII.

«'Tis he!» the stranger cried, and those that heard,
Re-echoed fast and far the whisper'd word.
«'Tis he!»—«'Tis who?» they question far and near,
Till louder accents rung on Lara's ear;
So widely spread, few bosoms well could brook
The general marvel, or that single look;
But Lara stirr'd not, changed not, the surprise
That sprung at first to his arrested eyes
Seem'd now subsided, neither sunk nor raised
Glanced his eye round, though still the stranger gazed;
And drawing nigh, exclaim'd, with haughty sneer,
«'Tis he!—how came he thence?—what doth he here?»

XXIII.

It were too much for Lara to pass by
Such question, so repeated fierce and high;
With look collected, but with accent cold,
More mildly firm than petulantly bold,
He turn'd, and met the inquisitorial tone—
«My name is Lara!—when thine own is known,
Doubt not my fitting answer to requite
The unlook'd for courtesy of such a knight.
'Tis Lara!—further wouldst thou mark or ask,
I shun no question and I wear no mask.»

«Thou shun'st no question! Ponder—is there none
Thy heart must answer, though thine ear would shun?
And deem'st thou me unknown too? Gaze again!
At least thy memory was not given in vain.
Oh! never canst thou cancel half her debt,
Eternity forbids thee to forget.»
With slow and searching glance upon his face
Grew Lara's eyes, but nothing there could trace
They knew, or chose to know—with dubious look
He deign'd no answer, but his head he shook,
And half contemptuous turn'd to pass away;
But the stern stranger motion'd him to stay.
«A word!—I charge thee stay, and answer here
To one, who, wert thou noble, were thy peer,
But as thou wast and art—nay, frown not, lord,
If false, 'tis easy to disprove the word—
But, as thou wast and art, on thee looks down.
Distrusts thy smiles, but shakes not at thy frown.
Art thou not he? whose deeds——»
«Whate'er I be,
Words wild as these, accusers like to thee
I list no further; those with whom they weigh
May hear the rest, nor venture to gainsay
The wondrous tale no doubt thy tongue can tell,
Which thus begins so courteously and well.
Let Otho cherish here his polish'd guest,
To him my thanks and thoughts shall be exprest.»
And here their wondering host hath interposed—
«Whate'er there be between you undisclosed,
This is no time nor fitting place to mar
The mirthful meeting with a wordy war.
If thou, Sir Ezzelin, hast ought to show
Which it befits Count Lara's ear to know,
To-morrow, here, or elsewhere, as may best
Beseem your mutual judgment, speak the rest;
I pledge myself for thee, as not unknown,
Though like Count Lara now return'd alone
From other lands, almost a stranger grown;
And if from Lara's blood and gentle birth
I augur right of courage and of worth,
He will not that untainted line belie,
Nor aught that knighthood may accord, deny.»

«To-morrow be it,» Ezzelin replied,
«And here our several worth and truth be tried;
I gage my life, my falchion to attest
My words, so may I mingle with the blest!»
What answers Lara? to its centre shrunk
His soul, in deep abstraction sudden sunk;
The words of many, and the eyes of all
That there were gather'd, seem'd on him to fall;
But his were silent, his appear'd to stray
In far forgetfulness away—away—
Alas! that heedlessness of all around
Bespoke remembrance only too profound.

XXIV.

«To-morrow!—ay, to-morrow!» further word
Than those repeated none from Lara heard;
Upon his brow no outward passion spoke,
From his large eye no flashing anger broke;
Yet there was something fix'd in that low tone,
Which show'd resolve, determined, though unknown.
He seized his cloak—his head he slightly bow'd,
And passing Ezzelin, he left the crowd;
And, as he pass'd him, smiling met the frown
With which that chieftain's brow would bear him down:
It was nor smile of mirth, nor struggling pride
That curbs to scorn the wrath it cannot hide;
But that of one in his own heart secure
Of all that he would do, or could endure.
Could this mean peace? the calmness of the good?
Or guilt grown old in desperate hardihood?
Alas! too like in confidence are each,
For man to trust to mortal look or speech;

From deeds, and deeds alone, may he discern
Truths which it wrings the unpractised heart to learn.

XXV.

And Lara call'd his page, and went his way—
Well could that stripling word or sign obey:
His only follower from those climes afar,
Where the soul glows beneath a brighter star;
For Lara left the shore from whence he sprung,
In duty patient, and sedate though young;
Silent as him he served, his faith appears
Above his station, and beyond his years.
Though not unknown the tongue of Lara's land,
In such from him he rarely heard command;
But fleet his step, and clear his tones would come,
When Lara'ns lip breathed forth the words of home:
Those accents, as his native mountains dear,
Awake their absent echoes in his ear,
Friends', kindreds', parents', wonted voice recal,
Now lost, abjured, for one—his friend, his all:
For him earth now disclosed no other guide;
What marvel then he rarely left his side?

XXVI.

Light was his form, and darkly delicate
That brow whereon his native sun had sate,
But had not marr'd, though in his beams he grew,
The cheek where oft the unbidden blush shone through;
Yet not such blush as mounts when health would show
All the heart's hue in that delighted glow;
But 'twas a hectic tint of secret care
That for a burning moment fever'd there;
And the wild sparkle of his eye seem'd caught
From high, and lighten'd with electric thought,
Though its black orb those long low lashes fringe,
Had temper'd with a melancholy tinge;
Yet less of sorrow than of pride was there,
Or if 'twere grief, a grief that none should share:
And pleased not him the sports that please his age,
The tricks of youth, the frolics of the page;
For hours on Lara he would fix his glance,
As all-forgotten in that watchful trance;
And from his chief withdrawn, he wander'd lone,
Brief were his answers, and his questions none;
His walk the wood, his sport some foreign book;
His resting-place the bank that curbs the brook:
He seem'd, like him he served, to live apart
From all that lures the eye, and fills the heart;
To know no brotherhood, and take from earth
No gift beyond that bitter boon—our birth.

XXVII.

If aught he loved, 'twas Lara; but was shown
His faith in reverence and in deeds alone;
In mute attention; and his care, which guess'd
Each wish, fulfill'd it ere the tongue express'd.
Still there was haughtiness in all he did,
A spirit deep that brook'd not to be chid;
His zeal, though more than that of servile hands,
In act alone obeys, his air commands;
As if 'twas Lara's less than *his* desire
That thus he served, but surely not for hire.
Slight were the tasks enjoin'd him by his lord,
To hold the stirrup, or to bear the sword;
To tune his lute, or if he will'd it more,
On tomes of other times and tongues to pore;
But ne'er to mingle with the menial train,
To whom he show'd nor deference nor disdain,
But that well-worn reserve which proved he knew
No sympathy with that familiar crew:
His soul, whate'er his station or his stem,
Could bow to Lara, not descend to them.
Of higher birth he seem'd, and better days,
Nor mark of vulgar toil that hand betrays,
So femininely white it might bespeak
Another sex, when match'd with that smooth cheek,
But for his garb, and something in his gaze,
More wild and high than woman's eye betrays;
A latent fierceness that far more became
His fiery climate than his tender frame:
True, in his words it broke not from his breast,
But from his aspect might be more than guess'd.
Kaled his name, though rumour said he bore
Another ere he left his mountain-shore;
For sometimes he would hear, however nigh,
That name repeated loud without reply,
As unfamiliar, or, if roused again,
Start to the sound, as but remember'd then;
Unless 'twas Lara's wonted voice that spake,
For then, ear, eyes, and heart would all awake.

XXVIII.

He had look'd down upon the festive hall,
And mark'd that sudden strife so mark'd of all;
And when the crowd around and near him told
Their wonder at the calmness of the bold,
Their marvel how the high-born Lara bore
Such insult from a stranger, doubly sore,
The colour of young Kaled went and came,
The lip of ashes, and the cheek of flame;
And o'er his brow the dampening heart-drops threw
The sickening iciness of that cold dew,
That rises as the busy bosom sinks
With heavy thoughts from which reflection shrinks.
Yes—there be things that we must dream and dare,
And execute ere thought be half aware:
Whate'er might Kaled's be, it was enow
To seal his lip, but agonise his brow.
He gazed on Ezzelin till Lara cast
That sidelong smile upon the knight he past;
When Kaled saw that smile his visage fell,
As if on something recognised right well;
His memory read in such a meaning more
Than Lara's aspect unto others wore:
Forward he sprung—a moment, both were gone,
And all within that hall seem'd left alone;
Each had so fix'd his eye on Lara's mien,
All had so mix'd their feelings with that scene,
That when his long dark shadow through the porch
No more relieves the glare of yon high torch,
Each pulse beats quicker, and all bosoms seem
To bound as doubting from too black a dream,
Such as we know is false, yet dread in sooth,
Because the worst is ever nearest truth.
And they are gone—but Ezzelin is there,
With thoughtful visage and imperious air;
But long remain'd not; ere an hour expired
He waved his hand to Otho, and retired.

XXIX.

The crowd are gone, the revellers at rest;
The courteous host, and all-approving guest,

Again to that accustom'd couch must creep
Where joy subsides, and sorrow sighs to sleep,
And man, o'er-labour'd with his being's strife,
Shrinks to that sweet forgetfulness of life:
There lie love's feverish hope and cunning's guile,
Hate's working brain, and lull'd ambition's wile;
O'er each vain eye oblivion's pinions wave,
And quench'd existence crouches in a grave.
What better name may slumber's bed become?
Night's sepulchre, the universal home,
Where weakness, strength, vice, virtue, sunk supine,
Alike in naked helplessness recline;
Glad for awhile to heave unconscious breath,
Yet wake to wrestle with the dread of death,
And shun, though day but dawn on ills increast,
That sleep, the loveliest, since it dreams the least.

CANTO II.

I.

Night-wanes—the vapours round the mountains curl'd
Melt into morn, and Light awakes the world.
Man has another day to swell the past,
And lead him near to little, but his last;
But mighty nature bounds as from her birth,
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.
Immortal man! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting inly, «they are thine!»
Gaze on, while yet thy gladden'd eye may see;
A morrow comes when they are not for thee:
And grieve what may above thy senseless bier,
Nor earth nor sky will yield a single tear;
Nor cloud shall gather more, nor leaf shall fall,
Nor gale breathe forth one sigh for thee, for all;
But creeping things shall revel in their spoil,
And fit thy clay to fertilise the soil.

II.

'T is morn—'t is noon—assembled in the hall,
The gather'd chieftains come to Otho's call;
'T is now the promised hour, that must proclaim
The life or death of Lara's future fame;
When Ezzelin his charge may here unfold,
And whatsoe'er the tale, it must be told.
His faith was pledged, and Lara's promise given,
To meet it in the eye of man and heaven.
Why comes he not? Such truths to be divulged,
Methinks the accuser's rest is long indulged.

III.

The hour is past, and Lara too is there,
With self-confiding, coldly patient air;
Why comes not Ezzelin? The hour is past,
And murmurs rise, and Otho's brow's o'ercast.
«I know my friend! his faith I cannot fear,
If yet he be on earth, expect him here;
The roof that held him in the valley stands
Between my own and noble Lara's lands;
My halls from such a guest had honour gain'd,
Nor had Sir Ezzelin his host disdain'd,
But that some previous proof forbade his stay,
And urged him to prepare against to-day;
The word I pledged for his I pledge again,
Or will myself redeem his knighthood's stain.»
He ceased—and Lara answer'd, «I am here
To lend at thy demand a listening ear;
To tales of evil from a stranger's tongue,
Whose words already might my heart have wrung,
But that I deem'd him scarcely less than mad,
Or, at the worst, a foe ignobly bad.
I know him not—but me it seems he knew
In lands where—but I must not trifle too:
Produce this babbler—or redeem the pledge;
Here in thy hold, and with thy falchion's edge.»
Proud Otho on the instant, reddening, threw
His glove on earth, and forth his sabre flew.
«The last alternative befits me best,
And thus I answer for mine absent guest.»
With cheek unchanging from its sallow gloom,
However near his own or other's tomb;
With hand, whose almost careless coolness spoke,
Its grasp well-used to deal the sabre-stroke;
With eye, though calm, determined not to spare,
Did Lara too his willing weapon bare.
In vain the circling chieftains round them closed;
For Otho's phrenzy would not be opposed;
And from his lip those words of insult fell—
His sword is good who can maintain them well.

IV.

Short was the conflict; furious, blindly rash,
Vain Otho gave his bosom to the gash:
He bled, and fell, but not with deadly wound,
Stretch'd by a dextrous sleight along the ground.
«Demand thy life!» He answer'd not: and then
From that red floor he ne'er had risen again,
For Lara's brow upon the moment grew
Almost to blackness in its demon hue;
And fiercer shook his angry falchion now
Than when his foe's was levell'd at his brow;
Then all was stern collectedness and art,
Now rose the unleaven'd hatred of his heart;
So little sparing to the foe he fell'd,
That when the approaching crowd his arm withheld,
He almost turn'd the thirsty point on those
Who thus for mercy dared to interpose;
But to a moment's thought that purpose bent:
Yet look'd he on him still with eye intent,
As if he loathed the ineffectual strife
That left a foe, howe'er o'erthrown, with life;
As if to search how far the wound he gave
Had sent its victim onward to his grave.

V.

They raised the bleeding Otho, and the Leech
Forbade all present question, sign, and speech;
The others met within a neighbouring hall,
And he, incensed and heedless of them all,
The cause and conqueror in this sudden fray,
In haughty silence slowly strode away;
He back'd his steed, his homeward path he took,
Nor cast on Otho's towers a single look.

VI.

But where was he? that meteor of a night,
Who menaced but to disappear with light?
Where was this Ezzelin? who came and went
To leave no other trace of his intent.

He left the dome of Otho long ere morn,
In darkness, yet so well the path was worn
He could not miss it: near his dwelling lay;
But there he was not, and with coming day
Came fast inquiry, which unfolded nought
Except the absence of the chief it sought.
A chamber tenantless, a steed at rest,
His host alarm'd, his murmuring squires distrest:
Their search extends along, around the path,
In dread to meet the marks of prowler's wrath:
But none are there, and not a brake hath borne,
Nor gout of blood, nor shred of mantle torn;
Nor fall nor struggle hath defaced the grass,
Which still retains a mark where murder was;
Nor dabbling fingers left to tell the tale,
The bitter print of each convulsive nail,
When agonized hands that cease to guard,
Wound in that pang the smoothness of the sward,
Some such had been, if here a life was reft,
But these were not; and doubting hope is left;
And strange suspicion whispering Lara's name,
Now daily mutters o'er his blacken'd fame;
Then sudden silent when his form appear'd,
Awaits the absence of the thing it fear'd
Again its wonted wondering to renew,
And dye conjecture with a darker hue.

VII.

Days roll along, and Otho's wounds are heal'd,
But not his pride; and hate no more conceal'd:
He was a man of power, and Lara's foe,
The friend of all who sought to work him woe,
And from his country's justice now demands
Account of Ezzelin at Lara's hands.
Who else than Lara could have cause to fear
His presence? who had made him disappear,
If not the man on whom his menaced charge
Had sate too deeply were he left at large?
The general rumour ignorantly loud,
The mystery dearest to the curious crowd;
The seeming friendlessness of him who strove
To win no confidence, and wake no love:
The sweeping fierceness which his soul betray'd,
The skill with which he wielded his keen blade;
Where had his arm unwarlike caught that art?
Where had that fierceness grown upon his heart?
For it was not the blind capricious rage
A word can kindle and a word assuage;
But the deep working of a soul unmix'd
With aught of pity where its wrath had fix'd;
Such as long power and overgorged success
Concentrates into all that 's merciless:
These, link'd with that desire which ever sways
Mankind, the rather to condemn than praise,
'Gainst Lara gathering raised at length a storm,
Such as himself might fear, and foes would form,
And he must answer for the absent head
Of one that haunts him still, alive or dead.

VIII.

Within that land was many a malcontent,
Who cursed the tyranny to which he bent;
That soil full many a wringing despot saw,
Who work'd his wantonness in form of law;
Long war without and frequent broil within
Had made a path for blood and giant sin,
That waited but a signal to begin
New havock, such as civil discord blends,
Which knows no neuter, owns but foes or friends;
Fix'd in his feudal fortress each was lord,
In word and deed obey'd, in soul abhorr'd.
Thus Lara had inherited his lands,
And with them pining hearts and sluggish hands;
But that long absence from his native clime
Had left him stainless of oppression's crime,
And now diverted by his milder sway,
All dread by slow degrees had worn away:
The menials felt their usual awe alone,
But more for him than them that fear was grown;
They deem'd him now unhappy, though at first
Their evil judgment augur'd of the worst,
And each long restless night, and silent mood,
Was traced to sickness, fed by solitude:
And though his lonely habits threw of late
Gloom o'er his chamber, cheerful was his gate;
For thence the wretched ne'er unsoothed withdrew,
For them, at least, his soul compassion knew.
Cold to the great, contemptuous to the high,
The humble pass'd not his unheeding eye;
Much he would speak not, but beneath his roof
They found asylum oft, and ne'er reproof.
And they who watch'd might mark that day by day,
Some new retainers gather'd to his sway;
But most of late, since Ezzelin was lost,
He play'd the courteous lord and bounteous host:
Perchance his strife with Otho made him dread
Some snare prepared for his obnoxious head;
Whate'er his view, his favour more obtains
With these, the people, than his fellow thanes.
If this were policy, so far 't was sound,
The million judged but of him as they found;
From him by sterner chiefs to exile driven
They but required a shelter, and 't was given.
By him no peasant mourn'd his rifled cot,
And scarce the serf could murmur o'er his lot;
With him old Avarice found its hoard secure,
With him contempt forbore to mock the poor;
Youth present cheer and promised recompense
Detain'd, till all too late to part from thence:
To hate he offer'd, with the coming change,
The deep reversion of delay'd revenge;
To love, long baffled by the unequal match,
The well-won charms success was sure to snatch.
All now was ripe, he waits but to proclaim
That slavery nothing which was still a name.
The moment came, the hour when Otho thought
Secure at last the vengeance which he sought:
His summons found the destined criminal
Begirt by thousands in his swarming hall,
Fresh from their feudal fetters newly riven,
Defying earth, and confident of heaven.
That morning he had freed the soil-bound slaves
Who dig no land for tyrants but their graves!
Such is their cry—some watchword for the fight
Must vindicate the wrong, and warp the right:
Religion—freedom—vengeance—what you will,
A word 's enough to raise mankind to kill:
Some factious phrase by cunning caught and spread,
That guilt may reign, and wolves and worms be fed!

IX.

Throughout that clime the feudal chiefs had gain'd
Such sway, their infant monarch hardly reign'd;

Now was the hour for faction's rebel growth,
The serfs contemned the one, and hated both:
They waited but a leader, and they found
One to their cause inseparably bound;
By circumstance compell'd to plunge again,
In self-defence, amidst the strife of men.
Cut off by some mysterious fate from those
Whom birth and nature meant not for his foes,
Had Lara from that night, to him accurst,
Prepared to meet, but not alone, the worst:
Some reason urged, whate'er it was, to shun
Inquiry into deeds at distance done;
By mingling with his own the cause of all,
E'en if he fail'd, he still delay'd his fall.
The sullen calm that long his bosom kept,
The storm that once had spent itself and slept,
Roused by events that seem'd foredoom'd to urge
His gloomy fortunes to their utmost verge,
Burst forth, and made him all he once had been,
And is again; he only changed the scene.
Light care had he for life, and less for fame,
But not less fitted for the desperate game:
He deem'd himself mark'd out for others' hate,
And mock'd at ruin so they shared his fate.
What cared he for the freedom of the crowd?
He raised the humble but to bend the proud.
He had hoped quiet in his sullen lair,
But man and destiny beset him there;
Inured to hunters he was found at bay,
And they must kill, they cannot snare the prey.
Stern, unambitious, silent, he had been
Henceforth a calm spectator of life's scene;
But dragg'd again upon the arena, stood,
A leader not unequal to the feud;
In voice—mien—gesture—savage nature spoke,
And from his eye the gladiator broke.

X.

What boots the oft-repeated tale of strife,
The feast of vultures, and the waste of life?
The varying fortune of each separate field,
The fierce that vanquish and the faint that yield?
The smoking ruin, and the crumbled wall?
In this the struggle was the same with all;
Save that distemper'd passions lent their force
In bitterness that banish'd all remorse.
None sued, for Mercy knew her cry was vain,
The captive died upon the battle-slain:
In either cause, one rage alone possest
The empire of the alternate victor's breast;
And they that smote for freedom or for sway,
Deem'd few were slain, while more remain'd to slay.
It was too late to check the wasting brand,
And Desolation reap'd the famish'd land;
The torch was lighted, and the flame was spread,
And Carnage smiled upon her daily dead.

XI.

Fresh with the nerve the new-born impulse strung,
The first success to Lara's numbers clung:
But that vain victory hath ruin'd all,
They form no longer to their leader's call;
In blind confusion on the foe they press,
And think to snatch is to secure success.
The lust of booty, and the thirst of hate,
Lure on the broken brigands to their fate;
In vain he doth whate'er a chief may do,
To check the headlong fury of that crew;
In vain their stubborn ardour he would tame,—
The hand that kindles cannot quench the flame;
The wary foe alone hath turn'd their mood,
And shown their rashness to that erring brood:
The feign'd retreat, the nightly ambuscade,
The daily harass, and the fight delay'd,
The long privation of the hoped supply,
The tentless rest beneath the humid sky,
The stubborn wall that mocks the leaguer's art,
And palls the patience of his baffled heart,
Of these they had not deem'd: the battle-day
They could encounter as a veteran may,
But more preferr'd the fury of the strife,
And present death to hourly suffering life:
And famine wrings, and fever sweeps away
His numbers melting fast from their array;
Intemperate triumph fades to discontent,
And Lara's soul alone seems still unbent:
But few remain to aid his voice and hand,
And thousands dwindled to a scanty band:
Desperate, though few, the last and best remain'd
To mourn the discipline they late disdain'd.
One hope survives, the frontier is not far,
And thence they may escape from native war;
And bear within them to the neighbouring state
An exile's sorrows, or an outlaw's hate:
Hard is the task their father land to quit,
But harder still to perish or submit.

XII.

It is resolved—they march—consenting Night
Guides with her star their dim and torchless flight;
Already they perceive its tranquil beam
Sleep on the surface of the barrier stream;
Already they descry—Is yon the bank?
Away! 'tis lined with many a hostile rank.
Return or fly!—What glitters in the rear?
'Tis Otho's banner—the pursuer's spear!
Are those the shepherds' fires upon the height?
Alas! they blaze too widely for the flight:
Cut off from hope, and compass'd in the toil,
Less blood perchance hath bought a richer spoil!

XIII.

A moment's pause, 'tis but to breathe their band,
Or shall they onward press, or here withstand?
It matters little—if they charge the foes
Who by the border-stream their march oppose,
Some few, perchance, may break and pass the line,
However link'd to baffle such design.
«The charge be ours! to wait for their assault
Were fate well worthy of a coward's halt.»
Forth flies each sabre, rein'd is every steed,
And the next word shall scarce outstrip the deed:
In the next tone of Lara's gathering breath
How many shall but hear the voice of death!

XIV.

His blade is bared, in him there is an air
As deep, but far too tranquil for despair;
A something of indifference more than then
Becomes the bravest, if they feel for men—
He turn'd his eye on Kaled, ever near,
And still too faithful to betray one fear;

Perchance 'twas but the moon's dim twilight threw
Along his aspect an unwonted hue
Of mournful paleness, whose deep tint exprest
The truth, and not the terror of his breast.
This Lara mark'd, and laid his hand on his:
It trembled not in such an hour as this;
His lip was silent, scarcely beat his heart,
His eye alone proclaim'd, «We will not part!
Thy band may perish, or thy friends may flee,
Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee!»
The word hath pass'd his lips, and onward driven,
Pours the link'd band through ranks asunder riven;
Well has each steed obey'd the armed heel,
And flash the scimitars, and rings the steel;
Outnumber'd not outbraved, they still oppose
Despair to daring, and a front to foes;
And blood is mingled with the dashing stream,
Which runs all redly till the morning beam.

XV.

Commanding, aiding, animating all,
Where foe appear'd to press, or friend to fall,
Cheers Lara's voice, and waves or strikes his steel,
Inspiring hope, himself had ceased to feel.
None fled, for well they knew that flight were vain;
But those that waver turn to smite again,
While yet they find the firmest of the foe
Recoil before their leader's look and blow:
Now girt with numbers, now almost alone,
He foils their ranks, or reunites his own;
Himself he spared not—once they seem'd to fly—
Now was the time, he waved his hand on high,
And shook—why sudden droops that plumed crest?
The shaft is sped—the arrow 's in his breast!
That fatal gesture left the unguarded side,
And Death hath stricken down yon arm of pride.
The word of triumph fainted from his tongue;
That hand, so raised, how droopingly it hung!
But yet the sword instinctively retains,
Though from its fellow shrink the falling reins:
These Kaled snatches: dizzy with the blow,
And senseless bending o'er his saddle-bow,
Perceives not Lara that his anxious page
Beguiles his charger from the combat's rage:
Meantime his followers charge, and charge again;
Too mix'd the slayers now to heed the slain!

XVI.

Day glimmers on the dying and the dead,
The cloven cuirass, and the helmless head;
The war-horse masterless is on the earth,
And that last gasp hath burst his bloody girth;
And near, yet quivering with what life remain'd,
The heel that urged him and the hand that rein'd;
And some too near that rolling torrent lie,
Whose waters mock the lip of those that die;
That panting thirst which scorches in the breath
Of those that die the soldier's fiery death,
In vain impels the burning mouth to crave
One drop—the last—to cool it for the grave;
With feeble and convulsive effort swept,
Their limbs along the crimson'd turf have crept;
The faint remains of life such struggles waste,
But yet they reach the stream, and bend to taste:
They feel its freshness, and almost partake—
Why pause? No further thirst have they to slake—
It is unquench'd, and yet they feel it not;
It was an agony—but now forgot!

XVII.

Beneath a lime, remoter from the scene,
Where but for him that strife had never been,
A breathing but devoted warrior lay:
'Twas Lara, bleeding fast from life away.
His follower once, and now his only guide,
Kneels Kaled, watchful o'er his welling side,
And with his scarf would staunch the tides that rush,
With each convulsion, in a blacker gush;
And then, as his faint breathing waxes low,
In feebler, not less fatal tricklings flow:
He scarce can speak, but motions him 'tis vain,
And merely adds another throb to pain.
He clasps the hand that pang which would assuage,
And sadly smiles his thanks to that dark page
Who nothing fears, nor feels, nor heeds, nor sees,
Save that damp brow which rests upon his knees;
Save that pale aspect, where the eye, though dim,
Held all the light that shone on earth for him.

XVIII.

The foe arrives, who long had search'd the field,
Their triumph nought till Lara too should yield;
They would remove him, but they see 'twere vain,
And he regards them with a calm disdain,
That rose to reconcile him with his fate,
And that escape to death from living hate:
And Otho comes, and leaping from his steed,
Looks on the bleeding foe that made him bleed,
And questions of his state; he answers not,
Scarce glances on him as on one forgot,
And turns to Kaled:—each remaining word,
They understood not, if distinctly heard;
His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung.
They spake of other scenes, but what—is known
To Kaled, whom their meaning reach'd alone;
And he replied, though faintly, to their sound,
While gazed the rest in dumb amazement round:
They seem'd even then—that twain—unto the last
To half forget the present in the past;
To share between themselves some separate fate,
Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.

XIX.

Their words, though faint, were many—from the tone
Their import those who heard could judge alone;
From this, you might have deem'd young Kaled's death
More near than Lara's by his voice and breath,
So sad, so deep, and hesitating broke
The accents his scarce-moving pale lips spoke;
But Lara's voice though low, at first was clear
And calm, till murmuring death gasp'd hoarsely near:
But from his visage little could we guess,
So unrepentant, dark, and passionless,
Save that when struggling nearer to his last,
Upon that page his eye was kindly cast;
And once as Kaled's answering accents ceast,
Rose Lara's hand, and pointed to the East:
Whether (as then the breaking sun from high
Roll'd back the clouds) the morrow caught his eye,
Or that 'twas chance, or some remember'd scene
That raised his arm to point where such had been,

Scarce Kaled seem'd to know, but turn'd away,
As if his heart abhorr'd that coming day.
And shrunk his glance before that morning light,
To look on Lara's brow—where all grew night.
Yet sense seem'd left, though better were its loss;
For when one near display'd the absolving cross,
And proffer'd to his touch the holy bead,
Of which his parting soul might own the need,
He look'd upon it with an eye profane,
And smiled—Heaven pardon! if 'twere with disdain:
And Kaled, though he spoke not, nor withdrew
From Lara's face his fix'd despairing view,
With brow repulsive, and with gesture swift,
Flung back the hand which held the sacred gift,
As if such but disturb'd the expiring man,
Nor seem'd to know his life but *then* began,
That life of immortality, secure
To none, save them whose faith in Christ is sure.

XX.

But gasping heaved the breath that Lara drew,
And dull the film along his dim eye grew;
His limbs stretch'd fluttering, and his head droop'd o'er
The weak yet still untiring knee that bore;
He press'd the hand he held upon his heart—
It beats no more, but Kaled will not part
With the cold grasp, but feels, and feels in vain,
For that faint throb which answers not again.
«It beats!»—Away, thou dreamer!—he is gone—
It once was Lara which thou look'st upon.

XXI.

He gazed, as if not yet had pass'd away
The haughty spirit of that humble clay;
And those around have roused him from his trance,
But cannot tear from thence his fixed glance;
And when in raising him from where he bore
Within his arms the form that felt no more,
He saw the head his breast would still sustain,
Roll down like earth to earth upon the plain;
He did not dash himself thereby, nor tear
The glossy tendrils of his raven hair,
But strove to stand and gaze, but reel'd and fell,
Scarce breathing more than that he loved so well.
Than that *he* loved! Oh! never yet beneath
The breast of man such trusty love may breathe!
That trying moment hath at once reveal'd
The secret long and yet but half conceal'd;
In baring to revive that lifeless breast,
Its grief seem'd ended, but the sex confess'd;
And life return'd, and Kaled felt no shame—
What now to her was Womanhood or Fame!

XXII.

And Lara sleeps not where his fathers sleep;
But where he died his grave was dug as deep,
Nor is his mortal slumber less profound,
Though priest nor bless'd, nor marble deck'd the mound;
And he was mourn'd by one whose quiet grief,
Less loud, outlasts a people's for their chief.
Vain was all question ask'd her of the past,
And vain even menace—silent to the last,
She told nor whence, nor why she left behind
Her all for one who seem'd but little kind.
Why did she love him? Curious fool!—be still—
Is human love the growth of human will?
To her he might be gentleness; the stern
Have deeper thoughts than your dull eyes discern,
And when they love, your smilers guess not how
Beats the strong heart, though less the lips avow.
They were not common links, that form'd the chain
That bound to Lara Kaled's heart and brain;
But that wild tale she brook'd not to unfold,
And seal'd is now each lip that could have told.

XXIII.

They laid him in the earth, and on his breast,
Besides the wound that sent his soul to rest,
They found the scatter'd dints of many a scar,
Which were not planted there in recent war;
Where'er had pass'd his summer years of life,
It seems they vanish'd in a land of strife;
But all unknown his glory or his guilt,
These only told that somewhere blood was spilt,
And Ezzelin, who might have spoke the past,
Return'd no more—that night appear'd his last.

XXIV.

Upon that night (a peasant's is the tale),
A serf that cross'd the intervening vale,
When Cynthia's light almost gave way to morn,
And nearly veil'd in mist her waning horn;
A serf, that rose betimes to thread the wood,
And hew the bough that bought his children's food,
Pass'd by the river that divides the plain
Of Otho's lands and Lara's broad domain:
He heard a tramp—a horse and horseman broke
From out the wood—before him was a cloak
Wrapt round some burthen at his saddle-bow,
Bent was his head, and hidden was his brow.
Roused by the sudden sight at such a time,
And some foreboding that it might be crime,
Himself unheeded watch'd the stranger's course,
Who reach'd the river, bounded from his horse,
And lifting thence the burthen which he bore,
Heaved up the bank, and dash'd it from the shore,
Then paused, and look'd, and turn'd, and seem'd to watch,
And still another hurried glance would snatch,
And follow with his step the stream that flow'd,
As if even yet too much its surface show'd:
At once he started, stoop'd, around him strown
The winter floods had scatter'd heaps of stone;
Of these the heaviest thence he gather'd there,
And slung them with a more than common care.
Meantime the serf had crept to where unseen
Himself might safely mark what this might mean;
He caught a glimpse, as of a floating breast,
And something glitter'd starlike on the vest,
But here he well could mark the buoyant trunk,
A massy fragment smote it, and it sunk:
It rose again but indistinct to view,
And left the waters of a purple hue,
Then deeply disappear'd: the horseman gazed
Till ebb'd the latest eddy it had raised;
Then turning, vaulted on his pawing steed,
And instant spurr'd him into panting speed.
His face was mask'd—the features of the dead,
If dead it were, escaped the observer's dread;
But if in sooth a star its bosom bore,
Such is the badge that knighthood ever wore,
And such 't is known Sir Ezzelin had worn
Upon the night that led to such a morn.

If thus he perish'd, Heaven receive his soul!
His undiscover'd limbs to ocean roll;
And charity upon the hope would dwell
It was not Lara's hand by which he fell.

XXV.

And Kaled—Lara—Ezzelin, are gone,
Alike without their monumental stone!
The first, all efforts vainly strove to wean
From lingering where her chieftain's blood had been;
Grief had so tamed a spirit once too proud,
Her tears were few, her wailing never loud;
But furious would you tear her from the spot
Where yet she scarce believed that he was not,
Her eye shot forth with all the living fire
That haunts the tigress in her whelpless ire;
But left to waste her weary moments there,
She talk'd all idly unto shapes of air,
Such as the busy brain of sorrow paints,
And woos to listen to her fond complaints:
And she would sit beneath the very tree
Where lay his drooping head upon her knee;
And in that posture where she saw him fall,
His words, his looks, his dying grasp recal;
And she had shorn, but saved her raven hair,
And oft would snatch it from her bosom there,
And fold, and press it gently to the ground,
As if she staunch'd anew some phantom's wound.
Herself would question, and for him reply;
Then rising, start, and beckon him to fly
From some imagined spectre in pursuit;
Then seat her down upon some linden's root,
And hide her visage with her meagre hand,
Or trace strange characters along the sand—
This could not last—she lies by him she loved;
Her tale untold—her truth too dearly proved.

NOTE.

The event in section 24, Canto II, was suggested by the description of the death or rather burial of the Duke of Gandia.

The most interesting and particular account of this mysterious event is given by Burchard; and is in substance as follows: «On the eighth day of June, the cardinal of Valenza, and the Duke of Gandia, sons of the Pope, supped with their mother, Vanozza, near the church of *S. Pietro ad vincula;* several other persons being present at the entertainment. A late hour approaching, and the cardinal having reminded his brother, that it was time to return to the apostolic palace, they mounted their horses or mules, with only a few attendants, and proceeded together as far as the palace of cardinal Ascanio Sforza, when the duke informed the cardinal, that before he returned home, he had to pay a visit of pleasure. Dismissing therefore all his attendants, excepting his *staffiero,* or footman, and a person in a mask, who had paid him a visit whilst at supper, and who, during the space of a month, or thereabouts, previous to this time, had called upon him almost daily, at the apostolic palace; he took this person behind him on his mule, and proceeded to the street of the Jews, where he quitted his servant, directing him to remain there until a certain hour; when, if he did not return, he might repair to the palace. The duke then seated the person in the mask behind him, and rode, I know not whither; but in that night he was assassinated, and thrown into the river. The servant, after having been dismissed, was also assaulted and mortally wounded; and although he was attended with great care, yet such was his situation, that he could give no intelligible account of what had befallen his master. In the morning, the duke not having returned to the palace, his servants began to be alarmed; and one of them informed the pontiff of the evening excursion of his sons, and that the duke had not yet made his appearance. This gave the Pope no small anxiety; but he conjectured that the duke had been attracted by some courtesan to pass the night with her, and not choosing to quit the house in open day, had waited till the following evening to return home. When, however, the evening arrived, and he found himself disappointed in his expectations, he became deeply afflicted, and began to make inquiries from different persons, whom he ordered to attend him for that purpose. Amongst these was a man named Giorgio Schiavoni, who, having discharged some timber from a bark in the river, had remained on board the vessel, to watch it, and being interrogated whether he had seen any one thrown into the river, on the night preceding, he replied, that he saw two men on foot, who came down the street, and looked diligently about, to observe whether any person was passing. That seeing no one, they returned, and a short time afterwards two others came, and looked around in the same manner as the former; no person still appearing, they gave a sign to their companions, when a man came, mounted on a white horse, having behind him a dead body, the head and arms of which hung on one side, and the feet on the other side of the horse; the two persons on foot supporting the body, to prevent its falling. They thus proceeded towards that part, where the filth of the city is usually discharged into the river, and turning the horse, with his tail towards the water, the two persons took the dead body by the arms and feet, and with all their strength flung it into the river. The person on horseback then asked if they had thrown it in, to which they replied, *Signor, si* (yes, Sir). He then looked towards the river, and seeing a mantle floating on the stream, he inquired what it was that appeared black; to which they answered it was a mantle; and one of them threw stones upon it, in consequence of which it sunk. The attendants of the pontiff then inquired from Giorgio, why he had not revealed this to the governor of the city; to which he replied, that he had seen in his time a hundred dead bodies thrown into the river at the same place, without any inquiry being made respecting them, and that he had not, therefore, considered it as a matter of any importance. The fishermen and seamen were then collected, and ordered to search the river; where, on the following evening, they found the body of the duke, with his habit entire, and thirty ducats in his purse. He was pierced with nine wounds, one of which was in his throat, the others in his head, body, and limbs. No sooner was the pontiff informed of the death of his son, and that he had been thrown, like filth, into the river, than giving way to his grief, he shut himself up in a chamber, and wept bitterly. The cardinal of Segovia, and other attendants on the

Pope went to the door, and after many hours spent in persuasions and exhortations, prevailed upon him to admit them. From the evening of Wednesday, till the following Saturday, the Pope took no food; nor did he sleep from Thursday morning till the same hour on the ensuing day. At length, however, giving way to the entreaties of his attendants, he began to restrain his sorrow, and to consider the injury which his own health might sustain, by the further indulgence of his grief.»—*Roscoe's Leo Tenth*, vol. I, page 265.

The Curse of Minerva,

A POEM.

————Pallas te hoc vulnere, Pallas
Immolat, et pœnam scelerato ex sanguine sumit.

Slow sinks, more lovely ere his race be run,
Along Morea's hills the setting sun:
Not, as in northern climes, obscurely bright,
But one unclouded blaze of living light!
O'er the hush'd deep the yellow beam he throws,
Gilds the green wave, that trembles as it glows:
On old Ægina's rock, and Idra's isle,
The god of gladness sheds his parting smile;
O'er his own regions lingering loves to shine,
Though there his altars are no more divine.
Descending fast the mountain shadows kiss
Thy glorious gulph, unconquer'd Salamis!
Their azure arches through the long expanse,
More deeply purpled, meet his mellowing glance,
And tenderest tints, along their summits driven,
Mark his gay course and own the hues of heaven;
Till, darkly shaded from the land and deep,
Behind his Delphian cliff he sinks to sleep.

On such an eve, his palest beam he cast,
When, Athens! here thy wisest look'd his last:
How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd[1] sage's latest day!
Not yet—not yet—Sol pauses on the hill—
The precious hour of parting lingers still:
But sad his light to agonising eyes,
And dark the mountain's once delightful dyes;
Gloom o'er the lovely land he seem'd to pour,
The land where Phœbus never frown'd before;
But ere he sunk below Cithæron's head,
The cup of woe was quaff'd—the spirit fled;
The soul of him that scorn'd to fear or fly—
Who lived and died as none can live or die!

But, lo! from high Hymettus to the plain,
The queen of Night asserts her silent reign;[2]
No murky vapour, herald of the storm,
Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form.
With cornice glimmering as the moonbeams play,
There the white column greets her grateful ray,
And bright around, with quivering beams beset,
Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret:
The groves of olive scatter'd dark and wide
Where meek Cephisus sheds his scanty tide,
The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk,[3]
And, dun and sombre mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane, yon solitary palm,
All tinged with varied hues, arrest the eye—
And dull were his that pass'd them heedless by.

Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war;
Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
Mix'd with the shades of many a distant isle,
That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.

As thus within the walls of Pallas' fane
I mark'd the beauties of the land and main,
Alone and friendless, on the magic shore
Whose arts and arms but live in poet's lore,
Oft as the matchless dome I turn'd to scan,
Sacred to gods, but not secure from man,
The past return'd, the present seem'd to cease,
And glory knew no clime beyond her Greece.
Hours roll'd along, and Dian's orb on high
Had gain'd the centre of her softest sky,
And yet unwearied still my footsteps trod
O'er the vain shrine of many a vanish'd god;
But chiefly, Pallas! thine, when Hecate's glare,
Check'd by thy columns, fell more sadly fair
O'er the chill marble, where the startling tread
Thrills the lone heart like echoes from the dead.
Long had I mused, and measured every trace
The wreck of Greece recorded of her race,
When, lo! a giant form before me strode,
And Pallas hail'd me in her own abode.
Yes, 'twas Minerva's self, but, ah! how changed
Since o'er the Dardan field in arms she ranged!
Not such as erst, by her divine command,
Her form appear'd from Phidias' plastic hand;
Gone were the terrors of her awful brow,
Her idle Ægis bore no gorgon now;
Her helm was deep indented, and her lance
Seem'd weak and shaftless, e'en to mortal glance;
The olive branch, which still she deign'd to clasp,
Shrunk from her touch and wither'd in her grasp:
And, ah! though still the brightest of the sky,
Celestial tears bedimm'd her large blue eye;
Round the rent casque her owlet circled slow,
And mourn'd his mistress with a shriek of woe.
«Mortal! ('twas thus she spake) that blush of shame
Proclaims thee Briton—once a noble name—
First of the mighty, foremost of the free,
Now honour'd *less* by all—and *least* by me:
Chief of thy foes shall Pallas still be found:—
Seek'st thou the cause? O mortal, look around!
Lo! here, despite of war and wasting fire,
I saw successive tyrannies expire;

'Scaped from the ravage of the Turk and Goth,
Thy country sends a spoiler worse than both!
Survey this vacant violated fane;
Recount the relics torn that yet remain;
These Cecrops placed—*this* Pericles adorn'd[4]—
That Hadrian rear'd when drooping science mourn'd:
What more I owe let gratitude attest—
Know, Alaric and Elgin did the rest.
That all may learn from whence the plunderer came,
Th' insulted wall sustains his hated name.[5]
For Elgin's fame thus grateful Pallas pleads:
Below, his name—above, behold his deeds!
Be ever hail'd with equal honour here
The Gothic monarch and the Pictish peer.
Arms gave the first his right—the last had none,
But basely stole what less barbarians won!
So when the lion quits his fell repast,
Next prowls the wolf—the filthy jackal last:
Flesh, limbs, and blood, the former make their own;
The last base brute securely gnaws the bone.
Yet still the gods are just, and crimes are crost—
See here what Elgin won, and what he lost!
Another name with his pollutes my shrine,
Behold where Dian's beams disdain to shine!
Some retribution still might Pallas claim,
When Venus half avenged Minerva's shame.»[6]

She ceased awhile, and thus I dared reply,
To soothe the vengeance kindling in her eye:—
«Daughter of Jove! in Britain's injured name,
A true-born Briton may the deed disclaim!
Frown not on England—England owns him not—
Athena, no! the plunderer was a Scot![7]
Ask'st thou the difference? From fair Phyle's towers
Survey Bœotia—Caledonia 's ours.
And well I know within that bastard land[8]
Hath wisdom's goddess never held command:
A barren soil, where nature's germs, confined,
To stern sterility can stint the mind;
Whose thistle well betrays the niggard earth,
Emblem of all to whom the land gives birth.
Each genial influence nurtured to resist,
A land of meanness, sophistry, and mist:
Each breeze from foggy mount and marshy plain
Dilutes with drivel every drizzling brain,
Till burst at length each watery head o'erflows,
Foul as their soil, and frigid as their snows:
Ten thousand schemes of petulance and pride
Dispatch her scheming children far and wide;
Some east, some west, some every where but north!
In quest of lawless gain they issue forth;
And thus, accursed be the day and year,
She sent a Pict to play the felon here.
Yet, Caledonia claims some native worth,
As dull Bœotia gave a Pindar birth—
So may her few, the letter'd and the brave,
Bound to no clime, and victors o'er the grave,
Shake off the sordid dust of such a land,
And shine like children of a happier strand:
As once of yore, in some obnoxious place,
Ten names (if found) had saved a wretched race!»

«Mortal,» the blue-eyed maid resumed, «once more,
Bear back my mandate to thy native shore;
Though fallen, alas! this vengeance still is mine,
To turn my counsels far from lands like thine.
Hear then in silence Pallas' stern behest;
Hear and believe, for time shall tell the rest.
First on the head of him who did the deed
My curse shall light,—on him and all his seed:
Without one spark of intellectual fire,
Be all the sons as senseless as the sire:
If one with wit the parent brood disgrace,
Believe him bastard of a brighter race;
Still with his hireling artists let him prate,
And folly's praise repay for wisdom's hate!
Long of their patron's gusto let them tell,
Whose noblest *native* gusto—is to sell:
To sell, and make (may shame record the day!)
The state receiver of his pilfer'd prey!
Meantime, the flattering feeble dotard, West,
Europe's worst dauber and poor Britain's best,
With palsied hand shall turn each model o'er,
And own himself an infant of fourscore:[9]
Be all the bruisers call'd from all St. Giles,
That art and nature may compare their styles;
While brawny brutes in stupid wonder stare,
And marvel at his lordship's *stone shop* there.[10]
Round the throng'd gate shall sauntering coxcombs creep,
To lounge and lucubrate, to prate and peep:
While many a languid maid, with longing sigh,
On giant statues casts the curious eye;
The room with transient glance appears to skim,
Yet marks the mighty back and length of limb,
Mourns o'er the difference of *now* and *then;*
Exclaims, 'these Greeks indeed were proper men;'
Draws slight comparisons of *these* with *those,*
And envies Lais all her Attic beaux:
When shall a modern maid have swains like these?
Alas! Sir Harry is no Hercules!
And last of all, amidst the gaping crew,
Some calm spectator, as he takes his view,[11]
In silent indignation, mix'd with grief,
Admires the plunder, but abhors the thief.
Loathed throughout life—scarce pardon'd in the dust,
May hate pursue his sacrilegious lust!
Link'd with the fool who fired th' Ephesian dome,
Shall vengeance follow far beyond the tomb;
Erostratus and Elgin e'er shall shine
In many a branding page and burning line!
Alike condemn'd for aye to stand accursed—
Perchance the second viler than the first:
So let him stand through ages yet unborn,
Fix'd statue on the pedestal of scorn!
Though not for him alone revenge shall wait,
But fits thy country for her coming fate:
Hers were the deeds that taught her lawless son
To do what oft Britannia's self had done.
Look to the Baltic blazing from afar—
Your old ally yet mourns perfidious war:
Not to such deeds did Pallas lend her aid,
Or break the compact which herself had made;
Far from such councils, from the faithless field
She fled—but left behind her gorgon shield;
A fatal gift, that turn'd your friends to stone,
And left lost Albion hated and alone.
Look to the east, where Ganges' swarthy race
Shall shake your usurpation to its base;
Lo! there Rebellion rears her ghastly head,
And glares the Nemesis of native dead,
Till Indus rolls a deep purpureal flood,
And claims his long arrear of northern blood,

So may ye perish! Pallas, when she gave
Your free-born rights, forbade ye to enslave.
Look on your Spain, she clasps the hand she hates,
But coldly clasps, and thrusts you from her gates.
Bear witness, bright Barrossa, thou canst tell
Whose were the sons that bravely fought and fell.
While Lusitania, kind and dear ally,
Can spare a few to fight and sometimes fly.
Oh glorious field! by famine fiercely won;
The Gaul retires for once, and all is done!
But when did Pallas teach that one retreat
Retrieved three long olympiads of defeat.
Look last at home—ye love not to look there,
On the grim smile of comfortless despair;
Your city saddens, loud though revel howls,
Here famine faints, and yonder rapine prowls.
See all alike of more or less bereft—
No misers tremble when there 's nothing left.
'Blest paper credit' [12] who shall dare to sing?
It clogs like lead corruption's weary wing:
Yet Pallas pluck'd each Premier by the ear,
Who gods and men alike disdain'd to hear;
But one, repentant o'er a bankrupt state,
On Pallas calls, but calls, alas! too late:
Then raves for***; [13] to that Mentor bends,
Though he and Pallas never yet were friends:
Him senates hear whom never yet they heard,
Contemptuous once, and now no less absurd:
So once of yore each reasonable frog
Swore faith and fealty to his sovereign log;
Thus hail'd your rulers their patrician clod,
As Egypt chose an onion for a god.

«Now fare ye well, enjoy your little hour;
Go, grasp the shadow of your vanish'd power;
Gloss o'er the failure of each fondest scheme,
Your strength a name, your bloated wealth a dream.
Gone is that gold, the marvel of mankind,
And pirates barter all that 's left behind; [14]
No more the hirelings, purchased near and far,
Crowd to the ranks of mercenary war;
The idle merchant on the useless quay
Droops o'er the bales no bark may bear away,
Or, back returning, sees rejected stores
Rot piecemeal on his own encumber'd shores;
The starved mechanic breaks his rusting loom,
And desperate mans him 'gainst the common doom.
Then in the senate of your sinking state,
Show me the man whose counsels may have weight.
Vain is each voice whose tones could once command;
E'en factions cease to charm a factious land;
While jarring sects convulse a sister isle,
And light with maddening hands the mutual pile.

«'Tis done, 'tis past, since Pallas warns in vain,
The Furies seize her abdicated reign;
Wide o'er the realm they wave their kindling brands,
And wring her vitals with their fiery hands.
But one convulsive struggle still remains,
And Gaul shall weep ere Albion wear her chains,
The banner'd pomp of war, the glittering files,
O'er whose gay trappings stern Bellona smiles;
The brazen trump, the spirit-stirring drum,
That bid the foe defiance ere they come;
The hero bounding at his country's call,
The glorious death that decorates his fall,
Swell the young heart with visionary charms,
And bid it antedate the joys of arms.
But know, a lesson you may yet be taught—
With death alone are laurels cheaply bought:
Not in the conflict havoc seeks delight,
His day of mercy is the day of fight;
But when the field is fought, the battle won,
Though drench'd with gore, his woes are but begun.
His deeper deeds ye yet know but by name,—
The slaughter'd peasant and the ravish'd dame,
The rifled mansion and the foe-reap'd field,
Ill suit with souls at home untaught to yield.
Say with what eye, along the distant down,
Would flying burgers mark the blazing town?
How view the column of ascending flames
Shake his red shadow o'er the startled Thames?
Nay, frown not, Albion! for the torch was thine
That lit such pyres from Tagus to the Rhine:
Now should they burst on thy devoted coast,
Go, ask thy bosom, who deserves them most?
The law of heaven and earth is life for life;
And she who raised in vain regrets the strife.»

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 189, line 22.

How watch'd thy better sons his farewell ray,
That closed their murder'd sage's latest day!

Socrates drank the hemlock a short time before sunset (the hour of execution), notwithstanding the entreaties of his disciples to wait till the sun went down.

Note 2. Page 189, line 34.

The queen of Night asserts her silent reign.

The twilight in Greece is much shorter than in our country; the days in winter are longer, but in summer of less duration.

Note 3. Page 189, line 44.

The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk.

The Kiosk is a Turkish summer-house; the palm is without the present walls of Athens, not far from the temple of Theseus, between which and the tree the wall intervenes. Cephisus' stream is indeed scanty, and Hissus has no stream at all.

Note 4. Page 190, line 5.

These Cecrops placed—*this* Pericles adorn'd.

This is spoken of the city in general, and not of the Acropolis in particular. The temple of Jupiter Olympius, by some supposed the Pantheon, was finished by Hadrian: sixteen columns are standing, of the most beautiful marble and style of architecture.

Note 5. Page 190, line 10.

Th' insulted wall sustains his hated name.

It is related by a late oriental traveller, that when the wholesale spoliator visited Athens, he caused his own name, with that of his wife, to be inscribed on a pillar of one of the principal temples. This inscription was executed in a very conspicuous manner, and deeply engraved in the marble, at a very considerable elevation. Notwithstanding which precautions, some person (doubtless inspired by the Patron Goddess), has been at the pains to get himself raised up to the requisite height, and has obliterated the name of the laird, but left that of the lady untouched. The traveller in question ac-

companied this story by a remark, that it must have cost some labour and contrivance to get at the place, and could only have been effected by much zeal and determination.

Note 6. Page 190, line 21.

When Venus half avenged Minerva's shame.

His lordship's name, and that of one who no longer bears it, are carved conspicuously on the Parthenon above; in a part not far distant are the torn remnants of the basso-relievos, destroyed in a vain attempt to remove them.

Note 7. Page 190, line 27.

Frown not on England—England owns him not—
Athena, no! the plunderer was a Scot!

The plaster wall on the west side of the temple of Minerva Polias bears the following inscription, cut in very deep characters:

Quod non fecerunt Goti
Hoc fecerunt Scoti.
Hobhouse's Travels in Greece, etc. p. 345.

Note 8. Page 190, line 30.

And well I know within that bastard land.

Irish bastards, according to Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan.

Note 9. Page 190, line 77.

With palsied hand shall turn each model o'er,
And own himself an infant of fourscore.

Mr West, on seeing «the Elgin collection» (I suppose we shall hear of the Abershaw's and Jack Shephard's collection next), declared himself a mere Tyro in Art.

Note 10. Page 190, line 80.

While brawny brutes in stupid wonder stare,
And marvel at his lordship's *stone shop* there.

Poor Crib was sadly puzzled when exhibited at Elgin house;—he asked if it was not «a stone shop»: he was right,—it is a shop.

Note 11. Page 190, line 94.

And last of all, amidst the gaping crew,
Some calm spectator, as he takes his view.

«Alas! all the monuments of Roman magnificence, all the remains of Grecian taste, so dear to the artist, the historian, the antiquary, all depend on the will of an arbitrary sovereign; and that will is influenced too often by interest or vanity, by a nephew or a sycophant. Is a new palace to be erected (at Rome) for an upstart family? the Coliseum is stripped to furnish materials. Does a foreign minister wish to adorn the bleak walls of a northern castle with antiques? the temples of Theseus or Minerva must be dismantled, and the works of Phidias or Praxiteles be torn from the shattered frieze. That a decrepid uncle, wrapped up in the religious duties of his age and station, should listen to the suggestions of an interested nephew, is natural: and that an oriental despot should undervalue the masterpieces of Grecian art, is to be expected; though in both cases the consequences of such weakness are much to be lamented—but that the minister of a nation, famed for its knowledge of the language, and its veneration for the monuments of ancient Greece, should have been the prompter and the instrument of these destructions is almost incredible. Such rapacity is a crime against all ages and all generations; it deprives the past of the trophies of their genius and the title deeds of their fame; the present, of the strongest inducements to exertion, the noblest exhibitions that curiosity can contemplate; the future, of the masterpieces of art, the models of imitation. To guard against the repetition of such depredations is the wish of every man of genius, the duty of every man in power, and the common interest of every civilized nation.» — *Eustace's Classical Tour through Italy*, p. 269.

«This attempt to transplant the temple of Vesta from Italy to England, may, perhaps, do honour to the late Lord Bristol's patriotism or to his magnificence; but it cannot be considered as an indication of either taste or judgment.»—*Ibid*, p. 419.

Note 12. Page 191, line 19.

Blest paper credit who shall dare to sing?

Blest paper credit, last and best supply,
That lends corruption lighter wings to fly.—Pope.

Note 13. Page 191, line 25.

There raves for * * *
The Deal and Dover traffickers in specie.

Note 14. Page 191, line 38.

Gone is that gold, the marvel of mankind,
And pirates barter all that's left behind.

See the preceding note.

The Siege of Corinth.

TO JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.

This Poem is Inscribed

BY HIS FRIEND.

January 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

«The grand army of the Turks (in 1715), under the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way into the heart of the Morea, and to form the siege of Napoli di Romania, the most considerable place in all that country,[1] thought it best in the first place to attack Corinth, upon which they made several storms. The garrison being weakened, and the governor seeing it

[1] Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810–11; and in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1809, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness, but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poro etc. and the coast of the continent.

was impossible to hold out against so mighty a force, thought it fit to beat a parley: but while they were treating about the articles, one of the magazines in the Turkish camp, wherein they had six hundred barrels of powder, blew up by accident, whereby six or seven hundred men were killed: which so enraged the infidels, that they would not grant any capitulation, but stormed the place with so much fury, that they took it, and put most of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the governor, to the sword. The rest, with Antonio Bembo, proveditor extraordinary, were made prisoners of war.»—*History of the Turks*, vol. iii. p. 151.

THE

SIEGE OF CORINTH.

I.

Many a vanish'd year and age,
And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
Have swept o'er Corinth; yet she stands
A fortress form'd to Freedom's hands.
The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock,
Have left untouch'd her hoary rock,
The keystone of a land, which still,
Though fall'n, looks proudly on that hill,
The land-mark to the double tide
That purpling rolls on either side,
As if their waters chafed to meet,
Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
But could the blood before her shed
Since first Timoleon's brother bled,
Or baffled Persia's despot fled,
Arise from out the earth which drank
The stream of slaughter as it sank,
That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
Her isthmus idly spread below:
Or could the bones of all the slain,
Who perish'd there, be piled again,
That rival pyramid would rise
More mountain-like, through those clear skies,
Than yon tower-capt Acropolis
Which seems the very clouds to kiss.

II.

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
The gleam of twice ten thousand spears;
And downward to the Isthmian plain
From shore to shore of either main,
The tent is pitch'd, the crescent shines
Along the Moslem's leaguering lines;
And the dusk Spahi's bands advance
Beneath each bearded pacha's glance;
And far and wide as eye can reach
The turban'd cohorts throng the beach;
And there the Arab's camel kneels,
And there his steed the Tartar wheels;
The Turcoman hath left his herd,[1]
The sabre round his loins to gird;
And there the volleying thunders pour,
Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
Wings the far hissing globe of death;
Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,
Which crumbles with the ponderous ball;
And from that wall the foe replies,
O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
With fires that answer fast and well
The summons of the Infidel.

III.

But near and nearest to the wall
Of those who wish and work its fall,
With deeper skill in war's black art
Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
As any chief that ever stood
Triumphant in the fields of blood;
From post to post, and deed to deed,
Fast spurring on his reeking steed,
Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
And make the foremost Moslem quail;
Or where the battery, guarded well,
Remains as yet impregnable,
Alighting cheerly to inspire
The soldier slackening in his fire;
The first and freshest of the host
Which Stamboul's sultan there can boast,
To guide the follower o'er the field,
To point the tube, the lance to wield,
Or whirl around the bickering blade;—
Was Alp, the Adrian renegade!

IV.

From Venice—once a race of worth
His gentle sires—he drew his birth;
But late an exile from her shore,
Against his countrymen he bore
The arms they taught to bear; and now
The turban girt his shaven brow.
Through many a change had Corinth pass'd
With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
And here, before her walls, with those
To Greece and Venice equal foes,
He stood a foe, with all the zeal
Which young and fiery converts feel,
Within whose heated bosom throngs
The memory of a thousand wrongs.
To him had Venice ceased to be
Her ancient civic boast—« the Free;»
And in the palace of St Mark
Unnamed accusers in the dark
Within the « Lion's mouth» had placed
A charge against him uneffaced:
He fled in time, and saved his life,
To waste his future years in strife,
That taught his land how great her loss
In him who triumph'd o'er the Cross,
'Gainst which he rear'd the Crescent high,
And battled to avenge or die.

V.

Coumourgi[2]—he whose closing scene
Adorn'd the triumph of Eugene,
When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
The last and mightiest of the slain,
He sank, regretting not to die,
But curst the Christian's victory—
Coumourgi—can his glory cease,
That latest conqueror of Greece,

Till Christian hands to Greece restore
The freedom Venice gave of yore?
A hundred years have roll'd away
Since he refix'd the Moslem's sway;
And now he led the Mussulman,
And gave the guidance of the van
To Alp, who well repaid the trust
By cities levell'd with the dust;
And proved, by many a deed of death,
How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI.

The walls grew weak; and fast and hot
Against them pour'd the ceaseless shot,
With unabating fury sent
From battery to battlement;
And thunder-like the pealing din
Rose from each heated culverin;
And here and there some crackling dome
Was fired before the exploding bomb:
And as the fabric sank beneath
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
In red and wreathing columns flash'd
The flame, as loud the ruin crash'd,
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven;
Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII.

But not for vengeance, long delay'd,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach
His skill to pierce the promised breach:
Within these walls a maid was pent
His hope would win, without consent
Of that inexorable sire,
Whose heart refused him in its ire,
When Alp, beneath his Christian name,
Her virgin hand aspired to claim.
In happier mood, and earlier time,
While unimpeach'd for traitorous crime,
Gayest in gondola or hall,
He glitter'd through the Carnival;
And tuned the softest serenade
That e'er on Adria's waters play'd
At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII.

And many deem'd her heart was won;
For sought by numbers, given to none,
Had young Francesca's hand remain'd
Still by the church's bonds unchain'd:
And when the Adriatic bore
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail,
And pensive wax'd the maid and pale;
More constant at confessional,
More rare at masque and festival;
Or seen at such, with downcast eyes,
Which conquer'd hearts they ceased to prize:
With listless look she seems to gaze;
With humbler care her form arrays;
Her voice less lively in the song;
Her step, though light, less fleet among
The pairs, on whom the morning's glance
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

IX.

Sent by the state to guard the land,
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
While Sobieski tamed his pride
By Buda's wall and Danube's side,
The chiefs of Venice wrung away
From Patra to Eubœa's bay),
Minotti held in Corinth's towers
The Doge's delegated powers,
While yet the pitying eye of peace
Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece:
And ere that faithless truce was broke
Which freed her from the unchristian yoke,
With him his gentle daughter came:
Nor there, since Menelaus' dame
Forsook her lord and land, to prove
What woes await on lawless love,
Had fairer form adorn'd the shore
Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn;
And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,
O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
The foremost of the fierce assault.
The bands are rank'd; the chosen van
Of Tartar, and of Mussulman,
The full of hope, misnamed «forlorn,»
Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
And win their way with falchions' force,
Or pave the path with many a corse,
O'er which the following brave may rise,
Their stepping-stone—the last who dies!

XI.

'T is midnight: on the mountain's brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down;
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright;
Who ever gazed upon them shining,
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray?
The waves on either shore lay there
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillow'd on the waves;
The banners droop'd along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling;
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,
And echo answer'd from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
As rose the Muezzin's voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer;

It rose, that chanted mournful strain,
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain:
'T was musical, but sadly sweet,
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,
And take a long unmeasured tone,
To mortal minstrelsy unknown.
It seem'd to those within the wall
A cry prophetic of their fall:
It struck even the besieger's ear
With something ominous and drear,
An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed
Of that strange sense its silence framed;
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

XII.

The tent of Alp was on the shore;
The sound was hush'd, the prayer was o'er;
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obey'd;
'T is but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay,
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter; but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.
He stood alone among the host;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the Crescent o'er the Cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in paradise to be
By Houris loved immortally:
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil.
He stood alone—a renegade
Against the country he betray'd;
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand:
They follow'd him, for he was brave,
And great the spoil he got and gave;
They crouch'd to him, for he had skill
To warp and wield the vulgar will:
But still his Christian origin
With them was little less than sin.
They envied even the faithless fame
He earn'd beneath a Moslem name;
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
In youth a bitter Nazarene.
They did not know how pride can stoop,
When baffled feelings withering droop;
They did not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel.
He ruled them—man may rule the worst,
By ever daring to be first:
So lions o'er the jackal sway;
The jackal points, he fells the prey,
Then on the vulgar yelling press,
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII.

His head grows fever'd, and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose;
Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
Awoke him with a sunken heart.
The turban on his hot brow press'd,
The mail weigh'd lead-like on his breast,
Though oft and long beneath its weight
Upon his eyes had slumber sate,
Without or couch or canopy,
Except a rougher field and sky
Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
Than now along the heaven was spread.
He could not rest, he could not stay
Within his tent to wait for day,
But walk'd him forth along the sand,
Where thousand sleepers strew'd the strand.
What pillow'd them? and why should he
More wakeful that the humblest be!
Since more their peril, worse their toil,
And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
While he alone, where thousands pass'd
A night of sleep, perchance their last,
In sickly vigil wander'd on,
And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV.

He felt his soul become more light
Beneath the freshness of the night.
Cool was the silent sky, though calm,
And bathed his brow with airy balm:
Behind, the camp—before him lay,
In many a winding creek and bay,
Lepanto's gulf: and, on the brow
Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,
High and eternal, such as shone
Through thousand summers brightly gone,
Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
It will not melt, like man, to time:
Tyrant and slave are swept away,
Less form'd to wear before the ray,
But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
Which on the mighty mount thou hailest,
While tower and tree are torn and rent,
Shines o'er its craggy battlement;
In form a peak, in height a cloud,
In texture like a hovering shroud,
Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
As from her fond abode she fled,
And linger'd on the spot, where long
Her prophet spirit spake in song.
Oh, still her step at moments falters
O'er wither'd fields, and ruin'd altars,
And fain would wake, in souls too broken,
By pointing to each glorious token.
But vain her voice, till better days
Dawn in those yet remember'd rays
Which shone upon the Persian flying,
And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times
Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;

And through this night, as on he wander'd,
And o'er the past and present ponder'd,
And thought upon the glorious dead
Who there in better cause had bled,
He felt how faint and feebly dim
The fame that could accrue to him,
Who cheer'd the band, and waved the sword,
A traitor in a turban'd horde;
And led them to the lawless siege,
Whose best success were sacrilege.
Not so had those his fancy number'd,
The chiefs whose dust around him slumber'd;
Their phalanx marshall'd on the plain,
Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.
They fell devoted, but undying;
The very gale their names seem'd sighing:
The waters murmur'd of their name;
The woods were peopled with their fame;
The silent pillar, lone and gray,
Claim'd kindred with their sacred clay;
Their spirits wrapt the dusky mountain,
Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain;
The meanest rill, the mightiest river
Roll'd mingling with their fame for ever.
Despite of every yoke she bears,
That land is glory's still and theirs!
'Tis still a watch-word to the earth:
When man would do a deed of worth
He points to Greece, and turns to tread,
So sanction'd, on the tyrant's head:
He looks to her, and rushes on
Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
And woo'd the freshness night diffused.
There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,[3]
Which changeless rolls eternally;
So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood;
And the powerless moon beholds them flow,
Heedless if she come or go:
Calm or high, in main or bay,
On their course she hath no sway.
The rock unworn its base doth bare,
And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there;
And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
On the line that it left long ages ago:
A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.

He wander'd on, along the beach,
Till within the range of a carbine's reach
Of the leaguer'd wall; but they saw him not,
Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot?
Did traitors lurk in the Christian's hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts wax'd cold?
I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flash'd no fire, and there hiss'd no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flank'd the sea-ward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel,
As his measured step on the stone below
Clank'd, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival,
Gorging and growling o'er carcase and limb;
They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripp'd the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter skull,[4]
As it slipp'd through their jaws, when their edge grew dull,
As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed;
So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fallen for that night's repast.
And Alp knew, by the turbans that roll'd on the sand,
The foremost of these were the best of his band:
Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,
And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair,[5]
All the rest was shaven and bare.
The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.
But close by the shore on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Pick'd by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

XVII.

Alp turn'd him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight;
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorch'd with the death-thirst, and writhing in vain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower;
For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honour's eye on daring deeds!
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead,
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashion'd by long forgotten hands;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be:
What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone, rear'd by creatures of clay!

XIX.

He sate him down at a pillar's base,
And pass'd his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude;
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fever'd, throbbing, and opprest;
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see
Your own run over the ivory key,

Ere the measured tone is taken
By the chords you would awaken.
There he sate all heavily,
As he heard the night-wind sigh.
Was it the wind, through some hollow stone,[6]
Sent that soft and tender moan?
He lifted his head, and he look'd on the sea,
But it was unrippled as glass may be;
He look'd on the long grass—it waved not a blade;
How was that gentle sound convey'd?
He look'd to the banners—each flag lay still,
So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill.
And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
What did that sudden sound bespeak?
He turn'd to the left—is he sure of sight?
There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX.

He started up with more of fear
Than if an armed foe were near.
«God of my fathers! what is here?
Who art thou, and wherefore sent
So near a hostile armament?»
His trembling hands refused to sign
The cross he deem'd no more divine:
He had resumed it in that hour,
But conscience wrung away the power.
He gazed, he saw: he knew the face
Of beauty, and the form of grace;
It was Francesca by his side,
The maid who might have been his bride!

The rose was yet upon her cheek,
But mellow'd with a tenderer streak:
Where was the play of her soft lips fled!
Gone was the smile that enliven'd their red.
The ocean's calm within their view,
Beside her eye had less of blue;
But like that cold wave it stood still,
And its glance, though clear, was chill.
Around her form a thin robe twining,
Nought conceal'd her bosom shining;
Through the parting of her hair,
Floating darkly downward there,
Her rounded arm show'd white and bare:
And ere yet she made reply,
Once she raised her hand on high;
It was so wan, and transparent of hue,
You might have seen the moon shine through.

XXI.

«I come from my rest to him I love best,
That I may be happy, and he may be blest.
I have pass'd the guards, the gate, the wall;
Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
From a maid in the pride of her purity;
And the Power on high, that can shield the good
Thus from the tyrant of the wood,
Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
From the hands of the leaguering infidel.
I come—and if I come in vain,
Never, oh never, we meet again!
Thou hast done a fearful deed
In falling away from thy father's creed.
But dash that turban to earth, and sign
The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine;
Wring the black drop from thy heart,
And to-morrow unites us no more to part.»

«And where should our bridal couch be spread?
In the midst of the dying and the dead?
For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
The sons and the shrines of the Christian name:
None save thou and thine, I've sworn,
Shall be left upon the morn:
But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
Where our hands shall be join'd, and our sorrow forgot.
There thou yet shalt be my bride,
When once again I've quell'd the pride
Of Venice; and her hated race
Have felt the arm they would debase
Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
Whom vice and envy made my foes.»

Upon his hand she laid her own—
Light was the touch, but it thrill'd to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,
Which fix'd him beyond the power to start.
Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,
He could not loose him from its hold;
But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,
As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.
The feverish glow of his brow was gone,
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,
As he look'd on the face, and beheld its hue
So deeply changed from what he knew:
Fair but faint—without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day;
And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her breath,
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,
And there seem'd not a pulse in her veins to dwell.
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fix'd,
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmix'd
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream;
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare,
Stirr'd by the breath of the wintry air,
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight;
As they seem, through the dimness, about to come down
From the shadowy wall where their images frown;
Fearfully flitting to and fro,
As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

«If not for love of me be given
Thus much, then, for the love of Heaven,—
Again I say—that turban tear
From off thy faithless brow, and swear
Thine injured country's sons to spare,
Or thou art lost; and never shalt see,
Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.
If this thou dost accord, albeit
A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet,
That doom shall half absolve thy sin,
And Mercy's gate may receive thee within:
But pause one moment more, and take
The curse of Him thou didst forsake;

And look once more to heaven, and see
Its love for ever shut from thee.
There is a light cloud by the moon—[7]
'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—
If, by the time its vapoury sail
Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
Thy heart within thee is not changed,
Then God and man are both avenged;
Dark will thy doom be, darker still
Thine immortality of ill.»

Alp look'd to heaven, and saw on high
The sign she spake of in the sky;
But his heart was swollen, and turn'd aside,
By deep interminable pride,
This first false passion of his breast
Roll'd like a torrent o'er the rest.
He sue for mercy! *He* dismay'd
By wild words of a timid maid!
He, wrong'd by Venice, vow to save
Her sons devoted to the grave!
No—though that cloud were thunder's worst,
And charged to crush him—let it burst!

He look'd upon it earnestly,
Without an accent of reply;
He watch'd it passing; it is flown:
Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
And thus he spake—«Whate'er my fate,
I am no changeling—'tis too late:
The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
Then rise again; the tree must shiver.
What Venice made me, I must be,
Her foe in all, save love to thee:
But thou art safe: oh, fly with me!»
He turn'd, but she is gone!
Nothing is there but the column stone.
Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air?
He saw not, he knew not; but nothing is there.

XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun
As if that morn were a jocund one.
Lightly and brightly breaks away
The Morning from her mantle gray,
And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
Hark to the trump, and the drum,
And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
And the flap of the banners, that flit as they're borne,
And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
And the clash, and the shout, «they come, they come!»
The horsetails[8] are pluck'd from the ground, and the sword
From its sheath; and they form, and but wait for the word.
Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman,
Strike your tents, and throng to the van;
Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
That the fugitive may flee in vain,
When he breaks from the town; and none escape,
Aged or young, in the Christian shape;
While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.
The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
White is the foam of their champ on the bit:
The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
The cannon are pointed and ready to roar,
And crush the wall they have crumbled before:
Forms in his phalanx each Janizar;
Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,
So is the blade of his scimitar;
The khan and the pachas are all at their post;
The vizier himself at the head of the host.
When the culverin's signal is fired, then on;
Leave not in Corinth a living one—
A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls.
God and the prophet—Alla Hu!
Up to the skies with that wild halloo!
«There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to scale;
And your hands on your sabres, and how should ye fail?
He who first downs with the red cross may crave
His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and have!»
Thus utter'd Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;
The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear,
And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—
Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

XXIII.

As the wolves, that headlong go
On the stately buffalo,
Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die:
Thus against the wall they went,
Thus the first were backward bent;
Many a bosom, sheath'd in brass,
Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
Shiver'd by the shot, that tore
The ground whereon they moved no more:
Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heap'd by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battle goes,
If with them, or for their foes;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice,

Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new:
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara;
(We have heard the hearers say,)
Even unto Piræus bay.

XXV.

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt.
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done.
Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plunder'd dome:
Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street;
But here and there, where 'vantage ground
Against the foe may still be found,
Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again—
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall.

There stood an old man—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might:
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him on that day
In a semicircle lay;
Still he combated unwounded,
Though retreating, unsurrounded.
Many a scar of former fight
Lurk'd beneath his corslet bright;
But of every wound his body bore,
Each and all had been ta'en before:
Though aged, he was so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him;
And the foes whom he singly kept at bay,
Outnumber'd his thin hairs of silver gray.
From right to left his sabre swept:
Many an Othman mother wept
Sons that were unborn, when dipp'd
His weapon first in Moslem gore,
Ere his years could count a score.
Of all he might have been the sire
Who fell that day beneath his ire:
For, sonless left long years ago,
His wrath made many a childless foe;
And since the day, when in the strait 9
His only boy had met his fate,
His parent's iron hand did doom
More than a human hecatomb.
If shades by carnage be appeased,
Patroclus' spirit less was pleased
Than his, Minotti's son, who died
Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.
Buried he lay, where thousands before
For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore:
What of them is left to tell
Where they lie, and how they fell?
Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves;
But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout! a band
Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand.
Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
Swifter to smite, and never to spare—
Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on;
Thus in the fight is he ever known:
Others a gaudier garb may show,
To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe;
Many a hand 's on a richer hilt,
But none on a steel more ruddily gilt;
Many a loftier turban may wear,—
Alp is but known by the white arm bare;
Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there!
There is not a standard on that shore
So well advanced the ranks before;
There is not a banner in Moslem war
Will lure the Delhis half so far;
It glances like a falling star!
Where'er that mighty arm is seen,
The bravest be, or late have been;
There the craven cries for quarter
Vainly to the vengeful Tartar;
Or the hero, silent lying,
Scorns to yield a groan in dying;
Mustering his last feeble blow
'Gainst the nearest level'd foe,
Though faint beneath the mutual wound,
Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,
And Alp's career a moment check'd.
«Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
For thine own, thy daughter's sake.»

«Never, renegado, never!
Though the life of thy gift would last for ever.»

«Francesca!—Oh my promised bride!
Must she too perish by thy pride?»

«She is safe.»—«Where? where?»—«In heaven,
From whence thy traitor soul is driven—
Far from thee, and undefiled.»
Grimly then Minotti smiled,
As he saw Alp staggering bow
Before his words, as with a blow,
«Oh God! when died she?»—«Yesternight—
Nor weep I for her spirit's flight:
None of my pure race shall be
Slaves to Mahomet and thee—
Come on!»—That challenge is in vain—
Alp 's alrêady with the slain!
While Minotti's words were wreaking
More revenge in bitter speaking
Than his falchion's point had found,
Had the time allow'd to wound,
From within the neighbouring porch
Of a long defended church,
Where the last and desperate few
Would the failing fight renew,
The sharp shot dash'd Alp to the ground;
Ere an eye could view the wound
That crash'd through the brain of the infidel,
Round he spun, and down he fell;
A flash like fire within his eyes
Blazed, as he bent no more to rise,

And then eternal darkness sunk
Through all the palpitating trunk;
Nought of life left, save a quivering
Where his limbs were slightly shivering:
They turn'd him on his back; his breast
And brow were stain'd with gore and dust,
And through his lips the life-blood oozed,
From its deep veins lately loosed;
But in his pulse there was no throb,
Nor on his lips one dying sob;
Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
Heralded his way to death;
Ere his very thought could pray,
Unanel'd he pass'd away,
Without a hope from mercy's aid,—
To the last a renegade.

XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose
Of his followers, and his foes;
These in joy, in fury those:
Then again in conflict mixing,
Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
Interchanged the blow and thrust,
Hurling warriors in the dust.
Street by street, and foot by foot,
Still Minotti dares dispute
The latest portion of the land,
Left beneath his high command;
With him, aiding heart and hand,
The remnant of his gallant band.
Still the church is tenable,
Whence issued late the fated ball
That half avenged the city's fall,
When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:
Thither bending sternly back,
They leave before a bloody track;
And, with their faces to the foe,
Dealing wounds with every blow,
The chief, and his retreating train,
Join to those within the fane:
There they yet may breathe awhile,
Shelter'd by the massy pile.

XXIX.

Brief breathing-time! the turban'd host,
With added ranks and raging boast,
Press onwards with such strength and heat,
Their numbers balk their own retreat;
For narrow the way that led to the spot
Where still the Christians yielded not;
And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
Through the massy column to turn and fly;
They perforce must do or die.
They die; but ere their eyes could close
Avengers o'er their bodies rose;
Fresh and furious, fast they fill
The ranks unthinn'd, though slaughter'd still;
And faint the weary Christians wax
Before the still renew'd attacks:
And now the Othmans gain the gate;
Still resists its iron weight,
And still, all deadly aim'd and hot,
From every crevice comes the shot;
From every shatter'd window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower:
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—it falls—and all is o'er;
Lost Corinth may resist no more!

XXX.

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone:
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above,
With eyes of light and looks of love;
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,
When pictured there, we kneeling see
Her and the boy-god on her knee,
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there.
Still she smiled; even now she smiles,
Though slaughter streams along her aisles:
Minotti lifted his aged eye,
And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
Then seized a torch which blazed thereby;
And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
Contain'd the dead of ages gone;
Their names were on the graven floor,
But now illegible with gore;
The carved crests, and curious hues
The varied marble's veins diffuse,
Were smear'd, and slippery—stain'd and strown
With broken swords and helms o'erthrown:
There were dead above, and the dead below
Lay cold in many a coffin'd row,
You might see them piled in sable state,
By a pale light through a gloomy grate;
But War had enter'd their dark caves,
And stored along the vaulted graves
Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
In masses by the fleshless dead;
Here, throughout the siege, had been
The Christian's chiefest magazine;
To these a late-form'd train now led,
Minotti's last and stern resource
Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain
To strive, and those must strive in vain:
For lack of further lives, to slake
The thirst of vengeance now awake,
With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
And lop the already lifeless head,
And fell the statues from their niche,
And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
And from each other's rude hands wrest
The silver vessels saints had blest.
To the high altar on they go;
Oh, but it made a glorious show!
On its table still behold
The cup of consecrated gold;
Massy and deep, a glittering prize,
Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes:

That morn it held the holy wine,
Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
Which his worshippers drank at the break of day,
To shrive their souls ere they join'd in the fray.
Still a few drops within it lay;
And round the sacred table glow
Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row,
From the purest metal cast;
A spoil—the richest, and the last.

XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretch'd
To grasp the spoil he almost reach'd,
When old Minotti's hand
Touch'd with the torch the train—
'T is fired!
Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turban'd victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,
In one wild roar expired!
The shatter'd town—the walls thrown down—
The waves a moment backward bent—
The hills that shake, although unrent,
As if an earthquake pass'd—
The thousand shapeless things all driven
In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,
By that tremendous blast—
Proclaim'd the desperate conflict o'er
On that too long afflicted shore:
Up to the sky like rockets go
All that mingled there below:
Many a tall and goodly man,
Scorch'd and shrivell'd to a span,
When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strew'd the plain:
Down the ashes shower like rain;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles;
Some fell on the shore, but far away,
Scatter'd o'er the isthmus lay;
Christian or Moslem, which be they?
Let their mothers see and say!
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled
On the sweet sleep of her child,
Little deem'd she such a day
Would rend those tender limbs away.
Not the matrons that them bore
Could discern their offspring more;
That one moment left no trace
More of human form or face,
Save a scatter'd scalp or bone:
And down came blazing rafters, strown
Around, and many a falling stone,
Deeply dinted in the clay,
All blacken'd there and reeking lay.
All the living things that heard
That deadly earth-shock disappear'd:
The wild birds flew, the wild dogs fled,
And howling left the unburied dead;
The camels from their keepers broke;
The distant steer forsook the yoke—
The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
And burst his girth, and tore his rein;
The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh,
Deep-mouth'd arose, and doubly harsh;
The wolves yell'd on the cavern'd hill,
Where echo roll'd in thunder still;
The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry,[10]
Bay'd from afar complainingly,
With a mix'd and mournful sound,
Like crying babe and beaten hound:
With sudden wing and ruffled breast,
The eagle left his rocky nest,
And mounted nearer to the sun,
The clouds beneath him seem'd so dun;
Their smoke assail'd his startled beak,
And made him higher soar and shriek—
Thus was Corinth lost and won!

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 193, line 38.

The Turcoman hath left his herd.

The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal: they dwell in tents.

Note 2. Page 193, line 96.

Coumourgi—he whose closing scene.

Ali Coumourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III, after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians, in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin (in the plain of Carlowitz), in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Breuner, and some other German prisoners; and his last words, «Oh that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs!» a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, «was a great general,» he said «I shall become a greater, and at his expense.»

Note 3. Page 196, line 31.

There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea.

The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.

Note 4. Page 196, line 65.

And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter skull.

This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the wall of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock, a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.

Note 5. Page 196, line 74.

And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair.

This tuft, or long lock, is left from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into paradise by it.

Note 6. Page 197, line 5.

I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr Coleridge, called «Christabel.» It was not till after these lines were written

that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr Coleridge, whose poem has been composed above fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.

Note 7. Page 198, line 3.

There is a light cloud by the moon.

I have been told that the idea expressed from lines 598 to 603 have been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it: but it is not original—at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in pages 182-3-4 of the English version of «Vathek» (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, or read, without a renewal of gratification.

Note 8. Page 198, line 48.

The horsetails are pluck'd from the ground, and the sword.

The horsetail, fixed upon a lance, a pacha's standard.

Note 9. Page 199, line 45.

And since the day, when in the strait.

In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and the Turks.

Note 10. Page 201, line 68.

The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry.

I believe I have taken a poetical license to transplant the jackal from Asia. In Greece I never saw nor heard these animals; but among the ruins of Ephesus I have heard them by hundreds. They haunt ruins, and follow armies.

Parisina.

TO SCROPE BERDMORE DAVIES, ESQ.

The following Poem is Inscribed,

BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIRED HIS TALENTS, AND VALUED HIS FRIENDSHIP.

January 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's «Antiquities of the House of Brunswick.»—I am aware that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for Nicholas, as more metrical.

«Under the reign of Nicholas III, Ferrara was polluted with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an attendant, and his own observation, the Marquis of Este discovered the incestuous loves of his wife Parisina, and Hugo his bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and husband, who published his shame, and survived their execution. He was unfortunate, if they were guilty; if they were innocent, he was still more unfortunate; nor is there any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the last act of the justice of a parent.»—*Gibbon's Miscellaneous Works*, vol. 3, p. 470, new edition.

PARISINA.

I.

It is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whisper'd word;
And gentle winds, and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear.
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

II.

But it is not to list to the waterfall
That Parisina leaves her hall,
And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light
That the lady walks in the shadow of night;
And if she sits in Este's bower,
'T is not for the sake of its full-blown flower—
She listens—but not for the nightingale—
Though her ear expects as soft a tale.
There glides a step through the foliage thick,
And her cheek grows pale—and her heart beats quick.
There whispers a voice through the rustling leaves,
And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves:
A moment more—and they shall meet—
'T is past—her lover 's at her feet.

III.

And what unto them is the world beside,
With all its change of time and tide?
Its living things—its earth and sky—
Are nothing to their mind and eye.

And heedless as the dead are they
Of aught around, above, beneath;
As if all else had pass'd away,
They only for each other breathe;
Their very sighs are full of joy
So deep, that did it not decay,
That happy madness would destroy
The hearts which feel its fiery sway:
Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
In that tumultuous tender dream?
Who that have felt that passion's power,
Or paused, or fear'd in such an hour?
Or thought how brief such moments last:
But yet—they are already past!
Alas! we must awake before
We know such vision comes no more.

IV.

With many a lingering look they leave
The spot of guilty gladness past;
And though they hope, and vow, they grieve,
As if that parting were the last.
The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
The lip that there would cling for ever,
While gleams on Parisina's face
The Heaven she fears will not forgive her,
As if each calmly conscious star
Beheld her frailty from afar—
The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
Yet binds them to their trysting-place.
But it must come, and they must part
In fearful heaviness of heart,
With all the deep and shuddering chill
Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V.

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed,
To covet there another's bride;
But she must lay her conscious head
A husband's trusting heart beside.
But fever'd in her sleep she seems,
And red her cheek with troubled dreams,
And mutters she in her unrest
A name she dare not breathe by day,
And clasps her Lord unto the breast
Which pants for one away:
And he to that embrace awakes,
And, happy in the thought, mistakes
That dreaming sigh, and warm caress,
For such as he was wont to bless;
And could in very fondness weep
O'er her who loves him even in sleep.

VI.

He clasp'd her sleeping to his heart,
And listen'd to each broken word:
He hears—Why doth Prince Azo start,
As if the Archangel's voice he heard?
And well he may—a deeper doom
Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
When he shall wake to sleep no more,
And stand the eternal throne before
And well he may—his earthly peace
Upon that sound is doom'd to cease.
That sleeping whisper of a name
Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.

And whose that name? that o'er his pillow
Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
Which rolls the plank upon the shore,
And dashes on the pointed rock
The wretch who sinks to rise no more;—
So came upon his soul the shock.
And whose that name? 't is Hugo's,—his—
In sooth he had not deem'd of this!—
'T is Hugo's,—he, the child of one
He loved—his own all-evil son—
The offspring of his wayward youth,
When he betray'd Bianca's truth,
The maid whose folly could confide
In him who made her not his bride.

VII.

He pluck'd his poniard in its sheath,
But sheathed it ere the point was bare—
Howe'er unworthy now to breathe,
He could not slay a thing so fair—
At least, not smiling—sleeping there—
Nay, more:—he did not wake her then,
But gazed upon her with a glance
Which, had she roused her from her trance,
Had frozen her sense to sleep again—
And o'er his brow the burning lamp
Gleam'd on the dew-drops big and damp.
She spake no more—but still she slumber'd—
While, in his thought, her days are number'd.

VIII.

And with the morn he sought, and found,
In many a tale from those around,
The proof of all he fear'd to know,
Their present guilt, his future woe;
The long-conniving damsels seek
To save themselves, and would transfer
The guilt—the shame—the doom to her:
Concealment is no more—they speak
All circumstance which may compel
Full credence to the tale they tell:
And Azo's tortured heart and ear
Have nothing more to feel or hear.

IX.

He was not one who brook'd delay:
Within the chamber of his state,
The chief of Este's ancient sway
Upon his throne of judgment sate;
His nobles and his guards are there,—
Before him is the sinful pair;
Both young,—and *one* how passing fair!
With swordless belt, and fetter'd hand,
Oh, Christ! that thus a son should stand
Before a father's face!
Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,
And hear the sentence of his ire,
The tale of his disgrace!
And yet he seems not overcome,
Although, as yet, his voice be dumb.

X.

And still, and pale, and silently
Did Parisina wait her doom
How changed since last her speaking eye
Glanced gladness round the glittering room.

Where high-born men were proud to wait—
Where Beauty watch'd to imitate
Her gentle voice—her lovely mien—
And gather from her air and gait
The graces of its queen:
Then,—had her eye in sorrow wept,
A thousand warriors forth had leapt,
A thousand swords had sheathless shone,
And made her quarrel all their own.
Now,—what is she? and what are they?
Can she command, or these obey?
All silent and unheeding now,
With downcast eyes and knitting brow,
And folded arms, and freezing air,
And lips that scarce their scorn forbear,
Her knights and dames, her court—is there:
And he, the chosen one, whose lance
Had yet been couch'd before her glance,
Who—were his arm a moment free—
Had died or gain'd her liberty;
The minion of his father's bride,—
He, too, is fetter'd by her side;
Nor sees her swoln and full eye swim
Less for her own despair than him:
Those lids—o'er which the violet vein
Wandering, leaves a tender stain,
Shining through the smoothest white
That e'er did softest kiss invite—
Now seem'd with hot and livid glow
To press, not shade, the orbs below;
Which glance so heavily, and fill,
As tear on tear grows gathering still.

XI.

And he for her had also wept,
But for the eyes that on him gazed:
His sorrow, if he felt it, slept;
Stern and erect his brow was raised.
Whate'er the grief his soul avow'd,
He would not shrink before the crowd;
But yet he dared not look on her:
Remembrance of the hours that were—
His guilt—his love—his present state—
His father's wrath—all good men's hate—
His earthly, his eternal fate—
And hers,—oh, hers!—he dared not throw
One look upon that deathlike brow!
Else had his rising heart betray'd
Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII.

And Azo spake:—« But yesterday
I gloried in a wife and son;
That dream this morning pass'd away;
Ere day declines, I shall have none.
My life must linger on alone;
Well,—let that pass,—there breathes not one
Who would not do as I have done:
Those ties are broken—not by me;
Let that too pass;—the doom 's prepared!
Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,
And then—thy crime's reward!
Away! address thy prayers to Heaven,
Before its evening stars are met—
Learn if thou there canst be forgiven;
Its mercy may absolve thee yet.
But here, upon the earth beneath,
There is no spot where thou and I
Together, for an hour, could breathe:
Farewell! I will not see thee die.—
But thou, frail thing! shall view his head—
Away! I cannot speak the rest:
Go! woman of the wanton breast;
Not I, but thou his blood dost shed:
Go! if that sight thou canst outlive,
And joy thee in the life I give.»

XIII.

And here stern Azo hid his face—
For on his brow the swelling vein
Throbb'd as if back upon his brain
The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again;
And therefore bow'd he for a space,
And pass'd his shaking hand along
His eye, to veil it from the throng;
While Hugo raised his chained hands,
And for a brief delay demands
His father's ear: the silent sire
Forbids not what his words require.

« It is not that I dread the death—
For thou hast seen me by thy side
All redly through the battle ride,
And that not once a useless brand
Thy slaves have wrested from my hand,
Hath shed more blood in cause of thine,
Than e'er can stain the axe of mine:
« Thou gavest, and may'st resume my breath,
A gift for which I thank thee not;
Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,
Her slighted love and ruin'd name,
Her offspring's heritage of shame;
But she is in the grave, where he,
Her son, thy rival, soon shall be.
Her broken heart—my sever'd head—
Shall witness for thee from the dead
How trusty and how tender were
Thy youthful love—paternal care.
'T is true, that I have done thee wrong—
« But wrong for wrong—this deem'd thy bride,
The other victim of thy pride,
Thou know'st for me was destined long.
Thou saw'st, and coveted'st her charms—
And with thy very crime—my birth,
Thou taunted'st me—as little worth;
A match ignoble for her arms,
Because, forsooth, I could not claim
The lawful heirship of thy name,
Nor sit on Este's lineal throne:
Yet, were a few short summers mine,
My name should more than Este's shine
With honours all my own.
I had a sword—and have a breast
That should have won as haught[2] a crest
As ever waved along the line
Of all these sovereign sires of thine.
Not always knightly spurs are worn
The brightest by the better born;
And mine have lanced my courser's flank
Before proud chiefs of princely rank,
When charging to the cheering cry
Of 'Este and of Victory!'

I will not plead the cause of crime,
Nor sue thee to redeem from time
A few brief hours or days that must
At length roll o'er my reckless dust;—
Such maddening moments as my past,
They could not, and they did not, last—
Albeit my birth and name be base,
And thy nobility of race
Disdain'd to deck a thing like me—
  Yet in my lineaments they trace
  Some features of my father's face,
And in my spirit—all of thee.
From thee—this tamelessness of heart—
From thee—nay, wherefore dost thou start?—
From thee in all their vigour came
My arm of strength, my soul of flame—
Thou didst not give me life alone,
But all that made me more thine own.
See what thy guilty love hath done!
Repaid thee with too like a son!
I am no bastard in my soul,
For that, like thine, abhorr'd controul:
And for my breath, that hasty boon
Thou gavest and wilt resume so soon,
I valued it no more than thou,
When rose thy casque above thy brow,
And we, all side by side, have striven,
And o'er the dead our coursers driven:
The past is nothing—and at last
The future can but be the past;
Yet would I that I then had died:
  For though thou work'dst my mother's ill,
And made thy own my destined bride,
  I feel thou art my father still;
And, harsh as sounds thy hard decree,
'T is not unjust, although from thee.
Begot in sin, to die in shame,
My life begun and ends the same:
As err'd the sire, so err'd the son,
And thou must punish both in one.
My crime seems worst to human view,
But God must judge between us two!»

XIV.

He ceased—and stood with folded arms,
  On which the circling fetters sounded;
  And not an ear but felt as wounded,
  Of all the chiefs that there were rank'd
  When those dull chains in meeting clank'd:
Till Parisina's fatal charms
Again attracted every eye—
Would she thus hear him doom'd to die?
She stood, I said, all pale and still,
The living cause of Hugo's ill:
Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turn'd to either side—
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew—
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood;
But every now and then a tear
  So large and slowly gather'd slid
  From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear!
And those who saw, it did surprise,
Such drops could fall from human eyes.
To speak she thought—the imperfect note
Was choked within her swelling throat,
Yet seem'd in that low hollow groan
Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
It ceased—again she thought to speak,
Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
And to the earth she fell like stone,
Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
More like a thing that ne'er had life,—
A monument of Azo's wife,—
Than her, that living guilty thing,
Whose every passion was a sting,
Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
That guilt's detection and despair.
But yet she lived—and all too soon
Recover'd from that death-like swoon—
But scarce to reason—every sense
Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense;
And each frail fibre of her brain
(As bow-strings, when relax'd by rain,
The erring arrow launch aside)
Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide—
The past a blank, the future black,
With glimpses of a dreary track,
Like lightning on the desert path,
When midnight storms are mustering wrath.
She fear'd—she felt that something ill
Lay on her soul, so deep and chill—
That there was sin and shame she knew;
That some one was to die—but who?
She had forgotten:—did she breathe?
Could this be still the earth beneath?
The sky above, and men around;
Or were they fiends who now so frown'd
On one, before whose eyes each eye
Till then had smiled in sympathy?
All was confused and undefined,
To her all-jarr'd and wandering mind;
A chaos of wild hopes and fears:
And now in laughter, now in tears,
But madly still in each extreme,
She strove with that convulsive dream:
For so it seem'd on her to break:
Oh! vainly must she strive to wake!

XV.

The Convent bells are ringing,
  But mournfully and slow;
In the gray square turret swinging,
  With a deep sound, to and fro.
  Heavily to the heart they go!
Hark! the hymn is singing—
  The song for the dead below,
  Or the living who shortly shall be so!
For a departing being's soul
The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll:
He is near his mortal goal;
Kneeling at the Friar's knee;
Sad to hear—and piteous to see—
Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
With the block before and the guards around—
And the headsman with his bare arm ready,
That the blow may be both swift and steady,

Feels if the axe be sharp and true—
Since he set its edge anew:
While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father.

XVI.

It is a lovely hour as yet
Before the summer sun shall set,
Which rose upon that heavy day,
And mock'd it with his steadiest ray;
And his evening beams are shed
Full on Hugo's fated head,
As his last confession pouring
To the monk, his doom deploring
In penitential holiness,
He bends to hear his accents bless
With absolution such as may
Wipe our mortal stains away.
That high sun on his head did glisten
As he there did bow and listen—
And the rings of chesnut hair
Curled half down his neck so bare;
But brighter still the beam was thrown
Upon the axe which near him shone
With a clear and ghastly glitter——
Oh! that parting hour was bitter!
Even the stern stood chill'd with awe:
Dark the crime, and just the law—
Yet they shudder'd as they saw.

XVII.

The parting prayers are said and over
Of that false son—and daring lover!
His beads and sins are all recounted,
His hours to their last minute mounted—
His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd;
'Tis done—all closely are they shorn—
The vest which till this moment worn—
The scarf which Parisina gave—
Must not adorn him to the grave.
Even that must now be thrown aside,
And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied;
But no—that last indignity
Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
All feelings seemingly subdued,
In deep disdain were half renew'd,
When headsman's hands prepared to bind
Those eyes which would not brook such blind:
As if they dared not look on death.
«No—yours my forfeit blood and breath—
These hands are chain'd—but let me die
At least with an unshackled eye—
Strike:»—and as the word he said,
Upon the block he bow'd his head;
These the last accents Hugo spoke:
«Strike»—and flashing fell the stroke—
Roll'd the head—and, gushing, sunk
Back the stain'd and heaving trunk,
In the dust, which each deep vein
Slaked with its ensanguined rain;
His eyes and lips a moment quiver,
Convulsed and quick—then fix for ever.

He died, as erring man should die,
Without display, without parade;
Meekly had he bow'd and pray'd,
As not disdaining priestly aid,
Nor desperate of all hope on high.
And while before the Prior kneeling,
His heart was wean'd from earthly feeling;
His wrathful sire—his paramour—
What were they in such an hour?
No more reproach—no more despair;
No thought but heaven—no word but prayer—
Save the few which from him broke,
When, bared to meet the headsman's stroke,
He claim'd to die with eyes unbound,
His sole adieu to those around.

XVIII.

Still as the lips that closed in death,
Each gazer's bosom held his breath:
But yet, afar, from man to man,
A cold electric shiver ran,
As down the deadly blow descended
On him whose life and love thus ended;
And with a hushing sound comprest,
A sigh shrunk back on every breast;
But no more thrilling noise rose there,
Beyond the blow that to the block
Pierced through with forced and sullen shock,
Save one:—what cleaves the silent air
So madly shrill—so passing wild?
That, as a mother's o'er her child,
Done to death by sudden blow,
To the sky these accents go,
Like a soul's in endless woe.
Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
That horrid voice ascends to heaven,
And every eye is turn'd thereon;
But sound and sight alike are gone!
It was a woman's shriek—and ne'er
In madlier accents rose despair;
And those who heard it, as it past,
In mercy wish'd it were the last.

XIX.

Hugo is fallen; and, from that hour,
No more in palace, hall, or bower,
Was Parisina heard or seen:
Her name—as if she ne'er had been—
Was banish'd from each lip and ear,
Like words of wantonness or fear;
And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
Was mention heard of wife or son;
No tomb—no memory had they;
Theirs was unconsecrated clay;
At least the knight's who died that day.
But Parisina's fate lies hid
Like dust beneath the coffin lid:
Whether in convent she abode,
And won to heaven her dreary road,
By blighted and remorseful years
Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears;
Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
For that dark love she dared to feel;
Or if, upon the moment smote,
She died by tortures less remote;
Like him she saw upon the block,
With heart that shared the headsman's shock,

In quicken'd brokenness that came,
In pity, o'er her shatter'd frame,
None knew—and none can ever know:
But whatsoe'er its end below,
Her life began and closed in woe![3]

XX.

And Azo found another bride,
And goodly sons grew by his side;
But none so lovely and so brave
As him who wither'd in the grave;
Or if they were—on his cold eye
Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
Or noticed with a smother'd sigh.
But never tear his cheek descended,
And never smile his brow unbended;
And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
The intersected lines of thought;
Those furrows which the burning share
Of sorrow ploughs untimely there;
Scars of the lacerating mind
Which the soul's war doth leave behind.
He was past all mirth or woe:
Nothing more remain'd below
But sleepless nights and heavy days,
A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
A heart which shunn'd itself—and yet
That would not yield—nor could forget,
Which when it least appear'd to melt,
Intently thought—intensely felt:
The deepest ice which ever froze
Can only o'er the surface close—
The living stream lies quick below,
And flows—and cannot cease to flow.
Still was his seal'd-up bosom haunted
By thoughts which nature hath implanted;
Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
Howe'er our stifled tears we banish;
When, struggling as they rise to start,
We check those waters of the heart,
They are not dried—those tears unshed
But flow back to the fountain head,
And resting in their spring more pure,
For ever in its depth endure,
Unseen, unwept, but uncongeal'd,
And cherish'd most where least reveal'd.
With inward starts of feeling left,
To throb o'er those of life bereft;
Without the power to fill again
The desert gap which made his pain;
Without the hope to meet them where
United souls shall gladness share,
With all the consciousness that he
Had only pass'd a just decree;
That they had wrought their doom of ill;
Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
The tainted branches of the tree,
If lopp'd with care, a strength may give,
By which the rest shall bloom and live
All greenly fresh and wildly free:
But if the lightning, in its wrath,
The waving boughs with fury scathe,
The massy trunk the ruin feels.
And never more a leaf reveals.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 202, line 14.

As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

The lines contained in Section I. were printed as set to music some time since: but belonged to the poem where they now appear, the greater part of which was composed prior to «Lara,» and other compositions since published.

Note 2. Page 204, line 117.

That should have won as haught a crest.

Haught—haughty.—«Away, *haught* man, thou art insulting me.»
Shakspeare. *Richard II.*

Note 3. Page 207, line 5.

Her life began and closed in woe.

«This turned out a calamitous year for the people of Ferrara, for there occurred a very tragical event in the court of their sovereign. Our annals both printed and in manuscript, with the exception of the unpolished and negligent work of Sardi, and one other, have given the following relation of it, from which, however, are rejected many details, and especially the narrative of Bandelli, who wrote a century afterwards, and who does not accord with the contemporary historians.

«By the above mentioned Stella dell' Assassino, the Marquis, in the year 1405, had a son called Ugo, a beautiful and ingenuous youth. Parisina Malatesta, second wife of Niccolo, like the generality of step-mothers, treated him with little kindness, to the infinite regret of the Marquis, who regarded him with fond partiality. One day she asked leave of her husband to undertake a certain journey, to which he consented, but upon condition that Ugo should bear her company; for he hoped by these means to induce her, in the end, to lay aside the obstinate aversion which she had conceived against him. And indeed his intent was accomplished but too well, since, during the journey, she not only divested herself of all her hatred, but fell into the opposite extreme. After their return, the Marquis had no longer any occasion to renew his former reproofs. It happened one day that a servant of the Marquis, named Zoese, or, as some call him, Giorgio, passing before the apartments of Parisina, saw going out from them one of her chambermaids, all terrified and in tears. Asking the reason, she told him that her mistress, for some slight offence, had been beating her; and, giving vent to her rage, she added, that she could easily be revenged, if she chose to make known the criminal familiarity which subsisted between Parisina and her step-son. The servant took note of the words, and related them to his master. He was astounded thereat, but scarcely believing his ears, he assured himself of the fact, alas! too clearly, on the 18th of May, by looking through a hole made in the ceiling of his wife's chamber. Instantly he broke into a furious rage, and arrested both of them, together with Aldobrandino Rangoni, of Modena, her gentleman, and also, as some say, two of the women of her chamber, as abettors of this sinful act. He ordered them to be brought to a hasty trial, desiring the judges to pronounce sentence, in the accustomed forms, upon the culprits. This sentence was death. Some there were that bestirred themselves in favour of the delinquents, and, amongst others, Ugoccion Contrario, who was all-powerful with Niccolo, and also his aged and much deserving minister

Alberto dal Sale. Both of these, their tears flowing down their cheeks, and upon their knees, implored him for mercy: adducing whatever reasons they could suggest for sparing the offenders, besides those motives of honour and decency which might persuade him to conceal from the public so scandalous a deed. But his rage made him inflexible, and, on the instant, he commanded that the sentence should be put in execution.

«It was, then, in the prisons of the castle, and exactly in those frightful dungeons which are seen at this day beneath the chamber called the Aurora, at the foot of the Lion's tower, at the top of the street Giovecca, that on the night of the twenty-first of May were beheaded, first Ugo, and afterwards Parisina. Zoese, he that accused her, conducted the latter under his arm to the place of punishment. She, all along, fancied that she was to be thrown into a pit, and asked at every step, whether she was yet come to the spot? she was told that her punishment was the axe. She inquired what was become of Ugo, and received for answer, that he was already dead; at the which, sighing grievously, she exclaimed, «Now, then, I wish not myself to live;» and being come to the block, she stripped herself with her own hands of all her ornaments, and wrapping a cloth round her head, submitted to the fatal stroke which terminated the cruel scene. The same was done with Rangoni, who, together with the others, according to two calendars in the library of St Francesco, was buried in the cemetery of that convent. Nothing else is known respecting the women.

«The Marquis kept watch the whole of that dreadful night, and, as he was walking backwards and forwards, inquired of the Captain of the castle if Ugo was dead yet? who answered him, Yes. He then gave himself up to the most desperate lamentations, exclaiming, «Oh! that I too were dead, since I have been hurried on to resolve thus against my own Ugo!» And then gnawing with his teeth a cane which he had in his hand, he passed the rest of the night in sighs and in tears, calling frequently upon his own dear Ugo. On the following day, calling to mind that it would be necessary to make public his justification, seeing that the transaction could not be kept secret, he ordered the narrative to be drawn out upon paper, and sent it to all the courts of Italy.

«On receiving this advice, the Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari, gave orders, but without publishing his reasons, that stop should be put to the preparations for a tournament, which under the auspices of the Marquis, and at the expense of the city of Padua, was about to take place, in the square of St Mark, in order to celebrate his advancement to the ducal chair.

«The Marquis, in addition to what he had already done, from some unaccountable burst of vengeance, commanded that as many of the married women as were well known to him to be faithless, like his Parisina, should, like her, be beheaded. Amongst others, Barbarina, or as some call her, Laodamia Romei, wife of the court judge, underwent this sentence, at the usual place of execution, that is to say, in the quarter of St Giacomo, opposite the present fortress, beyond St Paul's. It cannot be told how strange appeared this proceeding in a prince, who, considering his own disposition, should, as it seemed, have been in such cases most indulgent. Some, however, there were, who did not fail to commend him.» [1]

[1] Frizzi—History of Ferrara.

The Prisoner of Chillon.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

Eternal spirit of the chainless mind!
Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! thou art,
For there thy habitation is the heart—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind;
And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
Until his very steps have left a trace
Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
By Bonnivard! [1]—May none those marks efface!
For they appeal from tyranny to God.

THE

PRISONER OF CHILLON.

I.

My hair is gray, but not with years,
Nor grew it white
In a single night, [2]
As men's have grown from sudden fears:
My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
But rusted with a vile repose,
For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
And mine has been the fate of those
To whom the goodly earth and air
Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare;
But this was for my father's faith,
I suffer'd chains and courted death;
That father perish'd at the stake
For tenets he would not forsake;
And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,
Proud of Persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have seal'd;
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old;
There are seven columns, massy and gray,
Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,

A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score,
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet, each alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight:
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but pined in heart;
'T was still some solace in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each,
With some new hope, or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold.
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon-stone,
A grating sound—not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be:
It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him—with eyes as blue as heaven,
For him my soul was sorely moved;
And truly might it be distrest
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles, being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V.

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind:
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank
With joy:—but not in chains to pine;
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—
And so perchance in sooth did mine;
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

VI.

Lake Leman lies by Chillon's walls:
A thousand feet in depth below
Its massy waters meet and flow;
Thus much the fathom-line was sent
From Chillon's snow-white battlement,[3]
Which round about the wave inthralls:
A double dungeon wall and wave
Have made—and like a living grave.
Below the surface of the lake
The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
We heard it ripple night and day,
Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
And I have felt the winter's spray
Wash through the bars when winds were high
And wanton in the happy sky;
And then the very rock hath rock'd,
And I have felt it shake unshock'd,
Because I could have smiled to see
The death that would have set me free.

VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,
I said his mighty heart declined,
He loathed and put away his food;
It was not that 't was coarse and rude,
For we were used to hunter's fare,
And for the like had little care:
The milk drawn from the mountain goat
Was changed for water from the moat;
Our bread was such as captives' tears
Have moisten'd many a thousand years,
Since man first pent his fellow men
Like brutes within an iron den:
But what were these to us or him?
These wasted not his heart or limb;
My brother's soul was of that mould
Which in a palace had grown cold,
Had his free breathing been denied
The range of the steep mountain's side:
But why delay the truth?—he died.
I saw and could not hold his head,
Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,
Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
He died—and they unlock'd his chain,
And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
Even from the cold earth of our cave.

I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
His corse in dust whereon the day
Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
But then within my brain it wrought,
That even in death his freeborn breast
In such a dungeon could not rest.
I might have spared my idle prayer—
They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there:
The flat and turfless earth above
The being we so much did love;
His empty chain above it leant,
Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII.

But he, the favourite and the flower,
Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
His mother's image in fair face,
The infant love of all his race,
His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
My latest care, for whom I sought
To hoard my life, that his might be
Less wretched now, and one day free;
He, too, who yet had held untired
A spirit natural or inspired—
He, too, was struck, and day by day
Was wither'd on the stalk away.
Oh God! it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood:—
I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
I've seen it on the breaking ocean
Strive with a swoln convulsive motion,
I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
Of sin delirious with its dread:
But these were horrors—this was woe
Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow:
He faded, and so calm and meek,
So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
And grieved for those he left behind;
With all the while a cheek whose bloom
Was as a mockery of the tomb,
Whose tints as gently sunk away
As a departing rainbow's ray—
An eye of most transparent light,
That almost made the dungeon bright,
And not a word of murmur—not
A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
A little talk of better days,
A little hope my own to raise,
For I was sunk in silence—lost
In this last loss, of all the most;
And then the sighs he would suppress
Of fainting nature's feebleness,
More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
I listen'd, but I could not hear—
I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
I knew 't was hopeless, but my dread
Would not be thus admonished;
I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
I burst my chain with one strong bound,
And rush'd to him:—I found him not,
I only stirr'd in this black spot,
I only lived—*I* only drew
The accursed breath of dungeon dew;
The last—the sole—the dearest link
Between me and the eternal brink,
Which bound me to to my failing race,
Was broken in this fatal place.
One on the earth, and one beneath—
My brothers—both had ceased to breathe:
I took that hand which lay so still,
Alas! my own was full as chill;
I had not strength to stir, or strive,
But felt that I was still alive—
A frantic feeling when we know
That what we love shall ne'er be so.
I know not why
I could not die,
I had no earthly hope—but faith,
And that forbade a selfish death.

IX.

What next befel me then and there
I know not well—I never knew—
First came the loss of light, and air,
And then of darkness too:
I had no thought, no feeling—none—
Among the stones I stood a stone,
And was, scarce conscious what I wist,
As shrubless crags within the mist;
For all was blank, and bleak, and gray—
It was not night—it was not day,
It was not even the dungeon-light,
So hateful to my heavy sight,
But vacancy absorbing space,
And fixedness—without a place;
There were no stars—no earth—no time—
No check—no change—no good—no crime—
But silence, and a stirless breath
Which neither was of life nor death;
A sea of stagnant idleness,
Blind, boundless, mute, and motionless!

X.

A light broke in upon my brain,—
It was the carol of a bird;
It ceased, and then it came again,
The sweetest song ear ever heard,
And mine was thankful till my eyes
Ran over with the glad surprise,
And they that moment could not see
I was the mate of misery;
But then by dull degrees came back
My senses to their wonted track,
I saw the dungeon walls and floor
Close slowly round me as before,
I saw the glimmer of the sun
Creeping as it before had done,
But through the crevice where it came
That bird was perch'd, as fond and tame,
And tamer than upon the tree;
A lovely bird with azure wings,
And song that said a thousand things,
And seem'd to say them all for me!
I never saw its like before,
I ne'er shall see its likeness more:
It seem'd like me to want a mate,
But was not half so desolate,
And it was come to love me when
None lived to love me so again,

And cheering from my dungeon's brink,
Had brought me back to feel and think.
I know not if it late were free,
Or broke its cage to perch on mine,
But knowing well captivity,
Sweet bird! I could not wish for thine!
Or if it were, in winged guise,
A visitant from Paradise;
For—Heaven forgive that thought! the while
Which made me both to weep and smile;
I sometimes deem'd that it might be
My brother's soul come down to me;
But then at last away it flew,
And then 't was mortal—well I knew,
For he would never thus have flown,
And left me twice so doubly lone,—
Lone—as the corse within its shroud,
Lone—as a solitary cloud,
A single cloud on a sunny day,
While all the rest of heaven is clear,
A frown upon the atmosphere,
That hath no business to appear
When skies are blue, and earth is gay.

XI.

A kind of change came in my fate,
My keepers grew compassionate,
I know not what had made them so,
They were inured to sights of woe,
But so it was:—my broken chain
With links unfasten'd did remain,
And it was liberty to stride
Along my cell from side to side,
And up and down, and then athwart,
And tread it over every part;
And round the pillars one by one,
Returning where my walk begun,
Avoiding only, as I trod,
My brothers' graves without a sod;
For if I thought with heedless tread
My step profaned their lowly bed,
My breath came gaspingly and thick,
And my crush'd heart fell blind and sick.

XII.

I made a footing in the wall,
It was not therefrom to escape,
For I had buried one and all,
Who loved me in a human shape;
And the whole earth would henceforth be
A wider prison unto me:
No child—no sire—no kin had I,
No partner in my misery;
I thought of this, and I was glad,
For thought of them had made me mad;
But I was curious to ascend
To my barr'd windows, and to bend
Once more upon the mountains high,
The quiet of a loving eye.

XIII.

I saw them—and they were the same,
They were not changed like me in frame;
I saw their thousand years of snow
On high—their wide long lake below,
And the blue Rhone in fullest flow,
I heard the torrents leap and gush
O'er channell'd rock and broken bush;
I saw the white-wall'd distant town,
And whiter sails go skimming down;
And then there was a little isle,[4]
Which in my very face did smile,
The only one in view;
A small green isle, it seem'd no more,
Scarce broader than my dungeon floor,
But in it there were three tall trees,
And o'er it blew the mountain breeze,
And by it there were waters flowing,
And on it there were young flowers growing,
Of gentle breath and hue.
The fish swam by the castle wall,
And they seem'd joyous each and all;
The eagle rode the rising blast,
Methought he never flew so fast
As then to me he seem'd to fly,
And then new tears came in my eye,
And I felt troubled—and would fain
I had not left my recent chain;
And when I did descend again,
The darkness of my dim abode
Fell on me as a heavy load;
It was as is a new dug grave,
Closing o'er one we sought to save,
And yet my glance, too much oppress,
Had almost need of such a rest.

XIV.

It might be months, or years, or days,
I kept no count—I took no note,
I had no hope my eyes to raise,
And clear them of their dreary mote;
At last men came to set me free,
I ask'd not why, and reck'd not where,
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be—
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appear'd at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own!
And half I felt as they were come
To tear me from a second home:
With spiders I had friendship made,
And watch'd them in their sullen trade,
Had seen the mice by moonlight play,
And why should I feel less than they?
We were all inmates of one place,
And I the monarch of each race,
Had power to kill—yet, strange to tell!
In quiet we had learn'd to dwell—
My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 208, Sonnet, line 13.

By Bonnivard!—May none those marks efface!

François de Bonnivard, fils de Louis de Bonnivard, originaire de Seyssel et Seigneur de Lunes, naquit en

1496; il fit ses études à Turin. En 1510 Jean-Aimé de Bonnivard, son oncle, lui résigna le Prieuré de St Victor, qui aboutissait aux murs de Genève, et qui formait un bénéfice considérable.

Ce grand homme (Bonnivard mérite ce titre par la force de son âme, la droiture de son cœur, la noblesse de ses intentions, la sagesse de ses conseils, le courage de ses démarches, l'étendue de ses connaissances, et la vivacité de son esprit), ce grand homme, qui excitera l'admiration de tous ceux qu'une vertu héroique peut encore émouvoir, inspirera encore la plus vive reconnaissance dans les cœurs des Génevois qui aiment Genève. Bonnivard en fut toujours un des plus fermes appuis: pour assurer la liberté de notre République, il ne craignit pas de perdre souvent la sienne; il oublia son repos; il méprisa ses richesses; il ne négligea rien pour affermir le bonheur d'une patrie qu'il honora de son choix: dès ce moment il la chérit comme le plus zélé de ses citoyens; il la servit avec l'intrépidité d'un héros, et il écrivit son histoire avec la naïveté d'un philosophe et la chaleur d'un patriote.

Il dit dans le commencement de son histoire de Genève, que, *dès qu'il eut commencé de lire l'histoire des nations, il se sentit entraîné par son goût pour les républiques, dont il épousa toujours les intérêts:* c'est ce goût pour la liberté qui lui fit sans doute adopter Genève pour sa patrie.

Bonnivard, encore jeune, s'annonça hautement comme le défenseur de Genève contre le Duc de Savoye et l'Évêque.

En 1519, Bonnivard devient le martyr de sa patrie: le Duc de Savoye étant entré dans Genève avec cinq cents hommes, Bonnivard craignit le ressentiment du duc; il voulut se retirer à Fribourg pour en éviter les suites; mais il fut trahi par deux hommes qui l'accompagnaient, et conduit par ordre du prince à Grolée, où il resta prisonnier pendant deux ans. Bonnivard était malheureux dans ses voyages; comme ses malheurs n'avaient point ralenti son zèle pour Genève, il était toujours un ennemi redoutable pour ceux qui la menaçaient, et par conséquent il devait être exposé à leurs coups. Il fut rencontré en 1530 sur le Jura, par des voleurs, qui le dépouillèrent, et qui le mirent encore entre les mains du Duc de Savoye: ce prince le fit enfermer dans le Château de Chillon, où il resta sans être interrogé jusqu'en 1536; il fut alors délivré par les Bernois, qui s'emparèrent du pays de Vaud.

Bonnivard, en sortant de sa captivité, eût le plaisir de trouver Genève libre et reformée: la république s'empressa de lui témoigner sa reconnaissance et de le dédommager des maux qu'il avait soufferts; elle le reçut bourgeois de la ville au mois de Juin 1536; elle lui donna la maison habitée autrefois par le Vicaire-Général, et elle lui assigna une pension de 200 écus d'or tant qu'il séjournerait à Genève. Il fut admis dans le Conseil des Deux-Cents en 1537.

Bonnivard n'a pas fini d'être utile: après avoir travaillé à rendre Genève libre, il réussit à la rendre tolérante. Bonnivard engagea le Conseil à accorder aux ecclésiastiques et aux paysans un temps suffisant pour examiner les propositions qu'on leur faisait; il réussit par sa douceur: on prêche toujours le christianisme avec succès quand on le prêche avec charité.

Bonnivard fut savant; ses manuscrits, qui sont dans la bibliothèque publique, prouvent qu'il avait bien lu les auteurs classiques latins, et qu'il avait approfondi la théologie et l'histoire. Ce grand homme aimait les sciences, et il croyait qu'elles pouvaient faire la gloire de Genève; aussi il ne négligea rien pour les fixer dans cette ville naissante; en 1551 il donna sa bibliothèque au public; elle fut le commencement de notre bibliothèque publique; et ces livres sont en partie les rares et belles éditions du quinzième siècle qu'on voit dans notre collection. Enfin, pendant la même année, ce bon patriote institua la république son héritière, à condition qu'elle emploierait ses biens à entretenir le collège dont on projetait la fondation.

Il paraît que Bonnivard mourut en 1570; mais on ne peut l'assurer, parce qu'il y a une lacune dans le Nécrologe depuis le mois de Juillet 1570 jusqu'en 1571.

Note 2. Page 208, line 3.

In a single night.

Ludovico Sforza, and others.—The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis XVI. though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect: to such, and not to fear, this change in *her's* was to be attributed.

Note 3. Page 209, line 81.

From Chillon's snow-white battlement.

The Chateau de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of Mellerie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St Gingo.

Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent; below it, washing its walls, the lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet (French measure); within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or, rather, eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered; in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces—he was confined here several years.

It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Heloise, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death.

The chateau is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.

Note 4. Page 211, line 65.

And then there was a little isle.

Between the entrances of the Rhone and Villeneuve, not far from Chillon, is a very small island; the only one I could perceive, in my voyage round and over the lake, within its circumference. It contains a few trees (I think not above three), and from its singleness and diminutive size has a peculiar effect upon the view.

When the foregoing poem was composed I was not sufficiently aware of the history of Bonnivard, or I should have endeavoured to dignify the subject by an attempt to celebrate his courage and his virtues. Some account of his life will be found in a note appended to the «Sonnet on Chillon,» with which I have been furnished by the kindness of a citizen of that republic, which is still proud of the memory of a man worthy of the best age of ancient freedom.

Beppo,

A VENETIAN STORY.

Rosaline. Farewell, Monsieur Traveller: look you, lisp, and wear strange suits; disable all the benefits of your own country; be out of love with your nativity, and almost chide God for making you that countenance you are; or I will scarce think that you have swam in a Gondola.

As You Like It, Act IV. Scene I

Annotation of the Commentators.

That is, been at *Venice*, which was much visited by the young English gentlemen of those times, and was then what *Paris is now*—the seat of all dissoluteness.—S. A.

I.

'T is known, at least it should be, that throughout
All countries of the Catholic persuasion,
Some weeks before Shrove Tuesday comes about,
The people take their fill of recreation,
And buy repentance, ere they grow devout,
However high their rank, or low their station,
With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking, masking,
And other things which may be had for asking.

II.

The moment night with dusky mantle covers
The skies (and the more duskily the better),
The time less liked by husbands than by lovers
Begins, and prudery flings aside her fetter;
And gaiety on restless tiptoe hovers,
Giggling with all the gallants who beset her;
And there are songs, and quavers, roaring, humming,
Guitars, and every other sort of strumming.

III.

And there are dresses splendid, but fantastical,
Masks of all times and nations, Turks and Jews,
And harlequins and clowns, with feats gymnastical,
Greeks, Romans, Yankee-doodles, and Hindoos,
All kinds of dress, except the ecclesiastical,
All people, as their fancies hit, may choose;
But no one in these parts may quiz the clergy—
Therefore take heed, ye freethinkers! I charge ye.

IV.

You'd better walk about begirt with briars,
Instead of coat and smallclothes, than put on
A single stitch reflecting upon friars,
Although you swore it only was in fun;
They'd haul you o'er the coals, and stir the fires
Of Phlegethon with every mother's son,
Nor say one mass to cool the cauldron's bubble
That boil'd your bones, unless you paid them double.

V.

But, saving this, you may put on whate'er
You like, by way of doublet, cape, or cloak,
Such as in Monmouth-street, or in Rag Fair,
Would rig you out in seriousness or joke;
And even in Italy such places are,
With prettier names in softer accents spoke,
For, hating Covent Garden, I can hit on
No place that 's called «Piazza» in Great Britain.

VI.

This feast is named the Carnival, which, being
Interpreted, implies «farewell to flesh:»
So call'd, because the name and thing agreeing,
Through Lent they live on fish both salt and fresh.
But why they usher Lent with so much glee in,
Is more than I can tell, although I guess
'T is as we take a glass with friends at parting,
In the stage-coach or packet, just at starting.

VII.

And thus they bid farewell to carnal dishes,
And solid meats, and highly-spiced ragouts,
To live for forty days on ill-dress'd fishes,
Because they have no sauces to their stews,
A thing which causes many «poohs» and «pishes,»
And several oaths (which would not suit the Muse),
From travellers accustom'd from a boy
To eat their salmon, at the least, with soy;

VIII.

And therefore humbly I would recommend
«The curious in fish-sauce,» before they cross
The sea, to bid their cook, or wife, or friend,
Walk or ride to the Strand, and buy in gross
(Or if set out beforehand, these may send
By any means least liable to loss),
Ketchup, Soy, Chili-vinegar, and Hervey,
Or by the Lord! a Lent will well nigh starve ye;

IX.

That is to say, if your religion 's Roman,
And you at Rome would do as Romans do,
According to the proverb,—although no man,
If foreign, is obliged to fast; and you,
If protestant, or sickly, or a woman,
Would rather dine in sin on a ragout—
Dine, and be d—d! I don't mean to be coarse,
But that 's the penalty, to say no worse.

X.

Of all the places where the Carnival
Was most facetious in the days of yore,
For dance, and song, and serenade, and ball,
And masque, and mime and mystery, and more
Than I have time to tell now, or at all,
Venice the bell from every city bore,
And at the moment when I fix my story,
That sea-born city was in all her glory.

XI.

They 've pretty faces yet, those same Venetians,
Black eyes, arch'd brows, and sweet expressions still,
Such as of old were copied from the Grecians,
In ancient arts by moderns mimick'd ill;
And like so many Venuses of Titian's
(The best 's at Florence—see it, if ye will),
They look when leaning over the balcony,
Or stepp'd from out a picture by Giorgione,

XII.

Whose tints are truth and beauty at their best;
And when you to Manfrini's palace go,
That picture (howsoever fine the rest)
Is loveliest to my mind of all the show:
It may perhaps be also to *your* zest,
And that 's the cause I rhyme upon it so,
'T is but a portrait of his son, and wife,
And self; but *such* a woman! love in life!

XIII.

Love in full life and length, not love ideal,
No, nor ideal beauty, that fine name,
But something better still, so very real,
That the sweet model must have been the same;
A thing that you would purchase, beg, or steal,
Were't not impossible, besides a shame:
The face recals some face, as 't were with pain,
You once have seen, but ne'er will see again;

XIV.

One of those forms which flit by us, when we
Are young, and fix our eyes on every face;
And, oh! the loveliness at times we see
In momentary gliding, the soft grace,
The youth, the bloom, the beauty which agree,
In many a nameless being we retrace,
Whose course and home we knew not, nor shall know,
Like the lost Pleiad[1] seen no more below.

XV.

I said that like a picture by Giorgione
Venetian women were, and so they *are*,
Particularly seen from a balcony
(For beauty 's sometimes best set off afar);
And there, just like a heroine of Goldoni,
They peep from out the blind, or o'er the bar;
And, truth to say, they 're mostly very pretty,
And rather like to show it, more 's the pity!

XVI.

For glances beget ogles, ogles sighs,
Sighs wishes, wishes words, and words a letter,
Which flies on wings of light-heel'd Mercuries,
Who do such things because they know no better;
And then, God knows what mischief may arise,
When love links two young people in one fetter,
Vile assignations, and adulterous beds,
Elopements, broken vows, and hearts, and heads.

XVII.

Shakspeare described the sex in Desdemona
As very fair, but yet suspect in fame,
And to this day from Venice to Verona
Such matters may be probably the same,
Except that since those times was never known a
Husband whom mere suspicion could inflame
To suffocate a wife no more than twenty,
Because she had a «cavalier servente.»

XVIII.

Their jealousy (if they are ever jealous)
Is of a fair complexion altogether,
Not like that sooty devil of Othello's
Which smothers women in a bed of feather,
But worthier of these much more jolly fellows,
When weary of the matrimonial tether
His head for such a wife no mortal bothers,
But takes at once another, or another's.

XIX.

Did'st ever see a gondola? For fear
You should not, I'll describe it you exactly;
'T is a long cover'd boat that 's common here,
Carved at the prow, built lightly, but compactly,
Row'd by two rowers, each called «Gondolier,»
It glides along the water looking blackly,
Just like a coffin clapt in a canoe,
Where none can make out what you say or do.

XX.

And up and down the long canals they go,
And under the Rialto shoot along,
By night and day, all paces, swift or slow,
And round the theatres, a sable throng,
They wait in their dusk livery of woe,
But not to them do woful things belong,
For sometimes they contain a deal of fun,
Like mourning coaches when the funeral 's done.

XXI.

But to my story.—'T was some years ago,
It may be thirty, forty, more or less,
The Carnival was at its height, and so
Were all kinds of buffoonery and dress;
A certain lady went to see the show,
Her real name I know not, nor can guess,
And so we 'll call her Laura, if you please,
Because it slips into my verse with ease.

XXII.

She was not old, nor young, nor at the years
Which certain people call a «*certain age*,»
Which yet the most uncertain age appears,
Because I never heard, nor could engage
A person yet by prayers, or bribes or tears,
To name, define by speech, or write on page,
The period meant precisely by that word,—
Which surely is exceedingly absurd.

XXIII.

Laura was blooming still, had made the best
Of time, and time return'd the compliment,
And treated her genteelly, so that, drest,
She look'd extremely well where'er she went:
A pretty woman is a welcome guest,
And Laura's brow a frown had rarely bent,
Indeed she shone all smiles, and seem'd to flatter
Mankind with her black eyes for looking at her.

XXIV.

She was a married woman; 't is convenient,
Because in Christian countries 't is a rule
To view their little slips with eyes more lenient;
Whereas if single ladies play the fool,
(Unless within the period intervenient,
A well-timed wedding makes the scandal cool)
I don't know how they ever can get over it,
Except they manage never to discover it.

XXV.

Her husband sail'd upon the Adriatic,
And made some voyages, too, in other seas,
And when he lay in quarantine for pratique
(A forty days' precaution 'gainst disease),
His wife would mount, at times, her highest attic,
For thence she could discern the ship with ease:
He was a merchant trading to Aleppo,
His name Giuseppe, call'd more briefly, Beppo.[2]

XXVI.

He was a man as dusky as a Spaniard,
Sunburnt with travel, yet a portly figure;
Though, colour'd, as it were, within a tanyard,
He was a person both of sense and vigour—
A better seaman never yet did man yard:
And *she*, although her manners show'd no rigour,
Was deem'd a woman of the strictest principle,
So much as to be thought almost invincible.

XXVII.

But several years elapsed since they had met,
Some people thought the ship was lost, and some
That he had somehow blunder'd into debt,
And did not like the thoughts of steering home;
And there were several offer'd any bet,
Or that he would, or that he would not come,
For most men (till by losing render'd sager)
Will back their own opinions with a wager.

XXVIII.

'T is said that their last parting was pathetic,
As partings often are, or ought to be,
And their presentiment was quite prophetic
That they should never more each other see,
(A sort of morbid feeling, half poetic,
Which I have known occur in two or three)
When kneeling on the shore upon her sad knee,
He left his Adriatic Ariadne.

XXIX.

And Laura waited long, and wept a little,
And thought of wearing weeds, as well she might;
She almost lost all appetite for victual,
And could not sleep with ease alone at night;
She deem'd the window-frames and shutters brittle,
Against a daring housebreaker or sprite,
And so she thought it prudent to connect her
With a vice-husband, *chiefly to protect her*.

XXX.

She chose, (and what is there they will not choose,
If only you will but oppose their choice?)
Till Beppo should return from his long cruise,
And bid once more her faithful heart rejoice,
A man some women like, and yet abuse—
A coxcomb was he by the public voice:
A count of wealth, they said, as well as quality,
And in his pleasures of great liberality.

XXXI.

And then he was a count, and then he knew
Music and dancing, fiddling, French and Tuscan;
The last not easy, be it known to you,
For few Italians speak the right Etruscan.
He was a critic upon operas too,
And knew all niceties of the sock and buskin;
And no Venetian audience could endure a
Song, scene, or air, when he cried «seccatura.»

XXXII.

His «bravo» was decisive, for that sound
Hush'd «academie,» sigh'd in silent awe;
The fiddlers trembled as he look'd around,
For fear of some false note's detected flaw.
The «prima donna's» tuneful heart would bound,
Dreading the deep damnation of his «bah!»
Soprano, basso, even the contra-alto,
Wish'd him five fathom under the Rialto.

XXXIII.

He patronised the improvisatori
Nay, could himself extemporize some stanzas,
Wrote rhymes, sang songs, could also tell a story,
Sold pictures, and was skilful in the dance as
Italians can be, though in this their glory
Must surely yield the palm to that which France has;
In short, he was a perfect cavaliero,
And to his very valet seem'd a hero.

XXXIV.

Then he was faithful too, as well as amorous;
So that no sort of female could complain,
Although they 're now and then a little clamorous,
He never put the pretty souls in pain:
His heart was one of those which most enamour us,
Wax to receive, and marble to retain.
He was a lover of the good old school,
Who still become more constant as they cool.

XXXV.

No wonder such accomplishments should turn
A female head, however sage and steady—
With scarce a hope that Beppo could return,
In law he was almost as good as dead, he
Nor sent, nor wrote, nor show'd the least concern,
And she had waited several years already;
And really if a man won't let us know
That he 's alive, he 's *dead*, or should be so.

XXXVI.

Besides, within the Alps, to every woman
(Although, God knows, it is a grievous sin),
'T is, I may say, permitted to have *two* men;
I can't tell who first brought the custom in,
But «Cavalier Serventes» are quite common,
And no one notices, nor cares a pin;
And we may call this (not to say the worst)
A *second* marriage which corrupts the *first*.

XXXVII.

The word was formerly a «Cicisbeo,»
But *that* is now grown vulgar and indecent;
The Spaniards call the person a «*Cortejo*,»[3]
For the same mode subsists in Spain, though recent:
In short it reaches from the Po to Teio,
And may perhaps at last be o'er the sea sent.
But Heaven preserve Old England from such courses!
Or what becomes of damage and divorces?

XXXVIII.

However, I still think, with all due deference
To the fair *single* part of the creation,
That married ladies should preserve the preference
In *tête-à-tête* or general conversation—
And this I say without peculiar reference
To England, France, or any other nation—
Because they know the world, and are at ease,
And being natural, naturally please.

XXXIX.

'T is true, your budding Miss is very charming,
But shy and awkward at first coming out,
So much alarm'd, that she is quite alarming,
All giggle, blush;—half pertness, and half pout;
And glancing at *Mamma*, for fear there 's harm in
What you, she, it, or they, may be about,
The nursery still lisps out in all they utter—
Besides, they always smell of bread and butter.

XL.

But «Cavalier Servente» is the phrase
Used in politest circles to express
This supernumerary slave, who stays
Close to the lady as a part of dress,
Her word the only law which he obeys.
His is no sinecure, as you may guess;
Coach, servants, gondola, he goes to call,
And carries fan, and tippet, gloves, and shawl.

XLI.

With all its sinful doings, I must say,
That Italy 's a pleasant place to me,
Who love to see the sun shine every day,
And vines (not nail'd to walls) from tree to tree
Festoon'd, much like the back scene of a play,
Or melodrame, which people flock to see,
When the first act is ended by a dance
In vineyards copied from the south of France.

XLII.

I like on Autumn evenings to ride out,
Without being forced to bid my groom be sure
My cloak is round his middle strapp'd about,
Because the skies are not the most secure;
I know too that, if stopp'd upon my route,
Where the green alleys windingly allure,
Reeling with *grapes* red waggons choke the way—
In England 't would be dung, dust, or a dray.

XLIII.

I also like to dine on becaficas,
To see the sun set, sure he 'll rise to-morrow,
Not through a misty morning twinkling weak as
A drunken man's dead eye in maudlin sorrow,
But with all heaven t' himself; that day will break as
Beauteous as cloudless, nor be forced to borrow
That sort of farthing candle-light which glimmers
Where reeking London's smoky cauldron simmers.

XLIV.

I love the language, that soft bastard Latin,
Which melts like kisses from a female mouth,
And sounds as if it should be writ on satin,
With syllables which breathe of the sweet south,
And gentle liquids gliding all so pat in,
That not a single accent seems uncouth,
Like our harsh northern whistling, grunting guttural,
Which we 're obliged to hiss, and spit, and sputter all.

XLV.

I like the women too (forgive my folly),
From the rich peasant-cheek of ruddy bronze,
And large black eyes that flash on you a volley
Of rays that say a thousand things at once,
To the high dama's brow, more melancholy,
But clear, and with a wild and liquid glance,
Heart on her lips, and soul within her eyes,
Soft as her clime, and sunny as her skies.

XLVI.

Eve of the land which still is Paradise!
Italian beauty! didst thou not inspire
Raphael,[4] who died in thy embrace, and vies
With all we know of heaven, or can desire,
In what he hath bequeath'd us?—in what guise,
Though flashing from the fervour of the lyre,
Would *words* describe thy past and present glow,
While yet Canova can create below.*

XLVII.

«England! with all thy faults I love thee still,»
I said at Calais, and have not forgot it;
I like to speak and lucubrate my fill;
I like the government (but that is not it);
I like the freedom of the press and quill;
I like the Habeas Corpus (when we 've got it);
I like a parliamentary debate,
Particularly when 't is not too late;

XLVIII.

I like the taxes, when they 're not too many;
I like a seacoal fire, when not too dear;
I like a beef-steak, too, as well as any;
Have no objection to a pot of beer;
I like the weather, when it is not rainy,
That is, I like two months of every year.
And so God save the regent, church, and king!
Which means that I like all and every thing.

XLIX.

Our standing army, and disbanded seamen,
Poor's rate, reform, my own, the nation's debt,
Our little riots just to show we are freemen,
Our trifling bankruptcies in the gazette,
Our cloudy climate, and our chilly women,
All these I can forgive, and those forget,
And greatly venerate our recent glories,
And wish they were not owing to the tories.

L.

But to my tale of Laura,—for I find
Digression is a sin, that by degrees
Becomes exceeding tedious to my mind,
And, therefore, may the reader too displease—
The gentle reader, who may wax unkind,
And, caring little for the author's ease,
Insist on knowing what he means, a hard
And hapless situation for a bard.

LI.

Oh, that I had the art of easy writing
What should be easy reading! could I scale
Parnassus, where the Muses sit inditing
Those pretty poems never known to fail,
How quickly would I print (the world delighting)
A Grecian, Syrian, or Assyrian tale;
And sell you, mix'd with western sentimentalism,
Some samples of the finest orientalism.

* *Note.*

(In talking thus, the writer, more especially
Of women, would be understood to say,
He speaks as a spectator, not officially,
And always, reader, in a modest way;
Perhaps, too, in no very great degree shall he
Appear to have offended in this lay,
Since, as all know, without the sex, our sonnets
Would seem unfinish'd like their untrimm'd bonnets.
(Signed) PRINTER'S DEVIL.

LII.

But I am but a nameless sort of person
(A broken dandy lately on my travels),
And take for rhyme, to hook my rambling verse on,
The first that Walker's Lexicon unravels,
And when I can't find that, I put a worse on,
Not caring as I ought for critics' cavils;
I've half a mind to tumble down to prose,
But verse is more in fashion—so here goes.

LIII.

The count and Laura made their new arrangement,
Which lasted, as arrangements sometimes do,
For half a dozen years without estrangement;
They had their little differences too;
Those jealous whiffs, which never any change meant:
In such affairs there probably are few
Who have not had this pouting sort of squabble,
From sinners of high station to the rabble.

LIV.

But on the whole they were a happy pair,
As happy as unlawful love could make them:
The gentleman was fond, the lady fair,
Their chains so slight, 't was not worth while to break them:
The world beheld them with indulgent air;
The pious only wish'd « the devil take them!»
He took them not; he very often waits,
And leaves old sinners to be young ones' baits.

LV.

But they were young: O! what without our youth
Would love be! What would youth be without love!
Youth lends it joy, and sweetness, vigour, truth,
Heart, soul, and all that seems as from above;
But, languishing with years, it grows uncouth—
One of few things experience don't improve,
Which is, perhaps, the reason why old fellows
Are always so preposterously jealous.

LVI.

It was the Carnival, as I have said
Some six and thirty stanzas back, and so
Laura the usual preparations made,
Which you do when your mind 's made up to go
To-night to Mrs Boehm's masquerade,
Spectator, or partaker in the show;
The only difference known between the cases
Is—*here*, we have six weeks of « varnish'd faces.»

LVII.

Laura, when drest, was (as I sang before)
A pretty woman as was ever seen,
Fresh as the angel o'er a new inn door,
Or frontispiece of a new magazine,
With all the fashions which the last month wore,
Colour'd, and silver paper leaved between
That and the title-page, for fear the press
Should soil with parts of speech the parts of dress.

LVIII.

They went to the Ridotto;—'t is a hall
Where people dance, and sup, and dance again:
Its proper name, perhaps, were a mask'd ball,
But that 's of no importance to my strain;
'T is (on a smaller scale) like our Vauxhall,
Excepting that it can't be spoilt by rain:
The company is « mix'd» (the phrase I quote is,
As much as saying, they 're below your notice);

LIX.

For a « mixt company» implies that, save
Yourself and friends, and half a hundred more,
Whom you may bow to without looking grave,
The rest are but a vulgar set, the bore
Of public places, where they basely brave
The fashionable stare of twenty score
Of well-bred persons, called « *the world*;» but I,
Although I know them, really don't know why.

LX.

This is the case in England; at least was
During the dynasty of dandies, now
Perchance succeeded by some other class
Of imitated imitators:—how
Irreparably soon decline, alas!
The demagogues of fashion: all below
Is frail; how easily the world is lost
By love, or war, and now and then by frost!

LXI.

Crush'd was Napoleon by the northern Thor,
Who knock'd his army down with icy hammer,
Stopp'd by the *elements*, like a whaler, or
A blundering novice in his new French grammar;
Good cause had he to doubt the chance of war,
And as for fortune—but I dare not d—n her,
Because were I to ponder to infinity,
The more I should believe in her divinity.

LXII.

She rules the present, past, and all to be yet,
She gives us luck in lotteries, love and marriage;
I cannot say that she 's done much for me yet;
Not that I mean her bounties to disparage,
We 've not yet closed accounts, and we shall see yet
How much she 'll make amends for past miscarriage;
Meantime the goddess I 'll no more importune,
Unless to thank her when she 's made my fortune.

LXIII.

To turn,—and to return;—the devil take it,
This story slips for ever through my fingers,
Because, just as the stanza likes to make it,
It needs must be—and so it rather lingers;
This form of verse began, I can't well break it,
But must keep time and tune like public singers;
But if I once get through my present measure,
I 'll take another when I 'm next at leisure.

LXIV.

They went to the Ridotto ('t is a place
To which I mean to go myself to-morrow,
Just to divert my thoughts a little space,
Because I 'm rather hippish, and may borrow
Some spirits, guessing at what kind of face
May lurk beneath each mask, and as my sorrow
Slackens its pace sometimes, I 'll make, or find
Something shall leave it half an hour behind.

LXV.

Now Laura moves along the joyous crowd,
Smiles in her eyes, and simpers on her lips;
To some she whispers, others speaks aloud:
To some she curtsies, and to some she dips,
Complains of warmth, and this complaint avow'd,
Her lover brings the lemonade,—she sips;
She then surveys, condemns, but pities still
Her dearest friends for being drest so ill.

LXVI.

One has false curls, another too much paint,
A third—where did she buy that frightful turban?
A fourth 's so pale she fears she 's going to faint,
A fifth's look 's vulgar, dowdyish, and suburban,
A sixth's white silk has got a yellow taint,
A seventh's thin muslin surely will be her bane,
And lo! an eighth appears,—«I 'll see no more!»
For fear, like Banquo's kings, they reach a score.

LXVII.

Meantime, while she was thus at others gazing,
Others were levelling their looks at her;
She heard the men's half whisper'd mode of praising,
And, till 't was done, determined not to stir;
The women only thought it quite amazing
That at her time of life so many were
Admirers still,—but men are so debased,
Those brazen creatures always suit their taste.

LXVIII.

For my part, now, I ne'er could understand
Why naughty women——but I won't discuss
A thing which is a scandal to the land,
I only don't see why it should be thus;
And if I were but in a gown and band,
Just to entitle me to make a fuss,
I 'd preach on this till Wilberforce and Romilly
Should quote in their next speeches from my homily.

LXIX.

While Laura thus was seen and seeing, smiling,
Talking, she knew not why and cared not what,
So that her female friends, with envy broiling,
Beheld her airs and triumph, and all that;
And well-drest males still kept before her filing,
And passing bow'd and mingled with her chat;
More than the rest one person seem'd to stare
With pertinacity that 's rather rare.

LXX.

He was a Turk, the colour of mahogany;
And Laura saw him, and at first was glad,
Because the Turks so much admire philogyny,
Although their usage of their wives is sad;
'T is said they use no better than a dog any
Poor woman, whom they purchase like a pad:
They have a number, though they ne'er exhibit 'em,
Four wives by law, and concubines «ad libitum.»

LXXI.

They lock them up, and veil, and guard them daily,
They scarcely can behold their male relations,
So that their moments do not pass so gaily
As is supposed the case with northern nations;
Confinement, too, must make them look quite palely:
And as the Turks abhor long conversations,
Their days are either past in doing nothing,
Or bathing, nursing, making love, and clothing.

LXXII.

They cannot read, and so don't lisp in criticism;
Nor write, and so they don't affect the muse;
Were never caught in epigram or witticism,
Have no romances, sermons, plays, reviews,—
In harams learning soon would make a pretty schism!
But luckily these beauties are no «blues,»
No bustling Botherbys have they to show 'em
«That charming passage in the last new poem.»

LXXIII.

No solemn, antique gentleman of rhyme,
Who having angled all his life for fame,
And getting but a nibble at a time,
Still fussily keeps fishing on, the same
Small «Triton of the minnows,» the sublime
Of mediocrity, the furious tame,
The echo's echo, usher of the school
Of female wits, boy bards—in short, a fool!

LXXIV.

A stalking oracle of awful phrase,
The approving «*Good!*» (by no means good in law)
Humming like flies around the newest blaze,
The bluest of bluebottles you e'er saw,
Teasing with blame, excruciating with praise,
Gorging the little fame he gets all raw,
Translating tongues he knows not even by letter,
And sweating plays so middling, bad were better.

LXXV.

One hates an author, that 's *all author*, fellows
In foolscap uniforms turn'd up with ink,
So very anxious, clever, fine, and jealous,
One don't know what to say to them, or think,
Unless to puff them with a pair of bellows;
Of coxcombry's worst coxcombs e'en the pink
Are preferable to these shreds of paper,
These unquench'd snuffings of the midnight taper.

LXXVI.

Of these same we see several, and of others,
Men of the world, who know the world like men,
S—tt, R—s, M—re, and all the better brothers,
Who think of something else besides the pen;
But for the children of the «mighty mother's,»
The would-be wits and can't be gentlemen,
I leave them to their daily «tea is ready,»
Smug coterie, and literary lady.

LXXVII.

The poor dear Mussulwomen whom I mention
Have none of these instructive pleasant people,
And *one* would seem to them a new invention,
Unknown as bells within a Turkish steeple;
I think 't would almost be worth while to pension
(Though best-sown projects very often reap ill)
A missionary author, just to preach
Our Christian usage of the parts of speech.

LXXVIII.

No chemistry for them unfolds her gasses,
No metaphysics are let loose in lectures,
No circulating library amasses
Religious novels, moral tales, and strictures
Upon the living manners as they pass us;
No exhibition glares with annual pictures;
They stare not on the stars from out their attics,
Nor deal (thank God for that!) in mathematics.

LXXIX.

Why I thank God for that is no great matter,
I have my reasons, you no doubt suppose,
And as, perhaps, they would not highly flatter,
I'll keep them for my life (to come) in prose;
I fear I have a little turn for satire,
And yet methinks the older that one grows
Inclines us more to laugh than scold, though laughter
Leaves us so doubly serious shortly after.

LXXX.

Oh, mirth and innocence! Oh, milk and water!
Ye happy mixtures of more happy days!
In these sad centuries of sin and slaughter,
Abominable man no more allays
His thirst with such pure beverage. No matter,
I love you both, and both shall have my praise:
Oh, for old Saturn's reign of sugar-candy!—
Meantime I drink to your return in brandy.

LXXXI.

Our Laura's Turk still kept his eyes upon her,
Less in the Mussulman than Christian way,
Which seems to say, «Madam, I do you honour,
And while I please to stare, you 'll please to stay;»
Could staring win a woman this had won her,
But Laura could not thus be led astray,
She had stood fire too long and well to boggle
Even at this stranger's most outlandish ogle.

LXXXII.

The morning now was on the point of breaking,
A turn of time at which I would advise
Ladies who have been dancing, or partaking
In any other kind of exercise,
To make their preparations for forsaking
The ball-room ere the sun begins to rise,
Because when once the lamps and candles fail,
His blushes make them look a little pale.

LXXXIII.

I 've seen some balls and revels in my time,
And staid them over for some silly reason,
And then I look'd (I hope it was no crime),
To see what lady best stood out the season;
And though I 've seen some thousands in their prime,
Lovely and pleasing, and who still may please on,
I never saw but one (the stars withdrawn),
Whose bloom could after dancing dare the dawn.

LXXXIV.

The name of this Aurora I 'll not mention,
Although I might, for she was nought to me
More than that patent work of God's invention,
A charming woman, whom we like to see;
But writing names would merit reprehension,
Yet if you like to find out this fair *she*,
At the next London or Parisian ball
You still may mark her cheek, out-blooming all.

LXXXV.

Laura, who knew it would not do at all
To meet the daylight after seven hours sitting
Among three thousand people at a ball,
To make her curtsy thought it right and fitting;
The count was at her elbow with her shawl,
And they the room were on the point of quitting,
When lo! those cursed gondoliers had got
Just in the very place where they *should not*.

LXXXVI.

In this they 're like our coachmen, and the cause
Is much the same—the crowd, and pulling, hauling,
With blasphemies enough to break their jaws,
They make a never intermitted bawling.
At home, our Bow-street gemmen keep the laws,
And here a sentry stands within your calling;
But, for all that, there is a deal of swearing,
And nauseous words past mentioning or bearing.

LXXXVII.

The count and Laura found their boat at last,
And homeward floated o'er the silent tide,
Discussing all the dances gone and past;
The dancers and their dresses, too, beside;
Some little scandals eke: but all aghast
(As to their palace stairs the rowers glide),
Sate Laura by the side of her adorer,
When lo! the Mussulman was there before her.

LXXXVIII.

«Sir,» said the count, with brow exceeding grave,
«Your unexpected presence here will make
It necessary for myself to crave
Its import? But perhaps 't is a mistake;
I hope it is so; and at once to wave
All compliment, I hope so for *your* sake;
You understand my meaning, or you *shall*.»
«Sir,» (quoth the Turk) «'t is no mistake at all.

LXXXIX.

«That lady is *my wife!*» Much wonder paints
The lady's changing cheek, as well it might;
But where an Englishwoman sometimes faints,
Italian females don't do so outright;
They only call a little on their saints,
And then come to themselves, almost or quite;
Which saves much hartshorn, salts, and sprinkling faces,
And cutting stays, as usual in such cases.

XC.

She said,—what could she say! Why not a word:
But the count courteously invited in
The stranger, much appeased by what he heard:
«Such things perhaps we 'd best discuss within.»
Said he, «don't let us make ourselves absurd
In public, by a scene, nor raise a din,
For then the chief and only satisfaction
Will be much quizzing on the whole transaction.»

XCI.

They enter'd, and for coffee call'd,—it came,
A beverage for Turks and Christians both,
Although the way they make it 's not the same.
Now Laura, much recover'd, or less loth
To speak, cries «Beppo! what 's your pagan name?
Bless me! your beard is of amazing growth!
And how came you to keep away so long?
Are you not sensible 'twas very wrong?

XCII.

«And are you *really, truly*, now a Turk?
With any other women did you wive?
Is 't true they use their fingers for a fork?
Well, that 's the prettiest shawl—as I 'm alive!
You 'll give it me? They say you eat no pork.
And how so many years did you contrive
To—Bless me! did I ever? No, I never
Saw a man grown so yellow! How 's your liver?

XCIII.

Beppo! that beard of yours becomes you not;
It shall be shaved before you 're a day older:
Why do you wear it? Oh! I had forgot—
Pray don't you think the weather here is colder
How do I look? You sha'n't stir from this spot
In that queer dress, for fear that some beholder
Should find you out, and make the story known.
How short your hair is! Lord! how gray it 's grown!»

XCIV.

What answer Beppo made to these demands,
Is more than I know. He was cast away
About where Troy stood once, and nothing stands;
Became a slave of course, and for his pay
Had bread and bastinadoes, till some bands
Of pirates landing in a neighbouring bay,
He join'd the rogues and prosper'd, and became
A renegado of indifferent fame.

XCV.

But he grew rich, and with his riches grew so
Keen the desire to see his home again,
He thought himself in duty bound to do so,
And not be always thieving on the main;
Lonely he felt, at times, as Robin Crusoe,
And so he hired a vessel come from Spain,
Bound for Corfu; she was a fine polacca,
Mann'd with twelve hands, and laden with tobacco.

XCVI.

Himself, and much (Heaven knows how gotten) cash,
He then embark'd, with risk of life and limb,
And got clear off, although the attempt was rash;
He said that *Providence* protected him—
For my part, I say nothing, lest we clash
In our opinions:—well, the ship was trim,
Set sail, and kept her reckoning fairly on,
Except three days of calm when off Cape Bonn.

XCVII.

They reach'd the island, he transferr'd his lading,
And self and live-stock, to another bottom,
And pass'd for a true Turkey-merchant, trading
With goods of various names, but I 've forgot 'em.
However, he got off by this evading,
Or else the people would perhaps have shot him;
And thus at Venice landed to reclaim
His wife, religion, house, and Christian name.

XCVIII.

His wife received, the patriarch re-baptized him,
(He made the church a present by the way);
He then threw off the garments which disguised him,
And borrow'd the count's small-clothes for a day;
His friends the more for his long absence prized him,
Finding he 'd wherewithal to make them gay,
With dinners, where he oft became the laugh of them,
For stories,—but *I* don't believe the half of them.

XCIX.

Whate'er his youth had suffer'd, his old age
With wealth and talking made him some amends;
Though Laura sometimes put him in a rage,
I 've heard the count and he were always friends.
My pen is at the bottom of a page,
Which being finish'd here the story ends;
'T is to be wish'd it had been sooner done,
But stories somehow lengthen when begun.

NOTES.

Note 1. Stanza xiv. line 8.

Like the lost Pleiad, seen no more below.

« Quæ *septem* dici *sex* tamen esse solent.»—Ovid.

Note 2. Stanza xxv. line 8.

His name Giuseppe, call'd more briefly, Beppo.

Beppo is the *Joe* of the Italian *Joseph*.

Note 3. Stanza xxxvii. line 3.

The Spaniards call the person a « Cortejo.»

« Cortejo » is pronounced « Corteho,» with an aspirate, according to the Arabesque guttural. It means what there is as yet no precise name for in England, though the practice is as common as in any tramontane country whatever.

Note 4. Stanza xlvi. line 3.

Raphael, who died in thy embrace, and vies.

For the received accounts of the cause of Raphael's death, see his Lives.

Mazeppa.

ADVERTISEMENT.

« Celui qui remplissait alors cette place étoit un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Padolie; il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais, ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secoururent: il resta long-temps parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques: sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine.»

Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII.* p. 196.

« Le roi fuyant et poursuivi eut son cheval tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la fuite, ce conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille.»

Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII.* p. 216.

« Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse où il était rompit dans la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrace, il s'égara pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures, au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs qui le cherchaient de tous côtés.»

Voltaire, *Histoire de Charles XII.* p. 218.

MAZEPPA.

I.

'T was after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughter'd army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly
By day and night through field and flood,
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands fell that flight to aid:
And not a voice was heard to upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When truth had nought to dread from power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own—and died the Russians' slave.
This too sinks after many a league
Of well-sustain'd, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests, darkling
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
The beacons of surrounding foes—
A king must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In out-worn nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff—his limbs were stark—
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
King-like the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will;
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs!—alas! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinn'd it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous; upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed,
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade—
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
And joy'd to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browze beneath the midnight dews:
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too,
Whate'er was to be done, would do;
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obey'd his voice, and came to call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around,—and night,
Without a star, pursued her flight,—
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good
The long day's march had well withstood—
If still the powder fill'd the pan,
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt—
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the monarch and his men
The whole or portion offer'd then
With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe;—
And then he said—«Of all our band,
Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
In skirmish, march, or forage, none
Can less have said, or more have done,
Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
So fit a pair had never birth,
Since Alexander's days till now,
As thy Bucephalus and thou:
All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
For pricking on o'er flood and field.»
Mazeppa answer'd—«Ill betide
The school wherein I learn'd to ride!»
Quoth Charles—«Old hetman, wherefore so,
Since thou hast learn'd the art so well?»
Mazeppa said—«'T were long to tell;
And we have many a league to go
With every now and then a blow,
And ten to one at least the foe,
Before our steeds may graze at ease
Beyond the swift Borysthenes:
And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
And I will be the sentinel
Of this your troop.»—«But I request,»
Said Sweden's monarch, «thou wilt tell

This tale of thine, and I may reap
Perchance from this the boon of sleep;
For at this moment from my eyes
The hope of present slumber flies.»

« Well, sire, with such a hope, I 'll track
My seventy years of memory back:
I think 't was in my twentieth spring,—
Ay, 't was,—when Casimir was king—
John Casimir,—I was his page
Six summers in my earlier age;
A learned monarch, faith! was he,
And most unlike your majesty:
He made no wars, and did not gain
New realms to lose them back again;
And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
He reign'd in most unseemly quiet;
Not that he had no cares to vex,
He loved the muses and the sex;
And sometimes these so froward are,
They made him wish himself at war;
But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
Another mistress, or new book:
And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
All Warsaw gather'd round his gates
To gaze upon his splendid court,
And dames, and chiefs, of princely port:
He was the Polish Solomon,
So sung his poets, all but one,
Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,
And boasted that he could not flatter.
It was a court of jousts and mimes,
Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
Even I for once produced some verses,
And sign'd my odes, Despairing Thirsis.
There was a certain Palatine,
A count of far and high descent,
Rich as a salt or silver mine;*
And he was proud, ye may divine,
As if from heaven he had been sent:
He had such wealth in blood and ore
As few could match beneath the throne;
And he would gaze upon his store,
And o'er his pedigree would pore,
Until by some confusion led,
Which almost look'd like want of head,
He thought their merits were his own.
His wife was not of his opinion—
His junior she by thirty years—
Grew daily tired of his dominion;
And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
To virtue a few farewell tears,
A restless dream or two, some glances
At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
Awaited but the usual chances,
Those happy accidents which render
The coldest dames so very tender,
To deck her count with titles given,
'T is said, as passports into heaven;
But, strange to say, they rarely boast
Of these who have deserved them most.

V.

« I was a goodly stripling then;
At seventy years I so may say,
That there were few, or boys or men,
Who, in my dawning time of day,
Of vassal or of knight's degree,
Could vie in vanities with me;
For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
A port not like to this ye see,
But smooth, as all is rugged now;
For time, and care, and war, have ploughed
My very soul from out my brow;
And thus I should be disavow'd
By all my kind and kin, could they
Compare my day and yesterday;
This change was wrought, too, long ere age
Had ta'en my features for his page:
With years, ye know, have not declined
My strength, my courage, or my mind,
Or at this hour I should not be
Telling old tales beneath a tree,
With starless skies my canopy.
But let me on: Theresa's form—
Methinks it glides before me now,
Between me and yon chesnut's bough,
The memory is so quick and warm;
And yet I find no words to tell
The shape of her I loved so well:
She had the Asiatic eye,
Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
Dark as above us is the sky;
But through it stole a tender light,
Like the first moonrise at midnight;
Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
All love, half languor, and half fire,
Like saints that at the stake expire,
And lift their raptured looks on high,
As though it were a joy to die.
A brow like a midsummer lake,
Transparent with the sun therein,
When waves no murmur dare to make,
And heaven beholds her face within.
A cheek and lip—but why proceed?
I loved her then—I love her still;
And such as I am, love indeed
In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
But still we love even in our rage,
And haunted to our very age
With the vain shadow of the past,
As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

« We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh'd,
She did not speak, and yet replied;
There are ten thousand tones and signs
We hear and see, but none defines—
Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense,
Which link the burning chain that binds,
Without their will, young hearts and minds;
Conveying, as the electric wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.—
I saw, and sigh'd—in silence wept,
And still reluctant di[illegible]ept,

* This comparison of a «*salt* mine» may perhaps be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

Until I was made known to her,
And we might then and there confer
Without suspicion—then, even then,
I long'd, and was resolved to speak;
But on my lips they died again,
The accents tremulous and weak,
Until one hour.—There is a game,
A frivolous and foolish play,
Wherewith we while away the day;
It is—I have forgot the name—
And we to this, it seems, were set,
By some strange chance, which I forget:
I reck'd not if I won or lost,
It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh! to see
The being whom I loved the most.—
I watch'd her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)
Until I saw, and thus it was,
That she was pensive, nor perceived
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
Play'd on for hours, as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot.
Then through my brain the thought did pass
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair;
And on the thought my words broke forth,
All incoherent as they were—
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listen'd—'t is enough—
Who listens once will listen twice;
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

« I loved, and was beloved again—
They tell me, Sire, you never knew
Those gentle frailties; if 't is true,
I shorten all my joy or pain,
To you 't would seem absurd as vain;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am—or rather *was*—a prince,
A chief of thousands, and could lead
Them on where each would foremost bleed;
But could not o'er myself evince
The like control—But to resume:
I loved, and was beloved again;
In sooth, it is a happy doom,
But yet where happiest ends in pain.—
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery expectation's dower.
My days and nights were nothing—all
Except that hour, which doth recal
In the long lapse from youth to age
No other like itself—I 'd give
The Ukraine back again to live
It o'er once more—and be a page,
The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
And had no other gem nor wealth
Save nature's gift of youth and health—
We met in secret—doubly sweet,
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that—I would have given
My life but to have call'd her mine
In the full view of earth and heaven;
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

« For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us:—the devil
On such occasions should be civil—
The devil!—I 'm loth to do him wrong,
It might be some untoward saint,
Who would not be at rest too long,
But to his pious bile gave vent—
But one fair night, some lurking spies
Surprised and seized us both.
The count was something more than wroth—
I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
All cap-à-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do?—
'T was near his castle, far away
From city or from succour near,
And almost on the break of day;
I did not think to see another,
My moments seem'd reduced to few;
And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
And, it may be, a saint or two,
As I resign'd me to my fate,
They led me to the castle gate:
Theresa's doom I never knew,
Our lot was henceforth separate.—
An angry man, ye may opine,
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
And he had reason good to be,
But he was most enraged lest such
An accident should chance to touch
Upon his future pedigree;
Nor less amazed, that such a blot
His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
While he was highest of his line:
Because unto himself he seem'd
The first of men, nor less he deem'd
In others' eyes, and most in mine.
'Sdeath! with a *page*—perchance a king
Had reconciled him to the thing:
But with a stripling of a page—
I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

IX.

« 'Bring forth the horse!'—the horse was brought.
In truth, he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who look'd as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs: but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
With spur and bridle undefiled—
'T was but a day he had been caught;
And snorting, with erected mane,
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
In the full foam of wrath and dread,
To me the desert-born was led:

They bound me on, that menial throng,
Upon his back with many a thong;
Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
Away!—away!—and on we dash!—
Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X.

« Away!—away!—My breath was gone—
I saw not where he hurried on:
'T was scarcely yet the break of day,
And on he foam'd—away!—away!—
The last of human sounds which rose,
As I was darted from my foes,
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
Which on the wind came roaring after
A moment from that rabble rout:
With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
And writhing half my form about,
Howl'd back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
The thunder of my courser's speed,
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:
It vexes me—for I would fain
Have paid their insult back again.
I paid it well in after days:
There is not of that castle gate,
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
And many a time ye there might pass,
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was:
I saw its turrets in a blaze,
Their crackling battlements all cleft,
And the hot lead pour down like rain
From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
Whose thickness was not vengeance proof.
They little thought that day of pain,
When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
They bade me to destruction dash,
That one day I should come again,
With twice five thousand horse, to thank
The count for his uncourteous ride.
They play'd me then a bitter prank,
When, with the wild horse for my guide,
They bound me to his foaming flank:
At length I play'd them one as frank—
For time at last sets all things even—
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

« Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind,
All human dwellings left behind;
We sped like meteors through the sky,
When with its crackling sound the night
Is chequer'd with the northern light:
Town—village—none were on our track,
But a wild plain of far extent,
And bounded by a forest black:
And, save the scarce-seen battlement
On distant heights of some strong hold,
Against the Tartars built of old,
No trace of man. The year before
A Turkish army had march'd o'er;
And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
The verdure flies the bloody sod:—
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
And a low breeze crept moaning by—
I could have answer'd with a sigh—
But fast we fled, away, away—
And I could neither sigh nor pray;
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
Upon the courser's bristling mane:
But, snorting still with rage and fear,
He flew upon his far career:
At times I almost thought, indeed,
He must have slacken'd in his speed:
But no—my bound and slender frame
Was nothing to his angry might,
And merely like a spur became:
Each motion which I made to free
My swoln limbs from their agony
Increased his fury and affright:
I tried my voice,—'t was faint and low,
But yet he swerved as from a blow;
And, starting to each accent, sprang
As from a sudden trumpet's clang:
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
And in my tongue the thirst became
A something fierier far than flame.

XII.

« We near'd the wild wood—'t was so wide,
I saw no bounds on either side;
'T was studded with old sturdy trees,
That bent not to the roughest breeze
Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
And strips the forest in its haste,—
But these were few, and far between
Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
Ere strown by those autumnal eves
That nip the forest's foliage dead,
Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
And some long winter's night hath shed
Its frost o'er every tombless head,
So cold and stark the raven's beak
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:
'T was a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chesnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
But far apart—and well it were,
Or else a different lot were mine—
The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs; and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarr'd with cold—
My bonds forbade to loose my hold.
We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,

With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
Nor left us with the morning sun;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At day-break winding through the wood,
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,
And perish—if it must be so—
At bay, destroying many a foe.
When first my courser's race begun,
I wish'd the goal already won;
But now I doubted strength and speed.
Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;
Nor faster falls the blinding snow
Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
Than through the forest-paths he past—
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;
All furious as a favour'd child
Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still—
A woman piqued—who has her will.

XIII.

« The wood was past; 'twas more than noon;
But chill the air, although in June;
Or it might be my veins ran cold—
Prolong'd endurance tames the bold:
And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er:
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path,
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
Thus bound in nature's nakedness;
Sprung from a race whose rising blood
When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
And trodden hard upon, is like
The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,
What marvel if this worn out trunk
Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
I seem'd to sink upon the ground;
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore
And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more:
The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no farther. he who dies
Can die no more than then I died.
O'ertortured by that ghastly ride,
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake; but could not make
My senses climb up from below:
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain;
But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such:
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again;
And yet I do suppose we must
Feel far more ere we turn to dust:
No matter; I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face—before—and now.

XIV.

« My thoughts came back; where was I? Cold,
And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb; till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,
My heart began once more to thrill;
My sight return'd, though dim; alas!
And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.
Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
There was a gleam too of the sky,
Studded with stars;—it is no dream;
The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
The bright broad river's gushing tide
Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
And we are half-way struggling o'er
To yon unknown and silent shore.
The waters broke my hollow trance,
And with a temporary strength
My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.
My courser's broad breast proudly braves,
And dashes off the ascending waves
And onward we advance!
We reach the slippery shore at length,
A haven I but little prized,
For all behind was dark and drear,
And all before was night and fear.
How many hours of night or day
In those suspended pangs I lay,
I could not tell; I scarcely knew
If this were human breath I drew.

XV.

« With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
Up the repelling bank.
We gain the top: a boundless plain
Spreads through the shadow of the night,
And onward, onward, onward, seems
Like precipices in our dreams,
To stretch beyond the sight;
And here and there a speck of white,
Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
In masses broke into the light,
As rose the moon upon my right.
But nought distinctly seen
In the dim waste, would indicate
The omen of a cottage gate;
No twinkling taper from afar
Stood like an hospitable star;
Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
To make him merry with my woes:

That very cheat had cheer'd me then!
Although detected, welcome still,
Reminding me, through every ill,
Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

« Onward we went—but slack and slow;
His savage force at length o'erspent,
The drooping courser, faint and low,
All feebly foaming went.
A sickly infant had had power
To guide him forward in that hour;
But useless all to me.
His new-born tameness nought avail'd,
My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,
Perchance, had they been free.
With feeble effort still I tried
To rend the bounds so starkly tied—
But still it was in vain;
My limbs were only wrung the more,
And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
Which but prolong'd their pain:
The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
Although no goal was nearly won:
Some streaks announced the coming sun—
How slow, alas! he came!
Methought that mist of dawning gray
Would never dapple into day;
How heavily it roll'd away—
Before the eastern flame
Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
And call'd the radiance from their cars,
And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII.

« Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd
Back from the solitary world
Which lay around—behind—before:
What booted it to traverse o'er
Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
No sign of travel—none of toil;
The very air was mute;
And not an insect's shrill small horn,
Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
Panting as if his heart would burst,
The weary brute still stagger'd on;
And still we were—or seem'd—alone:
At length, while reeling on our way,
Methought I heard a courser neigh,
From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
Is it the wind those branches stirs?
No, no! from out the forest prance
A trampling troop; I see them come!
In one vast squadron they advance!
I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.
The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
But where are they the reins to guide?
A thousand horse—and none to ride!
With flowing tail, and flying mane,
Wide nostrils—never stretch'd by pain,
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod.
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
Came thickly thundering on,
As if our faint approach to meet;
The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
A moment, with a faint low neigh,
He answer'd, and then fell;
With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
And reeking limbs immoveable,
His first and last career is done!
On came the troop—they saw him stoop,
They saw me strangely bound along
His back with many a bloody thong:
They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
Gallop a moment here and there,
Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
Then plunging back with sudden bound,
Headed by one black mighty steed,
Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,
Without a single speck or hair
Of white upon his shaggy hide;
They snort—they foam—neigh—swerve aside,
And backward to the forest fly,
By instinct from a human eye—
They left me there, to my despair,
Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,
Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
Relieved from that unwonted weight,
From whence I could not extricate
Nor him nor me—and there we lay,
The dying on the dead!
I little deem'd another day
Would see my houseless, helpless head.
And there from morn till twilight bound,
I felt the heavy hours toil round,
With just enough of life to see
My last of suns go down on me,
In hopeless certainty of mind,
That makes us feel at length resign'd
To that which our foreboding years
Presents the worst and last of fears
Inevitable—even a boon,
Nor more unkind for coming soon;
Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
As if it only were a snare
That prudence might escape:
At times both wish'd for and implored,
At times sought with self-pointed sword,
Yet still a dark and hideous close
To even intolerable woes,
And welcome in no shape.
And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
They who have revell'd beyond measure
In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
Whose heritage was misery:
For he who hath in turn run through
All that was beautiful and new,
Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
And, save the future (which is view'd
Not quite as men are base or good,
But as their nerves may be endued),
With nought perhaps to grieve:—

The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears to his distemper'd eyes,
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.
To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall;
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplored or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII.

«The sun was sinking—still I lay
Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed;
I thought to mingle there our clay;
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed:
I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun
I saw the expecting raven fly,
Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun;
He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit
I could have smote, but lack'd the strength;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,
Together scared him off at length.—
I know no more—my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beam,
And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath,
A little thrill, a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—
A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX.

«I woke—Where was I?—Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie?
And is it mortal yon bright eye,
That watches me with gentle glance?
I closed my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance
Could not as yet be o'er.
A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall;
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw
A prying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free:
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
No vision it could be,—
But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast:
And when the cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,
She smiled—and I essay'd to speak,
But fail'd—and she approach'd, and made
With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free;
And then her hand on mine she laid,
And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,
And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet!
Even music follow'd her light feet!
But those she call'd were not awake,
And she went forth; but ere she pass'd,
Another look on me she cast,
Another sign she made, to say,
That I had nought to fear, that all
Were near, at my command or call,
And she would not delay
Her due return;—while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

«She came with mother and with sire—
What need of more?—I will not tire
With long recital of the rest,
Since I became the Cossack's guest:
They found me senseless on the plain—
They bore me to the nearest hut—
They brought me into life again—
Me—one day o'er their realm to reign!
Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
Sent me forth to the wilderness,
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne.—
What mortal his own doom may guess?—
Let none despond, let none despair!
To-morrow the Borysthenes
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank,—and never
Had I such welcome for a river
As I shall yield when safely there.
Comrades, good night!»—The Hetman threw
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:—
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not,—
The king had been an hour asleep.

Manfred,

A DRAMATIC POEM.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MANFRED.
CHAMOIS HUNTER.
ABBOT OF ST MAURICE.
MANUEL.
HERMAN.
WITCH OF THE ALPS.
ARIMANES.
NEMESIS.
THE DESTINIES.
SPIRITS, etc.

The Scene of the Drama is amongst the Higher Alps —partly in the Castle of Manfred, and partly in the Mountains.

MANFRED.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

MANFRED *alone.—Scene, a Gothic Gallery.—Time, Midnight.*

MANFRED.

THE lamp must be replenish'd, but even then
It will not burn so long as I must watch:
My slumbers—if I slumber—are not sleep,
But a continuance of enduring thought,
Which then I can resist not: in my heart
There is a vigil, and these eyes but close
To look within: and yet I live, and bear
The aspect and the form of breathing men.
But grief should be the instructor of the wise:
Sorrow is knowledge: they who know the most
Must mourn the deepest o'er the fatal truth,
The tree of knowledge is not that of life.
Philosophy and science, and the springs
Of wonder, and the wisdom of the world,
I have essay'd, and in my mind there is
A power to make these subject to itself—
But they avail not: I have done men good,
And I have met with good even among men—
But this avail'd not: I have had my foes,
And none have baffled, many fallen before me—
But this avail'd not:—good or evil, life,
Powers, passions, all I see in other beings,
Have been to me as rain unto the sands,
Since that all-nameless hour. I have no dread,
And feel the curse to have no natural fear,
Nor fluttering throb, that beats with hopes or wishes,
Or lurking love of something on the earth.—
Now to my task.—
Mysterious Agency!
Ye spirits of the unbounded universe!
Whom I have sought in darkness and in light—
Ye, who do compass earth about, and dwell
In subtler essence—ye, to whom the tops
Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
And earth's and ocean's caves familiar things—
I call upon ye by the written charm
Which gives me power upon you——Rise! appear!
[*A pause.*
They come not yet.—Now by the voice of him
Who is the first among you—by this sign,
Which makes you tremble—by the claims of him
Who is undying,—rise! appear!——Appear!
[*A pause.*
If it be so.—Spirits of earth and air,
Ye shall not thus elude me: by a power,
Deeper than all yet urged, a tyrant-spell,
Which had its birth-place in a star condemn'd,
The burning wreck of a demolish'd world,
A wandering hell in the eternal space;
By the strong curse which is upon my soul,
The thought which is within me and around me,
I do compel ye to my will.—Appear!
[*A star is seen at the darker end of the gallery; it is stationary; and a voice is heard singing.*]

FIRST SPIRIT.

Mortal! to thy bidding bow'd,
From my mansion in the cloud,
Which the breath of twilight builds,
And the summer's sun-set gilds
With the azure and vermilion,
Which is mix'd for my pavilion;
Though thy quest may be forbidden,
On a star-beam I have ridden;
To thine adjuration bow'd,
Mortal—be thy wish avow'd!

Voice of the SECOND SPIRIT.

Mont Blanc is the monarch of mountains,
They crown'd him long ago
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow.
Around his waist are forests braced,
The avalanche in his hand;
But ere it fall, that thundering ball
Must pause for my command.
The glacier's cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day;
But I am he who bids it pass,
Or with its ice delay.
I am the spirit of the place,
Could make the mountain bow
And quiver to his cavern'd base—
And what with me wouldst *thou*?

Voice of the THIRD SPIRIT.

In the blue depth of the waters,
Where the wave hath no strife,

Where the wind is a stranger,
And the sea-snake hath life,
Where the mermaid is decking
Her green hair with shells;
Like the storm on the surface
Came the sound of thy spells;
O'er my calm hall of coral
The deep echo roll'd—
To the Spirit of Ocean
Thy wishes unfold!

FOURTH SPIRIT.

Where the slumbering earthquake
Lies pillow'd on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen
Rise boilingly higher;
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth;
I have quitted my birth-place,
Thy bidding to bide—
Thy spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my guide!

FIFTH SPIRIT.

I 'm the rider of the wind,
The stirrer of the storm;
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm;
To speed to thee, o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast:
The fleet I met sail'd well, and yet
'T will sink ere night be past.

SIXTH SPIRIT.

My dwelling is the shadow of the night,
Why doth thy magic torture me with light?

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

The star which rules thy destiny
Was ruled, ere earth began, by me:
It was a world as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round sun in air;
Its course was free and regular,
Space bosom'd not a lovelier star.
The hour arrived—and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless comet, and a curse,
The menace of the universe;
Still rolling on with innate force,
Without a sphere, without a course,
A bright deformity on high,
The monster of the upper sky!
And thou! beneath its influence born—
Thou, worm! whom I obey and scorn—
Forced by a power (which is not thine,
And lent thee but to make thee mine)
For this brief moment to descend,
Where these weak spirits round thee bend,
And parley with a thing like thee—
What would'st thou, child of clay, with me?

THE SEVEN SPIRITS.

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy star,
Are at thy beck and bidding, child of clay!
Before thee, at thy quest, their spirits are—
What wouldst thou with us, son of mortals—say?

MANFRED.

Forgetfulness——

FIRST SPIRIT.

Of what—of whom—and why?

MANFRED.

Of that which is within me; read it there
—Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

SPIRIT.

We can but give thee that which we possess:
Ask of us subjects, sovereignty, the power
O'er earth, the whole, or portion, or a sign
Which shall control the elements, whereof
We are the dominators,—each and all,
These shall be thine.

MANFRED.

Oblivion, self-oblivion—
Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms
Ye offer so profusely what I ask?

SPIRIT.

It is not in our essence, in our skill;
But—thou may'st die.

MANFRED.

Will death bestow it on me?

SPIRIT.

We are immortal, and do not forget;
We are eternal: and to us the past
Is, as the future, present. Art thou answer'd?

MANFRED.

Ye mock me—but the power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves, scoff not at my will!
The mind, the spirit, the Promethean spark,
The lightning of my being, is as bright,
Pervading, and far-darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours, though coop'd in clay!
Answer, or I will teach ye what I am.

SPIRIT.

We answer as we answer'd; our reply
Is even in thine own words.

MANFRED.

Why say ye so?

SPIRIT.

If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
We have replied in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

MANFRED.

I then have call'd ye from your realms in vain;
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

SPIRIT.

Say;
What we possess we offer; it is thine:
Bethink ere thou dismiss us, ask again—
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days——

MANFRED.

Accursed! what have I to do with days?
They are too long already.—Hence—begone!

SPIRIT.

Yet pause: being here, our will would do thee service;
Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make not worthless in thine eyes?

MANFRED.

No, none: yet stay—one moment, ere we part—
I would behold ye face to face. I hear
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds,
As music on the waters; and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star;
But nothing more. Approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustom'd forms.

SPIRIT.

We have no forms beyond the elements
Of which we are the mind and principle:
But choose a form—in that we will appear.

MANFRED.

I have no choice; there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me. Let him,
Who is most powerful of ye, take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting—Come!

SEVENTH SPIRIT.

(*Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure.*)
Behold!

MANFRED.

Oh God! if it be thus, and *thou*
Art not a madness and a mockery,
I yet might be most happy.—I will clasp thee,
And we again will be—— [*The figure vanishes.*
My heart is crush'd!
[MANFRED *falls senseless.*

(*A voice is heard in the Incantation which follows.*)

When the moon is on the wave,
And the glow-worm in the grass,
And the meteor on the grave,
And the wisp on the morass;
When the falling stars are shooting,
And the answer'd owls are hooting,
And the silent leaves are still
In the shadow of the hill,
Shall my soul be upon thine,
With a power and with a sign.

Though thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
There are shades which will not vanish,
There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
By a power to thee unknown,
Thou canst never be alone;
Thou art wrapt as with a shroud,
Thou art gather'd in a cloud;
And for ever shalt thou dwell
In the spirit of this spell.

Though thou seest me not pass by,
Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
As a thing that, though unseen,
Must be near thee, and hath been;
And when in that secret dread
Thou hast turn'd around thy head,
Thou shalt marvel I am not
As thy shadow on the spot,
And the power which thou dost feel
Shall be what thou must conceal.

And a magic voice and verse
Hath baptised thee with a curse;
And a spirit of the air
Hath begirt thee with a snare;
In the wind there is a voice
Shall forbid thee to rejoice;
And to thee shall Night deny
All the quiet of her sky;
And the day shall have a sun,
Which shall make thee wish it done.

From thy false tears I did distil
An essence which hath strength to kill;
From thy own heart I then did wring
The black blood in its blackest spring;
From thy own smile I snatch'd the snake,
For there it coil'd as in a brake;
From thy own lip I drew the charm
Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
In proving every poison known,
I found the strongest was thine own.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathom'd gulfs of guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's hypocrisy;
By the perfection of thine art,
Which pass'd for human thine own heart;
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compel
Thyself to be thy proper hell!

And on thy head I pour the vial
Which doth devote thee to this trial;
Nor to slumber, nor to die,
Shall be in thy destiny;
Though thy death shall still seem near
To thy wish, but as a fear;
Lo! the spell now works around thee,
And the clankless chain hath bound thee;
O'er thy heart and brain together
Hath the word been pass'd—now wither!

SCENE II.

The Mountain of the Jungfrau.—Time, Morning.
—MANFRED *alone upon the Cliffs.*

MANFRED.

The spirits I have raised abandon me—
The spells which I have studied baffle me—
The remedy I reck'd of tortured me;
I lean no more on super-human aid,
It hath no power upon the past, and for
The future, till the past be gulf'd in darkness,
It is not of my search.—My mother earth!
And thou fresh breaking day, and you, ye mountains,
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou, the bright eye of the universe,
That openest over all, and unto all
Art a delight—thou shinest not on my heart.
And you, ye crags, upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrent's brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs
In dizziness of distance; when a leap,
A stir, a motion, even a breath, would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest for ever—wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse—yet I do not plunge;
I see the peril—yet do not recede;
And my brain reels—and yet my foot is firm:
There is a power upon me which withholds
And makes it my fatality to live;
If it be life to wear within myself
This barrenness of spirit, and to be
My own soul's sepulchre, for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself—
The last infirmity of evil. Ay,
Thou winged and cloud-cleaving minister,
[*An eagle passes.*
Whose happy flight is highest into heaven,
Well may'st thou swoop so near me—I should be

Thy prey, and gorge thine eaglets; thou art gone
Where the eye cannot follow thee; but thine
Yet pierces downward, onward, or above
With a pervading vision.—Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this visible world!
How glorious in its action and itself!
But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns, we,
Half dust, half deity, alike unfit
To sink or soar, with our mix'd essence make
A conflict of its elements, and breathe
The breath of degradation and of pride,
Contending with low wants and lofty will
Till our mortality predominates,
And men are—what they name not to themselves,
And trust not to each other. Hark! the note,

[*The shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.*

The natural music of the mountain reed—
For here the patriarchal days are not
A pastoral fable—pipes in the liberal air,
Mix'd with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;
My soul would drink those echoes.—Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment—born and dying
With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a CHAMOIS HUNTER.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Even so
This way the chamois leapt: her nimble feet
Have baffled me; my gains to-day will scarce
Repay my break-neck travail.—What is here?
Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reach'd
A height which none even of our mountaineers,
Save our best hunters, may attain: his garb
Is goodly, his mien manly, and his air
Proud as a free-born peasant's, at this distance.—
I will approach him nearer.

MANFRED. (*Not perceiving the other.*)

To be thus—
Gray-hair'd with anguish, like these blasted pines,
Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
A blighted trunk upon a cursed root,
Which but supplies a feeling to decay—
And to be thus, eternally but thus,
Having been otherwise! Now furrow'd o'er
With wrinkles, plough'd by moments, not by years;
And hours—all tortured into ages—hours
Which I outlive!—Ye toppling crags of ice!
Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down
In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me!
I hear ye momently above, beneath,
Crash with a frequent conflict; but ye pass,
And only fall on things that still would live;
On the young flourishing forest, or the hut
And hamlet of the harmless villager.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

The mists begin to rise from up the valley;
I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
To lose at once his way and life together.

MANFRED.

The mists boil up around the glaciers; clouds
Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
Like foam from the roused ocean of deep hell,
Whose every wave breaks on a living shore,
Heap'd with the damn'd like pebbles.—I am giddy.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

I must approach him cautiously; if near,
A sudden step will startle him, and he
Seems tottering already.

MANFRED.

Mountains have fallen,
Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
Rocking their Alpine brethren; filling up
The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters,
Damming the rivers with a sudden dash,
Which crush'd the waters into mist, and made
Their fountains find another channel—thus,
Thus, in its old age, did Mount Rosenburg—
Why stood I not beneath it?

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Friend! have a care,
Your next step may be fatal!—for the love
Of him who made you, stand not on that brink!

MANFRED. (*Not hearing him.*)

Such would have been for me a fitting tomb;
My bones had then been quiet in their depth;
They had not then been strewn upon the rocks
For the wind's pastime—as thus—thus they shall be—
In this one plunge.—Farewell, ye opening heavens!
Look not upon me thus reproachfully—
Ye were not meant for me—Earth! take these atoms!

(*As* MANFRED *is in act to spring from the cliff, the* CHAMOIS HUNTER *seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*)

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Hold, madman!—though aweary of thy life,
Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood.—
Away with me—I will not quit my hold.

MANFRED.

I am most sick at heart—nay, grasp me not—
I am all feebleness—the mountains whirl
Spinning around me—I grow blind.—What art thou?

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

I'll answer that anon.—Away with me—
The clouds grow thicker—there—now lean on me—
Place your foot here—here, take this staff, and cling
A moment to that shrub—now give me your hand,
And hold fast by my girdle—softly—well—
The Chalet will be gain'd within an hour—
Come on, we'll quickly find a surer footing,
And something like a pathway, which the torrent
Hath wash'd since winter.—Come, 't is bravely done—
You should have been a hunter.—Follow me.

(*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the scene closes.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Cottage amongst the Bernese Alps.

MANFRED *and the* CHAMOIS HUNTER.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

No, no—yet pause—thou must not yet go forth:
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other, for some hours, at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide—
But whither?

MANFRED.

It imports not: I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high lineage—
One of the many chiefs, whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys—which of these
May call thee Lord? I only know their portals;
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals; but the paths,
Which step from out our mountains to their doors,
I know from childhood—which of these is thine?

MANFRED.

No matter.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Well, sir, pardon me the question,
And be of better cheer. Come, taste my wine;
'T is of an ancient vintage; many a day
'T has thaw'd my veins among our glaciers, now
Let it do thus for thine—Come, pledge me fairly.

MANFRED.

Away, away! there 's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never—never sink in the earth?

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

What dost thou mean? thy senses wander from thee.

MANFRED.

I say 't is blood—my blood! the pure warm stream
Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours
When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
And loved each other as we should not love,
And this was shed: but still it rises up,
Colouring the clouds, that shut me out from heaven,
Where thou art not—and I shall never be.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Man of strange words, and some half-maddening sin,
Which makes thee people vacancy, whate'er
Thy dread and suffrance be, there 's comfort yet—
The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience——

MANFRED.

Patience, and patience! Hence—that word was made
For brutes of burthen, not for birds of prey;
Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine,—
I am not of thine order.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Thanks to Heaven!
I would not be of thine for the free fame
Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill,
It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.

MANFRED,

Do I not bear it?—Look on me—I live.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

This is convulsion, and no healthful life.

MANFRED.

I tell thee, man! I have lived many years,
Many long years, but they are nothing now
To those which I must number: ages—ages—
Space and eternity—and consciousness,
With the fierce thirst of death—and still unslaked!

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
Hath scarce been set; I am thine elder far.

MANFRED.

Think'st thou existence doth depend on time?
It doth: but actions are our epochs: mine
Have made my days and nights imperishable,
Endless, and all alike as sands on the shore,
Innumerable atoms; and one desert,
Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
But nothing rests, save carcasses and wrecks,
Rocks, and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Alas! he 's mad—but yet I must not leave him.

MANFRED.

I would I were—for then the things I see
Would be but a distemper'd dream.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

What is it
That thou dost see, or think thou look'st upon?

MANFRED.

Myself and thee—a peasant of the Alps—
Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
And spirit patient, pious, proud and free;
Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts;
Thy days of health, and nights of sleep; thy toils,
By danger dignified, yet guiltless; hopes
Of cheerful old age and a quiet grave,
With cross and garland over its green turf,
And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph:
This do I see—and then I look within—
It matters not—my soul was scorch'd already!

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

And would'st thou then exchange thy lot for mine?

MANFRED.

No, friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange
My lot with living being: I can bear—
However wretchedly, 't is still to bear—
In life what others could not brook to dream,
But perish in their slumber.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

And with this—
This cautious feeling for another's pain,
Canst thou be black with evil?—say not so.
Can one of gentle thoughts have wreak'd revenge
Upon his enemies?

MANFRED.

Oh! no, no, no!
My injuries came down on those who loved me—
On those whom I best loved: I never quell'd
An enemy, save in my just defence—
But my embrace was fatal.

CHAMOIS HUNTER.

Heaven give thee rest!
And penitence restore thee to thyself;
My prayers shall be for thee.

MANFRED.

I need them not,
But can endure thy pity. I depart—
'T is time—farewell!—Here 's gold, and thanks for thee—
No words—it is thy due.—Follow me not—
I know my path—the mountain peril 's past:—
And once again, I charge thee, follow not!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE II.

A lower Valley in the Alps—A Cataract.

Enter MANFRED.

It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving column
O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
The giant steed, to be bestrode by death,
As told in the Apocalypse. No eyes

But mine now drink this sight of loveliness;
I should be sole in this sweet solitude,
And with the spirit of the place divide
The homage of these waters.—I will call her.

(MANFRED *takes some of the water into the palm of his hand, and flings it in the air, muttering the adjuration. After a pause, the* WITCH OF THE ALPS *rises beneath the arch of the sunbeam of the torrent.*

MANFRED.

Beautiful spirit! with thy hair of light,
And dazzling eyes of glory, in whose form
The charms of earth's least-mortal daughters grow
To an unearthly stature, in an essence
Of purer elements; while the hues of youth,—
Carnation'd like a sleeping infant's cheek,
Rock'd by the beating of her mother's heart,
Or the rose tints, which summer's twilight leaves
Upon the lofty glacier's virgin snow,
The blush of earth embracing with her heaven,—
Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
The beauties of the sunbow which bends o'er thee.
Beautiful spirit! in thy calm clear brow,
Wherein is glass'd serenity of soul,
Which of itself shows immortality,
I read that thou wilt pardon to a son
Of earth, whom the abstruser powers permit
At times to commune with them—if that he
Avail him of his spells—to call thee thus,
And gaze on thee a moment.

WITCH.

Son of earth!
I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;
I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
And deeds of good and ill, extreme in both,
Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
I have expected this—what wouldst thou with me?

MANFRED.

To look upon thy beauty—nothing further.
The face of the earth hath madden'd me, and I
Take refuge in her mysteries, and pierce
To the abodes of those who govern her—
But they can nothing aid me. I have sought
From them what they could not bestow, and now
I search no further.

WITCH.

What could be the quest
Which is not in the power of the most powerful,
The rulers of the invisible?

MANFRED.

A boon;
But why should I repeat it? 't were in vain.

WITCH.

I know not that; let thy lips utter it.

MANFRED.

Well, though it torture me, 't is but the same;
My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards
My spirit walk'd not with the souls of men.
Nor look'd upon the earth with human eyes,
The thirst of their ambition was not mine,
The aim of their existence was not mine;
My joys, my griefs, my passions, and my powers,
Made me a stranger; though I wore the form,
I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
Nor midst the creatures of clay that girded me
Was there but one who——but of her anon.
I said, with men, and with the thoughts of men,
I held but slight communion: but instead,
My joy was in the wilderness, to breathe
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing
Flit o'er the herbless granite; or to plunge
Into the torrent, and to roll along
On the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
Of river-stream, or ocean, in their flow.
In these my early strength exulted; or
To follow through the night the moving moon,
The stars and their developement; or catch
The dazzling lightnings till my eyes grew dim;
Or to look, list'ning, on the scatter'd leaves,
While autumn winds were at their evening song.
These were my pastimes, and to be alone;
For if the beings, of whom I was one,—
Hating to be so,—cross'd me in my path,
I felt myself degraded back to them,
And was all clay again. And then I dived,
In my lone wanderings, to the caves of death,
Searching its cause in its effect; and drew
From wither'd bones, and skulls, and heap'd up dust,
Conclusions most forbidden. Then I pass'd
The nights of years in sciences untaught,
Save in the old-time; and with time and toil,
And terrible ordeal, and such penance
As in itself hath power upon the air,
And spirits that do compass air and earth,
Space, and the peopled infinite, I made
Mine eyes familiar with eternity,
Such as, before me, did the Magi, and
He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros,[2] at Gadara,
As I do thee;—and with my knowledge grew
The thirst of knowledge, and the power and joy
Of this most bright intelligence, until——

WITCH.

Proceed.

MANFRED.

Oh! I but thus prolong'd my words,
Boasting these idle attributes, because
As I approach the core of my heart's grief—
But to my task. I have not named to thee
Father or mother, mistress, friend, or being,
With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
If I had such, they seem'd not such to me—
Yet there was one——

WITCH.

Spare not thyself—proceed.

MANFRED.

She was like me in lineaments—her eyes,
Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
Even of her voice, they said were like to mine;
But soften'd all, and temper'd into beauty;
She had the same lone thoughts and wanderings,
The quest of hidden knowledge, and a mind
To comprehend the universe: nor these
Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine,
Pity, and smiles, and tears—which I had not;
And tenderness—but that I had for her;
Humility—and that I never had.
Her faults were mine—her virtues were her own—
I loved her, and destroy'd her!

WITCH.

With thy hand?

MANFRED.

Not with my hand, but heart—which broke her heart—
It gazed on mine, and wither'd. I have shed
Blood, but not hers—and yet her blood was shed—
I saw—and could not staunch it.

WITCH.

And for this—
A being of the race thou dost despise,
The order which thine own would rise above,
Mingling with us and ours, thou dost forego
The gifts of our great knowledge, and shrink'st back
To recreant mortality——Away!

MANFRED.

Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour—
But words are breath—look on me in my sleep,
Or watch my watchings—Come and sit by me!
My solitude is solitude no more,
But peopled with the Furies.—I have gnash'd
My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
Then cursed myself till sunset;—I have pray'd
For madness as a blessing—'tis denied me.
I have affronted death—but in the war
Of elements the waters shrunk from me,
And fatal things pass'd harmless—the cold hand
Of an all-pitiless demon held me back,
Back by a single hair, which would not break.
In phantasy, imagination, all
The affluence of my soul—which one day was
A Crœsus in creation—I plunged deep,
But, like an ebbing wave, it dash'd me back
Into the gulf of my unfathom'd thought.
I plunged amidst mankind—Forgetfulness
I sought in all, save where 't is to be found,
And that I have to learn—my sciences,
My long pursued and super-human art,
Is mortal here—I dwell in my despair—
And live—and live for ever.

WITCH.

It may be
That I can aid thee.

MANFRED.

To do this thy power
Must wake the dead, or lay me low with them.
Do so—in any shape—in any hour—
With any torture—so it be the last.

WITCH.

That is not in my province; but if thou
Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

MANFRED.

I will not swear.—Obey! and whom? the spirits
Whose presence I command, and be the slave
Of those who served me—Never!

WITCH.

Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer?—Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

MANFRED.

I have said it.

WITCH.

Enough!—I may retire then—say!

MANFRED.

Retire!

[*The* WITCH *disappears.*

MANFRED (*alone*).

We are the fools of time and terror: days
Steal on us and steal from us; yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die.
In all the days of this detested yoke—
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony or faintness—
In all the days of past and future, for
In life there is no present, we can number
How few—how less than few—wherein the soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter, though the chill
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science—I can call the dead,
And ask them what it is we dread to be:
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing—if they answer not—
The buried Prophet answer'd to the Hag
Of Endor; and the Spartan Monarch drew
From the Byzantine maid's unsleeping spirit
An answer and his destiny—he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardon'd—though he call'd in aid
The Phyxian Jove, and in Phigalia roused
The Arcadian Evocators to compel
The indignant shadow to depose her wrath,
Or fix her term of vengeance—she replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.[3]

If I had never lived, that which I love
Had still been living; had I never loved,
That which I love would still be beautiful—
Happy and giving happiness. What is she?
What is she now?—a sufferer for my sins—
A thing I dare not think upon—or nothing.
Within few hours I shall not call in vain—
Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare:
Until this hour I never shrunk to gaze
On spirit, good or evil—now I tremble,
And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart;
But I can act even what I most abhor,
And champion human fears.—The night approaches.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III.

The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.

Enter FIRST DESTINY.

The moon is rising broad, and round, and bright;
And here on snows, where never human foot
Of common mortal trod, we nightly tread,
And leave no traces; o'er the savage sea,
The glassy ocean of the mountain ice,
We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam,
Frozen in a moment—a dead whirlpool's image;
And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
The fretwork of some earthquake—where the clouds
Pause to repose themselves in passing by—
Is sacred to our revels, or our vigils;
Here do I wait my sisters, on our way
To the Hall of Arimanes, for to-night
Is our great festival—'tis strange they come not.

A voice without, singing.

The Captive Usurper,
Hurl'd down from the throne,
Lay buried in torpor,
Forgotten and lone;

I broke through his slumbers,
I shiver'd his chain,
I leagued him with numbers—
He 's Tyrant again!
With the blood of a million he 'll answer my care,
With a nation's destruction—his flight and despair.

Second Voice, without.

The ship sail'd on, the ship sail'd fast,
But I left not a sail, and I left not a mast;
There is not a plank of the hull or the deck,
And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck;
Save one, whom I held, as he swam, by the hair,
And he was a subject well worthy my care;
A traitor on land, and a pirate at sea—
But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me!

FIRST DESTINY, *answering.*

The city lies sleeping;
The morn, to deplore it,
May dawn on it weeping:
Sullenly, slowly,
The black plague flew o'er it—
Thousands lie lowly;
Tens of thousands shall perish—
The living shall fly from
The sick they should cherish;
But nothing can vanquish
The touch that they die from.
Sorrow and anguish,
And evil and dread,
Envelope a nation—
The blest are the dead,
Who see not the sight
Of their own desolation.—
This work of a night,
This wreck of a realm—this deed of my doing—
For ages I 've done, and shall still be renewing!

Enter the SECOND *and* THIRD DESTINIES.

The Three.

Our hands contain the hearts of men,
Our footsteps are their graves;
We only give to take again
The spirits of our slaves!

FIRST DESTINY.

Welcome!—Where's Nemesis?

SECOND DESTINY.

At some great work;
But what I know not, for my hands were full.

THIRD DESTINY.

Behold she cometh.

Enter NEMESIS.

FIRST DESTINY.

Say, where hast thou been?
My sisters and thyself are slow to-night.

NEMESIS.

I was detain'd repairing shatter'd thrones,
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies,
And making them repent their own revenge;
Goading the wise to madness; from the dull
Shaping out oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date,
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
To weigh kings in the balance, and to speak
Of freedom, the forbidden fruit.—Away!
We have outstaid the hour—mount we our clouds!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Hall of Arimanes—Arimanes on his Throne, a Globe of Fire, surrounded by the Spirits.

Hymn of the SPIRITS.

Hail to our master!—Prince of earth and air!—
Who walks the clouds and waters—in his hand
The sceptre of the elements, which tear
Themselves to chaos at his high command!
He breatheth—and a tempest shakes the sea;
He speaketh—and the clouds reply in thunder;
He gazeth—from his glance the sunbeams flee;
He moveth—earthquakes rend the world asunder.
Beneath his footsteps the volcanos rise;
His shadow is the Pestilence; his path
The comets herald through the crackling skies;
And planets turn to ashes at his wrath.
To him war offers daily sacrifice;
To him death pays his tribute; Life is his,
With all its infinite of agonies—
And his the spirit of whatever is!

Enter the DESTINIES *and* NEMESIS.

FIRST DESTINY.

Glory to Arimanes! on the earth
His power increaseth—both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty!

SECOND DESTINY.

Glory to Arimanes! we who bow
The necks of men, bow down before his throne!

THIRD DESTINY.

Glory to Arimanes!—we await his nod!

NEMESIS.

Sovereign of Sovereigns! we are thine,
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,
And most things wholly so; still to increase
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care,
And we are vigilant—Thy late commands
Have been fulfill'd to the utmost.

Enter MANFRED.

A SPIRIT.

What is here?
A mortal!—Thou most rash and fatal wretch,
Bow down and worship!

SECOND SPIRIT.

I do know the man—
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill!

THIRD SPIRIT.

Bow down and worship, slave!—
What, know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign?—Tremble, and obey!

ALL THE SPIRITS.

Prostrate thyself, and thy condemned clay,
Child of the Earth! or dread the worst.

MANFRED.

I know it;
And yet ye see I kneel not.

FOURTH SPIRIT.

'T will be taught thee.

MANFRED.

'T is taught already;—many a night on the earth,
On the bare ground, have I bow'd down my face,
And strew'd my head with ashes; I have known
The fulness of humiliation, for
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation.

FIFTH SPIRIT.

Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his glory—Crouch! I say.

MANFRED.

Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him,
The overruling Infinite—the Maker
Who made him not for worship—let him kneel,
And we will kneel together.

THE SPIRITS.

Crush the worm!
Tear him in pieces!—

FIRST DESTINY.

Hence! Avaunt! he 's mine.
Prince of the powers invisible! this man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote: his sufferings
Have been of an immortal nature, like
Our own; his knowledge and his powers and will,
As far as is compatible with clay,
Which clogs the ætherial essence, have been such
As clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know—
That knowledge is not happiness, and science
But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.
This is not all—the passions, attributes
Of earth and heaven, from which no power, nor being,
Nor breath, from the worm upwards, is exempt,
Have pierced his heart; and in their consequence
Made him a thing which I, who pity not,
Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,
And thine, it may be—be it so, or not,
No other spirit in this region hath
A soul like his—or power upon his soul.

NEMESIS.

What doth he here then?

FIRST DESTINY.

Let him answer that.

MANFRED.

Ye know what I have known; and without power
I could not be amongst ye: but there are
Powers deeper still beyond—I come in quest
Of such to answer unto what I seek.

NEMESIS.

What wouldst thou?

MANFRED.

Thou canst not reply to me.
Call up the dead—my question is for them.

NEMESIS.

Great Arimanes, doth thy will avouch
The wishes of this mortal?

ARIMANES.

Yea.

NEMESIS.

Whom would'st thou
Uncharnel?

MANFRED.

One without a tomb—call up
Astarte.

NEMESIS.

Shadow! or Spirit!
Whatever thou art,
Which still doth inherit
The whole or a part
Of the form of thy birth,
Of the mould of thy clay,
Which return'd to the earth,
Re-appear to the day!
Bear what thou borest,
The heart and the form,
And the aspect thou worest
Redeem from the worm.
Appear!—appear!—appear!
Who sent thee there requires thee here!

(*The phantom of* ASTARTE *rises and stands in the midst.*)

MANFRED.

Can this be death? there 's bloom upon her cheek!
But now I see it is no living hue,
But a strange hectic—like the unnatural red
Which Autumn plants upon the perish'd leaf.
It is the same! Oh God! that I should dread
To look upon the same—Astarte!—No,
I cannot speak to her—but bid her speak—
Forgive me or condemn me.

NEMESIS.

By the power which hath broken
The grave which inthrall'd thee,
Speak to him who hath spoken,
Or those who have call'd thee!

MANFRED.

She is silent,
And in that silence I am more than answer'd.

NEMESIS.

My power extends no further. Prince of air!
It rests with thee alone—command her voice.

ARIMANES.

Spirit! obey this sceptre!

NEMESIS.

Silent still!
She is not of our order, but belongs
To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
And we are baffled also.

MANFRED.

Hear me, hear me—
Astarte! my beloved! speak to me:
I have so much endured—so much endure—
Look on me! the grave hath not changed thee more
Than I am changed for thee. Thou lovedst me
Too much, as I loved thee: we were not made
To torture thus each other, though it were
The deadliest sin to love as we have loved.
Say that thou loathest me not—that I do bear
This punishment for both—that thou wilt be
One of the blessed—and that I shall die;
For hitherto all hateful things conspire
To bind me in existence—in a life
Which makes me shrink from immortality—
A future like the past. I cannot rest.
I know not what I ask nor what I seek:
I feel but what thou art—and what I am;
And I would hear yet once before I perish
The voice which was my music—Speak to me!
For I have call'd on thee in the still night,
Startled the slumbering birds from the hush'd boughs,
And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,
Which answer'd me—many things answer'd me—

Spirits and men—but thou wert silent all.
Yet speak to me! I have outwatch'd the stars,
And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee.
Speak to me! I have wander'd o'er the earth
And never found thy likeness—Speak to me!
Look on the fiends around—they feel for me:
I fear them not, and feel for thee alone—
Speak to me! though it be in wrath,—but say—
I reck not what—but let me hear thee once—
This once—once more!

PHANTOM OF ASTARTE.

Manfred!

MANFRED.

Say on, say on—
I live but in the sound—it is thy voice!

PHANTOM.

Manfred! to-morrow ends thine earthly ills.
Farewell!

MANFRED.

Yet one word more—am I forgiven?

PHANTOM.

Farewell!

MANFRED.

Say, shall we meet again?

PHANTOM.

Farewell!

MANFRED.

One word for mercy! say, thou lovest me.

PHANTOM.

Manfred!

[*The Spirit of* ASTARTE *disappears.*

NEMESIS.

She 's gone, and will not be recall'd;
Her words will be fulfill'd. Return to the earth.

A SPIRIT.

He is convulsed.—This is to be a mortal,
And seek the things beyond mortality.

ANOTHER SPIRIT.

Yet, see, he mastereth himself, and makes
His torture tributary to his will.
Had he been one of us, he would have made
An awful spirit.

NEMESIS.

Hast thou further question
Of our great sovereign, or his worshippers?

MANFRED.

None.

NEMESIS.

Then for a time farewell.

MANFRED.

We meet then! Where? On the earth?—
Even as thou wilt: and for the grace accorded
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well!

[*Exit* MANFRED.

(*Scene closes.*)

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Castle of Manfred.

MANFRED AND HERMAN.

MANFRED.

What is the hour?

HERMAN.

It wants but one till sunset,
And promises a lovely twilight.

MANFRED.

Say,
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed?

HERMAN.

All, my lord, are ready;
Here is the key and casket.

MANFRED.

It is well:
Thou may'st retire. [*Exit* HERMAN.

MANFRED (*alone*).

There is a calm upon me—
Inexplicable stillness! which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life.
If that I did not know philosophy
To be of all our vanities the motliest,
The merest word that ever fool'd the ear
From out the schoolman's jargon, I should deem
The golden secret, the sought «Kalon,» found,
And seated in my soul. It will not last,
But it is well to have known it, though but once:
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down
That there is such a feeling. Who is there?

Re-enter HERMAN.

HERMAN.

My lord, the abbot of St Maurice craves
To greet your presence.

Enter the ABBOT OF ST MAURICE.

ABBOT.

Peace be with Count Manfred!

MANFRED.

Thanks, holy father! welcome to these walls;
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them.

ABBOT.

Would it were so, Count!—
But I would fain confer with thee alone.

MANFRED.

Herman, retire. What would my reverend guest?

ABBOT.

Thus, without prelude:—Age and zeal, my office,
And good intent, must plead my privilege;
Our near, though not acquainted neighbourhood,
May also be my herald. Rumours strange,
And of unholy nature, are abroad,
And busy with thy name; a noble name
For centuries; may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpair'd!

MANFRED.

Proceed,—I listen.

ABBOT.

'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man;
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes
The many evil and unheavenly spirits
Which walk the valley of the shade of death,
Thou communest. I know that with mankind,
Thy fellows in creation, thou dost rarely
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy solitude
Is as an anchorite's, were it but holy.

MANFRED.

And what are they who do avouch these things?

ABBOT.

My pious brethren—the scared peasantry—
Even thy own vassals—who do look on thee

With most unquiet eyes. Thy life 's in peril.

MANFRED.

Take it.

ABBOT.

I come to save, and not destroy—
I would not pry into thy secret soul;
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity: reconcile thee
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

MANFRED.

I hear thee. This is my reply; whate'er
I may have been, or am, doth rest between
Heaven and myself.—I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinn'd
Against your ordinances? prove and punish!

ABBOT.

My son! I did not speak of punishment,
But penitence and pardon;—with thyself
The choice of such remains—and for the last,
Our institutions and our strong belief
Have given me power to smooth the path from sin
To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
I leave to Heaven—«Vengeance is mine alone!»
So saith the Lord, and with all humbleness
His servant echoes back the awful word.

MANFRED.

Old man! there is no power in holy men,
Nor charm in prayer—nor purifying form
Of penitence—nor outward look—nor fast—
Nor agony—nor, greater than all these,
The innate tortures of that deep despair
Which is remorse without the fear of hell,
But all in all sufficient to itself
Would make a hell of heaven—can exorcise
From out the unbounded spirit, the quick sense
Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge
Upon itself; there is no future pang
Can deal that justice on the self-condemn'd
He deals on his own soul.

ABBOT.

All this is well;
For this will pass away, and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up
With calm assurance to that blessed place,
Which all who seek may win, whatever be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned:
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity.—Say on—
And all our church can teach thee shall be taught;
And all we can absolve thee, shall be pardon'd.

MANFRED.

When Rome's sixth Emperor was near his last,
The victim of a self-inflicted wound,
To shun the torments of a public death
From senates once his slaves, a certain soldier,
With show of loyal pity, would have staunch'd
The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back and said—
Some empire still in his expiring glance,
«It is too late—is this fidelity?»

ABBOT.

And what of this?

MANFRED.

I answer with the Roman—
«It is too late!»

ABBOT.

It never can be so,
To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
And thy own soul with Heaven. Hast thou no hope?
'Tis strange—even those who do despair above,
Yet shape themselves some phantasy on earth,
To which frail twig they cling, like drowning men.

MANFRED.

Ay—father! I have had those earthly visions
And noble aspirations in my youth,
To make my own the mind of other men,
The enlightener of nations; and to rise
I knew not whither—it might be to fall;
But fall, even as the mountain-cataract,
Which having leapt from its more dazzling height,
Even in the foaming strength of its abyss
(Which casts up misty columns that become
Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies),
Lies low but mighty still.—But this is past,
My thoughts mistook themselves.

ABBOT.

And wherefore so?

MANFRED.

I could not tame my nature down; for he
Must serve who fain would sway—and soothe—and sue—
And watch all time—and pry into all place—
And be a living lie—who would become
A mighty thing amongst the mean, and such
The mass are: I disdain'd to mingle with
A herd, though to be leader—and of wolves.
The lion is alone, and so am I.

ABBOT.

And why not live and act with other men?

MANFRED.

Because my nature was averse from life;
And yet not cruel; for I would not make,
But find a desolation:—like the wind,
The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,
Which dwells but in the desert, and sweeps o'er
The barren sands which bear no shrubs to blast,
And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
But being met is deadly; such hath been
The course of my existence; but there came
Things in my path which are no more.

ABBOT.

Alas!
I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
From me and from my calling; yet so young,
I still would——

MANFRED.

Look on me! there is an order
Of mortals on the earth, who do become
Old in their youth and die ere middle age,
Without the violence of warlike death;
Some perishing of pleasure—some of study—
Some worn with toil—some of mere weariness—
Some of disease—and some insanity—
And some of wither'd or of broken hearts;
For this last is a malady which slays
More than are number'd in the lists of Fate,
Taking all shapes, and bearing many names.
Look upon me! for even of all these things
Have I partaken; and of all these things,
One were enough: then wonder not that I

Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or, having been, that I am still on earth.

ABBOT.

Yet, hear me still——

MANFRED.

Old man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain:
Think me not churlish; I would spare thyself,
Far more than me, in shunning at this time
All further colloquy—and so—farewell.

[*Exit* MANFRED.

ABBOT.

This should have been a noble creature: he
Hath all the energy which would have made
A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful chaos—light and darkness—
And mind and dust—and passions and pure thoughts,
Mix'd and contending without end or order,
All dormant or destructive: he will perish,
And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption; and my duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end.
I'll follow him—but cautiously, though surely.

[*Exit* ABBOT.

SCENE II.

Another Chamber.

MANFRED AND HERMAN.

HERMAN.

My Lord, you bade me wait on you at sunset:
He sinks behind the mountain.

MANFRED.

Doth he so?
I will look on him.

[MANFRED *advances to the Window of the Hall.*

Glorious orb! the idol
Of early nature, and the vigorous race
Of undiseased mankind, the giant sons
Of the embrace of angels, with a sex
More beautiful than they, which did draw down
The erring spirits who can ne'er return—
Most glorious orb! that wert a worship, ere
The mystery of thy making was reveal'd!
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,
Which gladden'd, on their mountain tops, the hearts
Of the Chaldean shepherds, till they pour'd
Themselves in orisons! Thou material God!
And representative of the Unknown—
Who chose thee for his shadow! Thou chief star!
Centre of many stars! which mak'st our earth
Endurable, and temperest the hues
And hearts of all who walk within thy rays!
Sire of the seasons! Monarch of the climes,
And those who dwell in them! for near or far,
Our inborn spirits have a tint of thee,
Even as our outward aspects;—thou dost rise,
And shine, and set in glory. Fare thee well!
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first glance
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
My latest look: thou wilt not beam on one
To whom the gifts of life and warmth have been
Of a more fatal nature. He is gone:
I follow.

[*Exit* MANFRED.

SCENE III.

The Mountains—The Castle of Manfred at some distance—A Terrace before a Tower.—Time, Twilight.

HERMAN, MANUEL, *and other dependants of* MANFRED.

HERMAN.

'T is strange enough; night after night, for years,
He hath pursued long vigils in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it,—
So have we all been oft-times; but from it,
Or its contents, it were impossible
To draw conclusions absolute of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter; I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years,
To pore upon its mysteries.

MANUEL.

'T were dangerous;
Content thyself with what thou knowest already.

HERMAN.

Ah! Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
And could'st say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle—
How many years is 't?

MANUEL.

Ere Count Manfred's birth,
I served his father, whom he nought resembles.

HERMAN.

There be more sons in like predicament.
But wherein do they differ?

MANUEL.

I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits:
Count Sigismund was proud,—but gay and free,—
A warrior and a reveller; he dwelt not
With books and solitude, nor made the night
A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
From men and their delights.

HERMAN.

Beshrew the hour,
But those were jocund times! I would that such
Would visit the old walls again; they look
As if they had forgotten them.

MANUEL.

These walls
Must change their chieftain first. Oh! I have seen
Some strange things in them, Herman.

HERMAN.

Come, be friendly;
Relate me some to while away our watch:
I 've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happen'd hereabouts, by this same tower.

MANUEL.

That was a night indeed; I do remember
'T was twilight as it may be now, and such
Another evening;—yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,—
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing moon;
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower,—
How occupied, we knew not, but with him
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings—her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seem'd to love,—

As he, indeed, by blood was bound to do,
The lady Astarte, his—
Hush! who comes here?

Enter the ABBOT.

ABBOT.

Where is your master?

HERMAN.

Yonder, in the tower.

ABBOT.

I must speak with him.

MANUEL.

'T is impossible;
He is most private, and must not be thus
Intruded on.

ABBOT.

Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be—
But I must see him.

HERMAN.

Thou hast seen him once
This eve already.

ABBOT.

Herman! I command thee,
Knock, and apprize the Count of my approach.

HERMAN.

We dare not.

ABBOT.

Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose.

MANUEL.

Reverend father, stop—
I pray you pause.

ABBOT.

Why so?

MANUEL.

But step this way,
And I will tell you further.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

Interior of the Tower.

MANFRED *alone.*

MANFRED.

The stars are forth, the moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining mountains.—Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of man; and in her starry shade
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learn'd the language of another world.
I do remember me, that in my youth,
When I was wandering,—upon such a night
I stood within the Coliseum's wall,
Midst the chief relics of almighty Rome;
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue midnight, and the stars
Shone through the rents of ruin; from afar
The watch-dog bayed beyond the Tiber; and
More near from out the Cæsar's palace came
The owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant sentinels the fitful song
Begun and died upon the gentle wind.
Some cypresses beyond the time-worn breach
Appear'd to skirt the horizon, yet they stood
Within a bow-shot—where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of night, amidst
A grove which springs through levell'd battlements,
And twines its roots with the imperial hearths,
Ivy usurps the laurel's place of growth;—
But the gladiators' bloody Circus stands,
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay.—
And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon, upon
All this, and cast a wide and tender light,
Which soften'd down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and fill'd up,
As 't were anew, the gaps of centuries;
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the great of old!—
The dead, but sceptred sovereigns, who still rule
Our spirits from their urns.—
'T was such a night!
'T is strange that I recal it at this time;
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight
Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order.

Enter the ABBOT.

ABBOT.

My good lord!
I crave a second grace for this approach;
But yet let not my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness—all it hath of ill
Recoils on me; its good in the effect
May light upon your head—could I say *heart*—
Could I touch *that*, with words or prayers, I should
Recal a noble spirit which hath wander'd;
But is not yet all lost.

MANFRED.

Thou know'st me not;
My days are number'd, and my deeds recorded:
Retire, or 't will be dangerous—Away!

ABBOT.

Thou dost not mean to menace me?

MANFRED.

Not I;
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee.

ABBOT.

What dost mean?

MANFRED.

Look there!
What dost thou see?

ABBOT.

Nothing.

MANFRED.

Look there, I say,
And steadfastly;—now tell me what thou seest?

ABBOT.

That which should shake me,—but I fear it not—
I see a dusk and awful figure rise
Like an infernal god from out the earth;
His face wrapt in a mantle, and his form
Robed as with angry clouds; he stands between
Thyself and me—but I do fear him not.

MANFRED.

Thou hast no cause—he shall not harm thee—but
His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy.
I say to thee—Retire!

ABBOT.

And I reply—
Never—till I have battled with this fiend—
What doth he here?

MANFRED.

Why—ay—what doth he here?
I did not send for him,—he is unbidden.

ABBOT.

Alas! lost mortal! what with guests like these
Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake.
Why doth he gaze on thee, and thou on him?
Ah! he unveils his aspect; on his brow
The thunder-scars are graven; from his eye
Glares forth the immortality of hell—
Avaunt!——

MANFRED.

Pronounce—what is thy mission?

SPIRIT.

Come!

ABBOT.

What art thou, unknown being? answer!—speak!

SPIRIT.

The genius of this mortal.—Come! 't is time.

MANFRED.

I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me. Who sent thee here?

SPIRIT.

Thou 'lt know anon—Come! come!

MANFRED.

I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine,
And striven with thy masters. Get thee hence!

SPIRIT.

Mortal! thine hour is come—Away! I say.

MANFRED.

I knew, and know my hour is come, but not
To render up my soul to such as thee:
Away! I 'll die as I have lived—alone.

SPIRIT.

Then I must summon up my brethren.—Rise!

[*Other Spirits rise up.*

ABBOT.

Avaunt! ye evil ones!—Avaunt! I say,—
Ye have no power where piety hath power,
And I do charge ye in the name——

SPIRIT.

Old man!
We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order;
Waste not thy holy words on idle uses,
It were in vain; this man is forfeited.
Once more I summon him—Away! away!

MANFRED.

I do defy ye,—though I feel my soul
Is ebbing from me, yet I do defy ye;
Nor will I hence, while I have earthly breath
To breathe my scorn upon ye—earthly strength
To wrestle, though with spirits; what ye take
Shall be ta'en limb by limb.

SPIRIT.

Reluctant mortal!
Is this the Magian who would so pervade
The world invisible, and make himself
Almost our equal?—Can it be that thou
Art thus in love with life? the very life
Which made thee wretched!

MANFRED.

Thou false fiend, thou liest!
My life is in its last hour,—*that* I know,
Nor would redeem a moment of that hour;
I do not combat against death, but thee
And thy surrounding angels; my past power
Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
But by superior science—penance—daring—
And length of watching—strength of mind—and skill
In knowledge of our fathers—when the earth
Saw men and spirits walking side by side,
And gave ye no supremacy: I stand
Upon my strength—I do defy—deny—
Spurn back, and scorn ye!—

SPIRIT.

But thy many crimes
Have made thee——

MANFRED.

What are they to such as thee?
Must crimes be punish'd but by other crimes,
And greater criminals?—Back to thy hell!
Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel;
Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know:
What I have done is done; I bear within
A torture which could nothing gain from thine:
The mind which is immortal makes itself
Requital for its good or evil thoughts—
Is its own origin of ill and end—
And its own place and time—its innate sense,
When stripp'd of this mortality, derives
No colour from the fleeting things without;
But is absorb'd in sufferance or in joy,
Born from the knowledge of its own desert.
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey—
But was my own destroyer, and will be
My own hereafter.—Back, ye baffled fiends!
The hand of death is on me—but not yours!

[*The Demons disappear.*

ABBOT.

Alas! how pale thou art—thy lips are white—
And thy breast heaves—and in thy gasping throat
The accents rattle.—Give thy prayers to heaven—
Pray—albeit but in thought,—but die not thus.

MANFRED.

'T is over—my dull eyes can fix thee not;
But all things swim around me, and the earth
Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well—
Give me thy hand.

ABBOT.

Cold—cold—even to the heart—
But yet one prayer—alas! how fares it with thee?—

MANFRED.

Old man! 't is not so difficult to die.

[MANFRED *expires.*

ABBOT.

He 's gone—his soul hath ta'en its earthless flight—
Whither? I dread to think—but he is gone.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 232, lines 114 and 115.

——— The suobow's rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven.

This Iris is formed by the rays of the sun over the

lower part of the Alpine torrents: it is exactly like a rainbow, come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it:—this effect lasts till noon.

Note 2. Page 233, lines 100 and 101.

He who from out their fountain dwellings raised
Eros and Anteros, at Gadara.

The philosopher Iamblicus. The story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his life, by Eunapius. It is well told.

Note 3. Page 234, lines 91 and 92.

——— She replied
In words of dubious import, but fulfill'd.

The story of Pausanias, king of Sparta (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Platea, and afterwards perished for an attempt to betray the Lacedemonians), and Cleonice, is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon; and in the Laconics of Pausanias the Sophist, in his description of Greece.

Note 4. Page 239, lines 39 and 40.

——— The giant sons
Of the embrace of angels.

«That the *Sons of God* saw the daughters of men, that they were fair,» etc.

«There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the *Sons of God* came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.»—*Genesis*, ch. vi. verses 2 and 4.

Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

PREFACE.

The conspiracy of the Doge Marino Faliero is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the most singular government, city, and people of modern history. It occurred in the year 1355. Every thing about Venice is, or was, extraordinary—her aspect is like a dream, and her history is like a romance. The story of this Doge is to be found in all her Chronicles, and particularly detailed in the «Lives of the Doges,» by Marin Sanuto, which is given in the Appendix. It is simply and clearly related, and is, perhaps, more dramatic in itself than any scenes which can be founded upon the subject.

Marino Faliero appears to have been a man of talents and of courage. I find him commander in chief of the land forces at the siege of Zara, where he beat the King of Hungary and his army of eighty thousand men, killing eight thousand men, and keeping the besieged at the same time in check, an exploit to which I know none similar in history, except that of Cæsar at Elesia, and of Prince Eugene at Belgrade. He was afterwards commander of the fleet in the same war. He took Capo d'Istria. He was ambassador at Genoa and Rome, at which last he received the news of his election to the dukedom; his absence being a proof that he sought it by no intrigue, since he was apprized of his predecessor's death and his own succession at the same moment. But he appears to have been of an ungovernable temper. A story is told by Sanuto, of his having, many years before, when podesta and captain at Treviso, boxed the ears of the bishop, who was somewhat tardy in bringing the Host. For this honest Sanuto «saddles him with a judgment,» as Thwackum did Square; but he does not tell us whether he was punished or rebuked by the senate for this outrage at the time of its commission. He seems, indeed, to have been afterwards at peace with the church, for we find him ambassador at Rome, and invested with the fief of Val di Marino, in the march of Treviso, and with the title of Count, by Lorenzo Count-Bishop of Ceneda. For these facts my authorities are, Sanuto, Vettor Sandi, Andrea Navagero, and the account of the siege of Zara, first published by the indefatigable Abbate Morelli, in his «Monumenti Veneziani di varia letteratura,» printed in 1796, all of which I have looked over in the original language. The moderns, Daru, Sismondi, and Laugier, nearly agree with the ancient chroniclers. Sismondi attributes the conspiracy to his *jealousy*; but I find this no where asserted by the national historians. Vettor Sandi, indeed, says, that «Altri scrissero che.... dalla gelosa suspizion di esso Doge siasi fatto (Michel Steno) staccar con violenza,» etc. etc.; but this appears to have been by no means the general opinion, nor is it alluded to by Sanuto or by Navagero; and Sandi himself adds, a moment after, that «per altre Veneziane memorie traspiri, che non il *solo* desiderio di vendetta lo dispose alla congiura ma anche la innata abituale ambizion sua, per cui anelava a farsi principe independente.» The first motive appears to have been excited by the gross affront of the words written by Michel Steno on the ducal chair, and by the light and inadequate sentence of the Forty on the offender, who was one of their «tre Capi.» The attentions of Steno himself appear to have been directed towards one of her damsels, and not to the «Dogaressa» herself, against whose fame not the slightest insinuation appears, while she is praised for her beauty, and remarked for her youth. Neither do I find it asserted (unless the hint of Sandi be an assertion) that the Doge was actuated by jealousy of his wife; but rather by respect for her, and for his own honour, warranted by his past services and present dignity.

I know not that the historical facts are alluded to in English, unless by Dr Moore in his View of Italy. His account is false and flippant, full of stale jests about old men and young wives, and wondering at so great an effect from so slight a cause. How so acute and severe an observer of mankind as the author of Zeluco could wonder at this is inconceivable. He knew that a basin of water spilt on Mrs Masham's gown deprived the Duke of Marlborough of his command, and led to the inglorious peace of Utrecht—that Louis XIV. was plunged into the most desolating wars because his minister was nettled at his finding fault with a

window, and wished to give him another occupation —that Helen lost Troy—that Lucretia expelled the Tarquins from Rome—and that Cava brought the Moors to Spain—that an insulted husband led the Gauls to Clusium, and thence to Rome—that a single verse of Frederic II. of Prussia on the Abbé de Bernis, and a jest on Madame de Pompadour, led to the battle of Rosbach—that the elopement of Dearbhorgil with Mac Murchad conducted the English to the slavery of Ireland—that a personal pique between Maria Antoinette and the Duke of Orleans precipitated the first expulsion of the Bourbons—and, not to multiply instances, that Commodus, Domitian, and Caligula fell victims, not to their public tyranny, but to private vengeance—and that an order to make Cromwell disembark from the ship in which he would have sailed to America, destroyed both king and commonwealth. After these instances, on the least reflection, it is indeed extraordinary in Dr Moore to seem surprised that a man, used to command, who had served and swayed in the most important offices, should fiercely resent, in a fierce age, an unpunished affront, the grossest that can be offered to a man, be he prince or peasant. The age of Faliero is little to the purpose, unless to favour it.

> "The young man's wrath is like straw on fire,
> *But like red-hot steel is the old man's ire.*"
> "Young men soon give and soon forget affronts,
> Old age is slow at both."

Laugier's reflections are more philosophical:—"Tale fu il fine ignominioso di un' uomo, che la sua nascità, la sua età, il suo carattere dovevano tener lontano dalle passioni produttrici di grandi delitti. I suoi *talenti* per lungo tempo esercitati ne' maggiori impieghi, la sua capacità sperimentata ne' governi e nelle ambasciate, gli avevano acquistato la stima e la fiducia de' cittadini, ed avevano uniti i suffragi per collocarlo alla testa della republica. Innalzato ad un grado che terminava gloriosamenta la sua vita, il risentimento di un' ingiuria leggiera insinuò nel suo cuore tal veleno che basto a corrompere le antiche sue qualita, e a condulo al termine dei scellerati; serio esempio, che prova *non esservi età, in cui la prudenza umana sia sicura, e che nell' uomo restano sempre passioni capaci a disonorarlo, quando non invigili sopra se stesso.*"—*Laugier, Italian translation,* vol. iv. pp. 30, 31.

Where did Dr Moore find that Marino Faliero begged his life? I have searched the chroniclers, and find nothing of the kind; it is true that he avowed all. He was conducted to the place of torture, but there is no mention made of any application for mercy on his part; and the very circumstance of their having taken him to the rack seems to argue any thing but his having shown a want of firmness, which would doubtless have been also mentioned by those minute historians who by no means favour him: such, indeed, would be contrary to his character as a soldier, to the age in which he lived, and *at* which he died, as it is to the truth of history. I know no justification at any distance of time for calumniating an historical character; surely truth belongs to the dead and to the unfortunate, and they who have died upon a scaffold have generally had faults enough of their own, without attributing to them that which the very incurring of the perils which conducted them to their violent death renders, of all others, the most improbable. The black veil which is painted over the place of Marino Faliero amongst the doges, and the Giant's Staircase, where he was crowned, and discrowned, and decapitated, struck forcibly upon my imagination, as did his fiery character and strange story. I went in 1819, in search of his tomb, more than once, to the church San Giovanni e San Paolo; and as I was standing before the monument of another family, a priest came up to me and said, "I can show you finer monuments than that." I told him that I was in search of that of the Faliero family, and particularly of the Doge Marino's. "Oh," said he, "I will show it you;" and, conducting me to the outside, pointed out a sarcophagus in the wall, with an illegible inscription. He said that it had been in a convent adjoining, but was removed after the French came, and placed in its present situation; that he had seen the tomb opened at its removal; there were still some bones remaining, but no positive vestige of the decapitation. The equestrian statue of which I have made mention in the third act as before that church, is not, however, of a Faliero, but of some other now obsolete warrior, although of a later date. There were two other Doges of this family prior to Marino: Ordelafo, who fell in battle at Zara, in 1117 (where his descendant afterwards conquered the Huns), and Vital Faliero, who reigned in 1082. The family, originally from Fano, was of the most illustrious in blood and wealth in the city of once the most wealthy and still the most ancient families in Europe. The length I have gone into on this subject will show the interest I have taken in it. Whether I have succeeded or not in the tragedy, I have at least transferred into our language an historical fact worthy of commemoration.

It is now four years that I have meditated this work, and before I had sufficiently examined the records, I was rather disposed to have made it turn on a jealousy in Faliero. But perceiving no foundation for this in historical truth, and aware that jealousy is an exhausted passion in the drama, I have given it a more historical form. I was, besides, well advised by the late Matthew Lewis on that point, in talking with him of my intention, at Venice, in 1817. "If you make him jealous," said he, "recollect that you have to contend with established writers, to say nothing of Shakspeare, and an exhausted subject;—stick to the old fiery Doge's natural character, which will bear you out, if properly drawn; and make your plot as regular as you can." Sir William Drummond gave me nearly the same counsel. How far I have followed these instructions, or whether they have availed me, is not for me to decide. I have had no view to the stage; in its present state it is, perhaps, not a very exalted object of ambition; besides, I have been too much behind the scenes to have thought it so at any time. And I cannot conceive any man of irritable feeling putting himself at the mercies of an audience,—the sneering reader, and the loud critic, and the tart review, are scattered and distant calamities; but the trampling of an intelligent or of an ignorant audience on a production which, be it good or bad, has been a mental labour to the writer, is a palpable and immediate grievance, heightened by a man's doubt of their competency to judge, and his certainty of his own imprudence in electing them his judges. Were I capable of writing a play which

could be deemed stage-worthy, success would give me no pleasure, and failure great pain. It is for this reason that, even during the time of being one of the committee of one of the theatres, I never made the attempt, and never will.[1] But surely there is dramatic power somewhere,—where Joanna Baillie, and Milman, and John Wilson exist. The «City of the plague» and the «Fall of Jerusalem» are full of the best «*matériel*» for tragedy that has been seen since Horace Walpole, except passages of «Ethwald» and «De Montfort.» It is the fashion to underrate Horace Walpole; firstly, because he was a nobleman, and secondly, because he was a gentleman; but, to say nothing of the composition of his incomparable «Letters,» and of the «Castle of Otranto,» he is the «Ultimus Romanorum,» the author of the «Mysterious Mother,» a tragedy of the highest order, and not a puling love-play. He is the father of the first romance, and of the last tragedy in our language, and surely worthy of a higher place than any living writer, be he who he may.

In speaking of the drama of Marino Faliero, I forgot to mention that the desire of preserving, though still too remote, a nearer approach to unity than the irregularity, which is the reproach of the English theatrical compositions, permits, has induced me to represent the conspiracy as already formed, and the Doge acceding to it, whereas, in fact, it was of his own preparation and that of Israel Bertuccio. The other characters (except that of the duchess), incidents, and almost the time, which was wonderfully short for such a design in real life, are strictly historical, except that all the consultations took place in the palace. Had I followed this, the unity would have been better preserved; but I wished to produce the Doge in the full assembly of the conspirators, instead of monotonously placing him always in dialogue with the same individuals. For the real facts, I refer to the extracts given in the Appendix in Italian, with a translation.

[1] While I was in the sub-committee of Drury Lane Theatre, I can vouch for my colleagues, and I hope for myself, that we did our best to bring back the legitimate drama. I tried what I could to get «De Montfort» revived, but in vain, and equally in vain in favour of Sotheby's «Ivan,» which was thought an acting play; and I endeavoured also to wake Mr Coleridge to write a tragedy. Those who are not in the secret will hardly believe that the «School for Scandal» is the play which has brought *least money*, averaging the number of times it has been acted since its production; so Manager Dibdin assured me. Of what has occurred since Maturin's «Bertram,» I am not aware; so that I may be traducing, through ignorance, some excellent new writers: if so, I beg their pardon. I have been absent from England nearly five years, and, till last year, I never read an English newspaper since my departure, and am now only aware of theatrical matters through the medium of the Parisian English Gazette of Galignani, and only for the last twelve months. Let me then deprecate all offence to tragic or comic writers, to whom I wish well, and of whom I know nothing. The long complaints of the actual state of the drama arise, however, from no fault of the performers. I can conceive nothing better than Kemble, Cooke, and Kean, in their very different manners, or than Elliston in *gentleman's* comedy, and in some parts of tragedy. Miss O'Neill I never saw, having made and kept a determination to see nothing which should divide or disturb my recollection of Siddons. Siddons and Kemble were the *ideal* of tragic action; I never saw any thing at all resembling them, even in *person*: for this reason we shall never see again Coriolanus or Macbeth. When Kean is blamed for want of dignity, we should remember that it is a grace and not an art, and not to be attained by study. In all *not* supernatural parts he is perfect; even his very defects belong, or seem to belong, to the parts themselves, and appear truer to nature. But of Kemble we may say, with reference to his acting, what the Cardinal de Retz said of the Marquis of Montrose, «that he was the only man he ever saw who reminded him of the heroes of Plutarch.»

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge of Venice.*
BERTUCCIO FALIERO, *Nephew of the Doge.*
LIONI, *a Patrician and Senator.*
BENINTENDE, *Chief of the Council of Ten.*
MICHEL STENO, *one of the three Capi of the Forty.*
ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, PHILIP CALENDARO, DAGOLINO, BERTRAM, *Conspirators.*
Signor of the Night, «*Signore di Notte,*» *one of the Officers belonging to the Republic.*
First Citizen.
Second Citizen.
Third Citizen.
VINCENZO, PIETRO, BATTISTA, *Officers belonging to the Ducal Palace.*
Secretary of the Council of Ten.
Guards, Conspirators, Citizens, the Council of Ten, the Giunta, etc. etc.

WOMEN.

ANGIOLINA, *Wife to the Doge.*
MARIANNA, *her Friend.*
Female Attendants, etc.

Scene, VENICE—in the year 1355.

MARINO FALIERO.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

An Antechamber in the Ducal Palace.

PIETRO *speaks, in entering, to* BATTISTA.

PIETRO.

Is not the messenger return'd?

BATTISTA.

Not yet;
I have sent frequently, as you commanded,
But still the signory is deep in council
And long debate on Steno's accusation.

PIETRO.

Too long—at least so thinks the Doge.

BATTISTA.

How bears he
These moments of suspense?

PIETRO.

With struggling patience.
Placed at the ducal table, cover'd o'er
With all the apparel of the state; petitions,
Dispatches, judgments, acts, reprieves, reports,
He sits as rapt in duty; but whene'er
He hears the jarring of a distant door,
Or aught that intimates a coming step,
Or murmur of a voice, his quick eye wanders,
And he will start up from his chair, then pause,
And seat himself again, and fix his gaze
Upon some edict; but I have observed
For the last hour he has not turn'd a leaf.

BATTISTA.

'Tis said he is much moved, and doubtless 'twas
Foul scorn in Steno to offend so grossly.

PIETRO.

Ay, if a poor man: Steno 's a patrician,
Young, galliard, gay, and haughty.

BATTISTA.

Then you think
He will not be judged hardly.

PIETRO.

'Twere enough
He be judged justly; but 'tis not for us
To anticipate the sentence of the Forty.

BATTISTA.

And here it comes.—What news, Vincenzo?

Enter VINCENZO.

VINCENZO.

'Tis
Decided; but as yet his doom 's unknown:
I saw the president in act to seal
The parchment which will bear the Forty's judgment
Unto the Doge, and hasten to inform him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Chamber.

MARINO FALIERO, *Doge; and his nephew,* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

It cannot be but they will do you justice.

DOGE.

Ay, such as the Avogadori did,
Who sent up my appeal unto the Forty
To try him by his peers, his own tribunal.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

His peers will scarce protect him; such an act
Would bring contempt on all authority.

DOGE.

Know you not Venice? know you not the Forty?
But we shall see anon.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO (*addressing* VINCENZO, *then entering*).

How now—what tidings?

VINCENZO.

I am charged to tell his highness that the court
Has pass'd its resolution, and that, soon
As the due forms of judgment are gone through,
The sentence will be sent up to the Doge;
In the mean time the Forty doth salute
The prince of the Republic, and entreat
His acceptation of their duty.

DOGE.

Yes—
They are wond'rous dutiful, and ever humble.
Sentence is past, you say?

VINCENZO.

It is, your highness:
The president was sealing it, when I
Was call'd in, that no moment might be lost
In forwarding the intimation due,
Not only to the Chief of the Republic,
But the complainant, both in one united.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Are you aware, from aught you have perceived,
Of their decision?

VINCENZO.

No, my lord; you know
The secret customs of the courts in Venice.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

True; but there still is something given to guess,
Which a shrewd gleaner and quick eye would catch at;
A whisper, or a murmur, or an air
More or less solemn spread o'er the tribunal.
The Forty are but men—most worthy men,
And wise, and just, and cautious—this I grant—
And secret as the grave to which they doom
The guilty; but with all this, in their aspects—
At least in some, the juniors of the number—
A searching eye, an eye like yours, Vincenzo,
Would read the sentence ere it was pronounced.

VINCENZO.

My lord, I came away upon the moment,
And had no leisure to take note of that
Which pass'd among the judges, even in seeming;
My station near the accused too, Michel Steno,
Made me——

DOGE (*abruptly*).

And how look'd *he*? deliver that.

VINCENZO.

Calm, but not overcast, he stood resign'd
To the decree, whate'er it were;—but lo!
It comes, for the perusal of his highness.

Enter the SECRETARY *of the Forty.*

SECRETARY.

The high tribunal of the Forty sends
Health and respect to the Doge Faliero,
Chief magistrate of Venice, and requests
His highness to peruse and to approve
The sentence past on Michel Steno, born
Patrician, and arraign'd upon the charge
Contain'd, together with its penalty,
Within the rescript which I now present.

DOGE.

Retire and wait without.—Take thou this paper:

[*Exeunt* SECRETARY *and* VINCENZO.

The misty letters vanish from my eyes;
I cannot fix them.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Patience, my dear uncle:
Why do you tremble thus?—nay, doubt not, all
Will be as could be wish'd.

DOGE.

Say on.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO (*reading*).

« Decreed
In council, without one dissenting voice,
That Michel Steno, by his own confession,
Guilty on the last night of carnival
Of having graven on the ducal throne
The following words ——»

DOGE.

Wouldst thou repeat them?
Wouldst *thou* repeat them—*thou*, a Faliero,
Harp on the deep dishonour of our house,
Dishonour'd in its chief—that chief the prince
Of Venice, first of cities?—To the sentence.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Forgive me, my good lord; I will obey—
(*Reads*) « That Michel Steno be detain'd a month
In close arrest.»

DOGE.

Proceed.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

My lord, 't is finish'd.

DOGE.

How, say you?—finish'd! Do I dream?—'T is false—
Give me the paper—(*Snatches the paper, and reads*)
« 'T is decreed in council
That Michel Steno »—Nephew, thine arm!

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Nay,
Cheer up, be calm; this transport is uncall'd for—
Let me seek some assistance.

DOGE.

Stop, sir—stir not—
'T is past.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I cannot but agree with you
The sentence is too slight for the offence—
It is not honourable in the Forty
To affix so slight a penalty to that
Which was a foul affront to you, and even
To them, as being your subjects; but 't is not
Yet without remedy: you can appeal
To them once more, or to the Avogadori,
Who, seeing that true justice is withheld,
Will now take up the cause they once declined,
And do you right upon the bold delinquent.
Think you not thus, good uncle? why do you stand
So fix'd? You heed me not:—I pray you, hear me!

DOGE (*dashing down the ducal bonnet, and offering to trample upon it, exclaims, as he is withheld by his nephew*).

Oh, that the Saracen were in Saint Mark's!
Thus would I do him homage.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

For the sake
Of heaven and all its saints, my lord——

DOGE.

Away!
Oh, that the Genoese were in the port!
Oh, that the Huns whom I o'erthrew at Zara
Were ranged around the palace!

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

'T is not well
In Venice' Duke to say so.

DOGE.

Venice' Duke!
Who now is Duke in Venice? let me see him,
That he may do me right.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

If you forget
Your office, and its dignity and duty,
Remember that of man, and curb this passion.
The Duke of Venice——

DOGE (*interrupting him*).

There is no such thing—
It is a word—nay, worse—a worthless by-word:
The most despised, wrong'd, outraged, helpless wretch,
Who begs his bread, if 'tis refused by one,
May win it from another kinder heart;
But he who is denied his right by those
Whose place it is to do no wrong, is poorer
Than the rejected beggar—he's a slave—
And that am I, and thou, and all our house,
Even from this hour; the meanest artisan
Will point the finger, and the haughty noble
May spit upon us: where is our redress?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

The law, my prince——

DOGE (*interrupting him*).

You see what it has done:
I ask'd no remedy but from the law—
I sought no vengeance but redress by law—
I call'd no judges but those named by law—
As sovereign, I appeal'd unto my subjects,
The very subjects who had made me sovereign,
And gave me thus a double right to be so.
The rights of place and choice, of birth and service,
Honours and years, these scars, these hoary hairs,
The travel, toil, the perils, the fatigues,
The blood and sweat of almost eighty years,
Were weigh'd i' the balance, 'gainst the foulest stain,
The grossest insult, most contemptuous crime
Of a rank, rash patrician—and found wanting!
And this is to be borne?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I say not that:—
In case your fresh appeal should be rejected,
We will find other means to make all even.

DOGE.

Appeal again! art thou my brother's son?
A scion of the house of Faliero?
The nephew of a doge? and of that blood
Which hath already given three dukes to Venice?
But thou say'st well—we must be humble now.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

My princely uncle! you are too much moved:—
I grant it was a gross offence; and grossly
Left without fitting punishment; but still
This fury doth exceed the provocation,
Or any provocation: if we are wrong'd,
We will ask justice; if it be denied,
We 'll take it; but may do all this in calmness—
Deep vengeance is the daughter of deep silence.
I have yet scarce a third part of your years,
I love our house, I honour you, its chief,
The guardian of my youth, and its instructor—
But though I understand your grief, and enter
In part of your disdain, it doth appal me
To see your anger, like our Adrian waves,
O'ersweep all bounds, and foam itself to air.

DOGE.

I tell thee—*must* I tell thee—what thy father
Would have required no words to comprehend.
Hast thou no feeling save the external sense
Of torture from the touch? hast thou no soul—
No pride—no passion—no deep sense of honour?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

'T is the first time that honour has been doubted,
And were the last, from any other sceptic.

DOGE.

You know the full offence of this born villain,
This creeping, coward, rank, acquitted felon,
Who threw his sting into a poisonous libel,
And on the honour of—Oh, God!—my wife,
The nearest, dearest part of all men's honour,
Left a base slur to pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose mechanics, with all coarse foul comments,
And villanous jests, and blasphemies obscene;
While sneering nobles, in more polish'd guise,
Whisper'd the tale, and smiled upon the lie

Which made me look like them— a courteous wittol,
Patient—ay, proud, it may be, of dishonour.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

But still it was a lie—you knew it false,
And so did all men.

DOGE.

Nephew, the high Roman
Said «Cæsar's wife must not even be suspected,»
And put her from him.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

True—but in those days——

DOGE.

What is it that a Roman would not suffer,
That a Venetian prince must bear? Old Dandolo
Refused the diadem of all the Cæsars,
And wore the ducal cap I trample on,
Because 't is now degraded.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

'T is even so.

DOGE.

It is—it is:—I did not visit on
The innocent creature, thus most vilely slander'd
Because she took an old man for her lord,
For that he had been long her father's friend
And patron of her house, as if there were
No love in woman's heart but lust of youth
And beardless faces;—I did not for this
Visit the villain's infamy on her,
But craved my country's justice on his head,
The justice due unto the humblest being
Who hath a wife whose faith is sweet to him,
Who hath a home whose hearth is dear to him,
Who hath a name whose honour 's all to him,
When these are tainted by the accursing breath
Of calumny and scorn.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

And what redress
Did you expect as his fit punishment?

DOGE.

Death! Was I not the sovereign of the state—
Insulted on his very throne, and made
A mockery to the men who should obey me?
Was I not injured as a husband? scorn'd
As man? reviled, degraded, as a prince?
Was not offence like his a complication
Of insult and of treason? and he lives!
Had he, instead of on the Doge's throne,
Stamp'd the same brand upon a peasant's stool,
His blood had gilt the threshold, for the carle
Had stabb'd him on the instant.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Do not doubt it,
He shall not live till sunset—leave to me
The means, and calm yourself.

DOGE.

Hold, nephew! this
Would have sufficed but yesterday: at present
I have no further wrath against this man.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

What mean you? is not the offence redoubled
By this most rank—I will not say—acquittal,
For it is worse, being full acknowledgment
Of the offence, and leaving it unpunish'd?

DOGE.

It *is redoubled*, but not now by him:
The Forty hath decreed a month's arrest—
We must obey the Forty.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Obey *them!*
Who have forgot their duty to the sovereign?

DOGE.

Why, yes;—boy, you perceive it then at last:
Whether as fellow-citizen who sues
For justice, or as sovereign who commands it,
They have defrauded me of both my rights
(For here the sovereign is a citizen);
But, notwithstanding, harm not thou a hair
Of Steno's head—he shall not wear it long.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Not twelve hours longer, had you left to me
The mode and means: if you had calmly heard me,
I never meant this miscreant should escape,
But wish'd you to repress such gusts of passion,
That we more surely might devise together
His taking off.

DOGE.

No, nephew, he must live;
At least, just now—a life so vile as his
Were nothing at this hour; in th' olden time
Some sacrifices ask'd a single victim;
Great expiations had a hecatomb.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Your wishes are my law; and yet I fain
Would prove to you how near unto my heart
The honour of our house must ever be.

DOGE.

Fear not; you shall have time and place of proof:
But be not thou too rash, as I have been.
I am ashamed of my own anger now;
I pray you, pardon me.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Why that 's my uncle!
The leader, and the statesman, and the chief
Of commonwealths, and sovereign of himself!
I wonder'd to perceive you so forget
All prudence in your fury, at these years,
Although the cause——

DOGE.

Ay, think upon the cause—
Forget it not:—when you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams; and when
The morn returns, so let it stand between
The sun and you, as an ill-omen'd cloud
Upon a summer-day of festival:
So will it stand to me;—but speak not, stir not,—
Leave all to me;—we shall have much to do,
And you shall have a part.—But now retire,
'T is fit I were alone.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO

(*Taking up and placing the ducal bonnet on the table*).

Ere I depart,
I pray you to resume what you have spurn'd,
Till you can change it haply for a crown.
And now I take my leave, imploring you
In all things to rely upon my duty
As doth become your near and faithful kinsman,
And not less loyal citizen and subject.

(*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

DOGE (*solus*).

Adieu, my worthy nephew.—Hollow bauble!
(*Taking up the ducal cap.*

Beset with all the thorns that line a crown,
Without investing the insulted brow
With the all-swaying majesty of kings;
Thou idle, gilded, and degraded toy,
Let me resume thee as I would a vizor. [*Puts it on.*
How my brain aches beneath thee! and my temples
Throb feverish under thy dishonest weight.
Could I not turn thee to a diadem?
Could I not shatter the Briarean sceptre
Which in this hundred-handed senate rules,
Making the people nothing, and the prince
A pageant? In my life I have achieved
Tasks not less difficult—achieved for them,
Who thus repay me!—Can I not requite them?
Oh, for one year! Oh, but for even a day
Of my full youth, while yet my body served
My soul as serves the generous steed his lord!
I would have dash'd amongst them, asking few
In aid to overthrow these swoln patricians;
But now I must look round for other hands
To serve this hoary head; but it shall plan
In such a sort as will not leave the task
Herculean, though as yet 't is but a chaos
Of darkly-brooding thoughts: my fancy is
In her first work, more nearly to the light
Holding the sleeping images of things,
For the selection of the pausing judgment.—
The troops are few in——

Enter VINCENZO.

There is one without
Craves audience of your highness.

DOGE.

I 'm unwell—
I can see no one, not even a patrician—
Let him refer his business to the council.

VINCENZO.

My lord, I will deliver your reply;
It cannot much import—he's a plebeian,
The master of a galley, I believe.

DOGE.

How! did you say the patron of a galley?
That is—I mean—a servant of the state:
Admit him, he may be on public service.

[*Exit* VINCENZO.

DOGE (*solus*).

This patron may be sounded; I will try him.
I know the people to be discontented;
They have cause, since Sapienza's adverse day,
When Genoa conquer'd: they have further cause,
Since they are nothing in the state, and in
The city worse than nothing—mere machines,
To serve the nobles' most patrician pleasure.
The troops have long arrears of pay, oft promised,
And murmur deeply—any hope of change
Will draw them forward: they shall pay themselves
With plunder:—but the priests—I doubt the priesthood
Will not be with us; they have hated me
Since that rash hour, when, madden'd with the drone,
I smote the tardy bishop at Treviso,[1]
Quickening his holy march: yet, nevertheless,
They may be won, at least their chief at Rome,
By some well-timed concessions; but, above
All things, I must be speedy; at my hour
Of twilight little light of life remains.
Could I free Venice, and avenge my wrongs,
I had lived too long, and willingly would sleep
Next moment with my sires; and, wanting this,
Better that sixty of my fourscore years
Had been already where—how soon, I care not—
The whole must be extinguish'd;—better that
They ne'er had been, than drag me on to be
The thing these arch-oppressors fain would make me.
Let me consider—of efficient troops
There are three thousand posted at——

Enter VINCENZO *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

VINCENZO.

May it please
Your highness, the same patron whom I spake of
Is here to crave your patience.

DOGE.

Leave the chamber,
Vincenzo.—

[*Exit* VINCENZO.

Sir, you may advance—what would you?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Redress.

DOGE.

Of whom?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Of God and of the Doge.

DOGE.

Alas! my friend, you seek it of the twain
Of least respect and interest in Venice.
You must address the council.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'T were in vain;
For he who injured me is one of them.

DOGE.

There 's blood upon thy face—how came it there?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'T is mine, and not the first I 've shed for Venice,
But the first shed by a Venetian hand:
A noble smote me.

DOGE.

Doth he live?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not long—
But for the hope I had and have, that you,
My prince, yourself a soldier, will redress
Him, whom the laws of discipline and Venice
Permit not to protect himself, if not—
I say no more.

DOGE.

But something you would do—
Is it not so?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I am a man, my lord.

DOGE.

Why, so is he who smote you.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

He is call'd so;
Nay, more, a noble one—at least, in Venice:
But since he hath forgotten that I am one,
And treats me like a brute, the brute may turn—
'T is said the worm will.

DOGE.

Say—his name and lineage?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Barbaro.

DOGE.

What was the cause? or the pretext?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I am the chief of the arsenal, employ'd
At present in repairing certain galleys
But roughly used by the Genoese last year.
This morning comes the noble Barbaro
Full of reproof, because our artisans
Had left some frivolous order of his house,
To execute the state's decree: I dared
To justify the men—he raised his hand;—
Behold my blood! the first time it e'er flow'd
Dishonourably.

DOGE.

Have you long time served?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

So long as to remember Zara's siege,
And fight beneath the chief who beat the Huns there,
Sometime my general, now the Doge Faliero.—

DOGE.

How! are we comrades?—the state's ducal robes
Sit newly on me, and you were appointed
Chief of the arsenal ere I came from Rome;
So that I recognized you not. Who placed you?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

The late Doge; keeping still my old command
As patron of a galley: my new office
Was given as the reward of certain scars
(So was your predecessor pleased to say):
I little thought his bounty would conduct me
To his successor as a helpless plaintiff,
At least, in such a cause.

DOGE.

Are you much hurt?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Irreparably in my self-esteem.

DOGE.

Speak out; fear nothing: being stung at heart,
What would you do to be revenged on this man?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

That which I dare not name, and yet will do.

DOGE.

Then wherefore came you here?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I come for justice,
Because my general is Doge, and will not
See his old soldier trampled on. Had any,
Save Faliero, fill'd the ducal throne,
This blood had been wash'd out in other blood.

DOGE.

You come to me for justice—unto *me!*
The Doge of Venice, and I cannot give it;
I cannot even obtain it—'t was denied
To me most solemnly an hour ago.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

How says your highness?

DOGE.

Steno is condemn'd
To a month's confinement.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

What! the same who dared
To stain the ducal throne with those foul words,
That have cried shame to every ear in Venice?

DOGE.

Ay, doubtless they have echo'd o'er the arsenal,
Keeping due time with every hammer's clink
As a good jest to jolly artisans;
Or making chorus to the creaking oar,
In the vile tune of every galley slave,
Who, as he sung the merry stave, exulted
He was not a shamed dotard, like the Doge.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Is it possible? a month's imprisonment!
No more for Steno?

DOGE.

You have heard the offence,
And now you know his punishment; and then
You ask redress of *me!* Go to the Forty,
Who pass'd the sentence upon Michel Steno;
They 'll do as much by Barbaro, no doubt.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Ah! dared I speak my feelings!

DOGE.

Give them breath.
Mine have no further outrage to endure.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Then, in a word, it rests but on your word
To punish and avenge—I will not say
My petty wrong, for what is a mere blow,
However vile, to such a thing as I am?—
But the base insult done your state and person.

DOGE.

You overrate my power, which is a pageant.
This cap is not the monarch's crown; these robes
Might move compassion, like a beggar's rags;
Nay, more, a beggar's are his own, and these
But lent to the poor puppet, who must play
Its part with all its empire in this ermine.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Wouldst thou be king?

DOGE.

Yes—of a happy people.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Wouldst thou be sovereign lord of Venice?

DOGE.

Ay,
If that the people shared that sovereignty,
So that nor they nor I were further slaves
To this o'ergrown aristocratic hydra,
The poisonous heads of whose envenom'd body
Have breathed a pestilence upon us all.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yet, thou wast born and still hast lived patrician.

DOGE.

In evil hour was I so born; my birth
Hath made me Doge to be insulted: but
I lived and toil'd a soldier and a servant
Of Venice and her people, not the senate;
Their good and my own honour were my guerdon.
I have fought and bled; commanded, ay, and conquer'd;
Have made and marr'd peace oft in embassies,
As it might chance to be our country's 'vantage;
Have traversed land and sea in constant duty,
Through almost sixty years, and still for Venice,
My fathers' and my birth-place, whose dear spires,
Rising at distance o'er the blue Lagoon,
It was reward enough for me to view
Once more; but not for any knot of men,
Nor sect, nor faction, did I bleed or sweat!
But would you know why I have done all this?
Ask of the bleeding pelican why she
Hath ripp'd her bosom? Had the bird a voice,
She 'd tell thee 't was for *all* her little ones.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

And yet they made thee duke.

DOGE.

They made me so;
I sought it not; the flattering fetters met me
Returning from my Roman embassy,
And never having hitherto refused
Toil, charge, or duty for the state, I did not,
At these late years, decline what was the highest
Of all in seeming, but of all most base
In what we have to do and to endure:
Bear witness for me thou, my injured subject,
When I can neither right myself nor thee.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You shall do both, if you possess the will,
And many thousands more not less oppress'd,
Who wait but for a signal—will you give it?

DOGE.

You speak in riddles.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Which shall soon be read,
At peril of my life, if you disdain not
To lend a patient ear.

DOGE.

Say on.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not thou,
Nor I alone, are injured and abused,
Contemn'd and trampled on, but the whole people
Groan with the strong conception of their wrongs:
The foreign soldiers in the senate's pay
Are discontented for their long arrears;
The native mariners and civic troops
Feel with their friends; for who is he amongst them
Whose brethren, parents, children, wives, or sisters,
Have not partook oppression, or pollution,
From the patricians? And the hopeless war
Against the Genoese, which is still maintain'd
With the plebeian blood, and treasure wrung
From their hard earnings, has inflamed them further:
Even now—but I forget that, speaking thus,
Perhaps I pass the sentence of my death!

DOGE.

And, suffering what thou hast done, fear'st thou death?
Be silent then, and live on, to be beaten
By those for whom thou hast bled.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

No, I will speak
At every hazard; and if Venice' Doge
Should turn delator, be the shame on him,
And sorrow too; for he will lose far more
Than I.

DOGE.

From me fear nothing; out with it.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Know, then, that there are met and sworn in secret
A band of brethren, valiant hearts and true;
Men who have proved all fortunes, and have long
Grieved over that of Venice, and have right
To do so; having served her in all climes,
And having rescued her from foreign foes,
Would do the same from those within her walls:
They are not numerous, nor yet too few
For their great purpose; they have arms, and means,
And hearts, and hopes, and faith, and patient courage.

DOGE.

For what then do they pause?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

An hour to strike.

DOGE (*aside*).

Saint Mark's shall strike that hour!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I now have placed
My life, my honour, all my earthly hopes
Within thy power, but in the firm belief
That injuries like ours, sprung from one cause,
Will generate one vengeance: should it be so,
Be our chief now—our sovereign hereafter.

DOGE.

How many are ye?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I 'll not answer that
Till I am answer'd.

DOGE.

How, Sir! do you menace?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

No; I affirm. I have betray'd myself;
But there 's no torture in the mystic wells
Which undermine your palace, nor in those
Not less appalling cells, « the leaden roofs,»
To force a single name from me of others.
The Pozzi and the Piombi were in vain;
They might wring blood from me, but treachery never.
And I would pass the fearful « Bridge of Sighs,»
Joyous that mine must be the last that e'er
Would echo o'er the Stygian wave which flows
Between the murderers and the murder'd, washing
The prison and the palace walls: there are
Those who would live to think on't and avenge me.

DOGE.

If such your power and purpose, why come here
To sue for justice, being in the course
To do yourself due right?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Because the man
Who claims protection from authority,
Showing his confidence and his submission
To that authority, can hardly be
Suspected of combining to destroy it.
Had I sate down too humbly with this blow,
A moody brow and mutter'd threats had made me
A mark'd man to the Forty's inquisition?
But loud complaint, however angrily
It shapes its phrase, is little to be fear'd,
And less distrusted. But, besides all this,
I had another reason.

DOGE.

What was that?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Some rumours that the Doge was greatly moved
By the reference of the Avogadori
Of Michel Steno's sentence to the Forty
Had reach'd me. I had served you, honour'd you,
And felt that you were dangerously insulted,
Being of an order of such spirits as
Requite tenfold both good and evil: 't was
My wish to prove and urge you to redress.
Now you know all; and that I speak the truth,
My peril be the proof.

DOGE.

You have deeply ventured;
But all must do so who would greatly win:
Thus far I 'll answer you—your secret 's safe.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

And is this all?

DOGE.

Unless with all entrusted,
What would you have me answer?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I would have you
Trust him who leaves his life in trust with you.

DOGE.

But I must know your plan, your names, and numbers;
The last may then be doubled, and the former
Matured and strengthen'd.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We 're enough already;
You are the sole ally we covet now.

DOGE.

But bring me to the knowledge of your chiefs.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

That shall be done upon your formal pledge
To keep the faith that we will pledge to you.

DOGE.

When? where?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

This night I 'll bring to your apartment
Two of the principals; a greater number
Were hazardous.

DOGE.

Stay, I must think of this.
What if I were to trust myself amongst you,
And leave the palace?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You must come alone.

DOGE.

With but my nephew.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not were he your son.

DOGE.

Wretch! darest thou name my son? He died in arms,
At Sapienza, for this faithless state.
Oh! that he were alive, and I in ashes!
Or that he were alive e'er I be ashes!
I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Not one of all those strangers whom thou doubtest,
But will regard thee with a filial feeling,
So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

DOGE.

The die is cast. Where is the place of meeting?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

At midnight I will be alone and mask'd
Where'er your highness pleases to direct me,
To wait your coming, and conduct you where
You shall receive our homage, and pronounce
Upon our project.

DOGE.

At what hour arises
The moon?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Late; but the atmosphere is thick and dusky;
'T is a sirocco.

DOGE.

At the midnight hour, then,
Near to the church where sleep my sires: the same,
Twin named from the apostles John and Paul;
A gondola,[2] with one oar only will
Lurk in the narrow channel which glides by.
Be there.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I will not fail.

DOGE.

And now retire——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

In the full hope your highness will not falter
In your great purpose. Prince, I take my leave.

[*Exit* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

DOGE (*solus*).

At midnight, by the church Saints John and Paul,
Where sleep my noble fathers, I repair—
To what? to hold a council in the dark
With common ruffians leagued to ruin states!
And will not my great sires leap from the vault,
Where lie two doges who preceded me,
And pluck me down amongst them? Would they could!
For I should rest in honour with the honour'd.
Alas! I must not think of them, but those
Who have made me thus unworthy of a name,
Noble and brave as aught of consular
On Roman marbles: but I will redeem it
Back to its antique lustre in our annals,
By sweet revenge on all that 's base in Venice,
And freedom to the rest, or leave it black
To all the growing calumnies of time,
Which never spare the fame of him who fails,
But try the Cæsar, or the Cataline,
By the true touchstone of desert—success.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Ducal Palace.

ANGIOLINA (*wife of the Doge*) *and* MARIANNA.

ANGIOLINA.

What was the Doge's answer?

MARIANNA.

That he was
That moment summon'd to a conference;
But 't is by this time ended. I perceived
Not long ago the senators embarking;
And the last gondola may now be seen
Gliding into the throng of barks which stud
The glittering waters.

ANGIOLINA.

Would he were return'd!
He has been much disquieted of late;
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,
Which seems to be more nourish'd by a soul
So quick and restless that it would consume
Less hardy clay—Time has but little power
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
To other spirits of his order, who,
In the first burst of passion, pour away
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him
An aspect of eternity: his thoughts,
His feelings, passions, good or evil, all
Have nothing of old age; and his bold brow
Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,

Not their decrepitude: and he of late
Has been more agitated than his wont.
Would he were come! for I alone have power
Upon his troubled spirit.

MARIANNA.

It is true,
His highness has of late been greatly moved
By the affront of Steno, and with cause;
But the offender doubtless even now
Is doom'd to expiate his rash insult with
Such chastisement as will enforce respect
To female virtue, and to noble blood.

ANGIOLINA.

'T was a gross insult; but I heed it not:
For the rash scorner's falsehood in itself,
But for the effect, the deadly deep impression
Which it has made upon Faliero's soul,
The proud, the fiery, the austere—austere
To all save me: I tremble when I think
To what it may conduct.

MARIANNA.

Assuredly
The Doge can not suspect you?

ANGIOLINA.

Suspect *me!*
Why Steno dared not: when he scrawl'd his lie,
Groveling by stealth in the moon's glimmering light,
His own still conscience smote him for the act,
And every shadow on the walls frown'd shame
Upon his coward calumny.

MARIANNA.

'T were fit
He should be punish'd grievously.

ANGIOLINA.

He is so.

MARIANNA.

What! is the sentence past? is he condemn'd?

ANGIOLINA.

I know not that, but he has been detected.

MARIANNA.

And deem you this enough for such foul scorn?

ANGIOLINA.

I would not be a judge in my own cause,
Nor do I know what sense of punishment
May reach the soul of ribalds such as Steno;
But if his insults sink no deeper in
The minds of the inquisitors than they
Have ruffled mine, he will, for all acquittance,
Be left to his own shamelessness or shame.

MARIANNA.

Some sacrifice is due to slander'd virtue.

ANGIOLINA.

Why, what is virtue if it needs a victim?
Or if it must depend upon men's words?
The dying Roman said, « 't was but a name:»
It were indeed no more, if human breath
Could make or mar it.

MARIANNA.

Yet full many a dame,
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong
Of such a slander; and less rigid ladies,
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud
And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice.

ANGIOLINA.

This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize: the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,
If they require it to be blazon'd forth;
And those who have not kept it seek its seeming
As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not because
They think it so; they live in others' thoughts,
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

MARIANNA.

You have strange thoughts for a patrician dame.

ANGIOLINA.

And yet they were my father's; with his name,
The sole inheritance he left.

MARIANNA.

You want none;
Wife to a prince, the chief of the republic.

ANGIOLINA.

I should have sought none, though a peasant's bride,
But feel not less the love and gratitude
Due to my father, who bestow'd my hand
Upon his early, tried, and trusted friend,
The Count Val di Marino, now our Doge.

MARIANNA.

And with that hand did he bestow your heart?

ANGIOLINA.

He did so, or it had not been bestow'd.

MARIANNA.

Yet this strange disproportion in your years,
And, let me add, disparity of tempers,
Might make the world doubt whether such an union
Could make you wisely, permanently happy.

ANGIOLINA.

The world will think with worldlings: but my heart
Has still been in my duties, which are many,
But never difficult.

MARIANNA.

And do you love him?

ANGIOLINA.

I love all noble qualities which merit
Love, and I loved my father, who first taught me
To single out what we should love in others,
And to subdue all tendency to lend
The best and purest feelings of our nature
To baser passions. He bestow'd my hand
Upon Faliero: he had known him noble,
Brave, generous, rich in all the qualities
Of soldier, citizen, and friend; in all
Such have I found him as my father said.
His faults are those that dwell in the high bosoms
Of men who have commanded; too much pride,
And the deep passions fiercely foster'd by
The uses of patricians and a life
Spent in the storms of state and war; and also
From the quick sense of honour, which becomes
A duty to a certain sign, a vice
When overstrain'd, and this I fear in him.
And then he has been rash from his youth upwards,
Yet temper'd by redeeming nobleness
In such sort, that the wariest of republics
Has lavish'd all its chief employs upon him,
From his first fight to his last embassy,
From which on his return the dukedom met him.

MARIANNA.

But, previous to this marriage, had your heart
Ne'er beat for any of the noble youth,
Such as in years had been more meet to match

Beauty like yours? or since have you ne'er seen
One, who, if your fair hand were still to give,
Might now pretend to Loredano's daughter?

ANGIOLINA.

I answer'd your first question when I said
I married.

MARIANNA.

And the second?

ANGIOLINA.

Needs no answer.

MARIANNA.

I pray you pardon, if I have offended.

ANGIOLINA.

I feel no wrath, but some surprise: I knew not
That wedded bosoms could permit themselves
To ponder upon what they *now* might choose,
Or aught, save their past choice.

MARIANNA.

'Tis their past choice
That far too often makes them deem they would
Now choose more wisely, could they cancel it.

ANGIOLINA.

It may be so. I knew not of such thoughts.

MARIANNA.

Here comes the Doge—shall I retire?

ANGIOLINA.

It may
Be better you should quit me; he seems wrapt
In thought.—How pensively he takes his way!

[*Exit* MARIANNA.

Enter the DOGE *and* PIETRO.

DOGE (*musing*).

There is a certain Philip Calendaro
Now in the arsenal, who holds command
Of eighty men, and has great influence
Besides on all the spirits of his comrades,
This man, I hear, is bold and popular,
Sudden and daring, and yet secret: 'twould
Be well that he were won: I needs must hope
That Israel Bertuccio has secured him,
But fain would be——

PIETRO.

My lord, pray pardon me
For breaking in upon your meditation;
The Senator Bertuccio, your kinsman,
Charged me to follow and inquire your pleasure
To fix an hour when he may speak with you.

DOGE.

At sunset.—Stay a moment—let me see—
Say in the second hour of night. [*Exit* PIETRO.

ANGIOLINA.

My lord!

DOGE.

My dearest child, forgive me—why delay
So long approaching me?—I saw you not.

ANGIOLINA.

You were absorb'd in thought, and he who now
Has parted from you might have words of weight
To bear you from the senate.

DOGE.

From the senate?

ANGIOLINA.

I would not interrupt him in his duty
And theirs.

DOGE.

The senate's duty! you mistake;
'Tis we who owe all service to the senate.

ANGIOLINA.

I thought the Duke had held command in Venice.

DOGE.

He shall.—But let that pass.—We will be jocund.
How fares it with you? have you been abroad?
The day is overcast, but the calm wave
Favours the gondolier's light skimming oar;
Or have you held a levee of your friends?
Or has your music made you solitary?
Say—is there aught that you would will within
The little sway now left the Duke? or aught
Of fitting splendour, or of honest pleasure,
Social or lonely, that would glad your heart,
To compensate for many a dull hour, wasted
On an old man oft moved with many cares?
Speak, and 'tis done.

ANGIOLINA.

You 're ever kind to me—
I have nothing to desire, or to request,
Except to see you oftener and calmer.

DOGE.

Calmer?

ANGIOLINA.

Ay, calmer, my good lord.—Ah, why
Do you still keep apart, and walk alone,
And let such strong emotions stamp your brow,
As, not betraying their full import, yet
Disclose too much?

DOGE.

Disclose too much!—of what?
What is there to disclose?

ANGIOLINA.

A heart so ill
At ease.

DOGE.

'Tis nothing, child.—But in the state
You know what daily cares oppress all those
Who govern this precarious commonwealth;
Now suffering from the Genoese without,
And malcontents within—'tis this which makes me
More pensive and less tranquil than my wont.

ANGIOLINA.

Yet this existed long before, and never
Till in these late days did I see you thus.
Forgive me: there is something at your heart
More than the mere discharge of public duties,
Which long use and a talent like to yours
Have render'd light, nay, a necessity,
To keep your mind from stagnating. 'Tis not
In hostile states, nor perils, thus to shake you;
You, who have stood all storms and never sunk,
And climb'd up to the pinnacle of power,
And never fainted by the way, and stand
Upon it, and can look down steadily
Along the depth beneath, and ne'er feel dizzy.
Were Genoa's galleys riding in the port,
Were civil fury raging in Saint Mark's,
You are not to be wrought on, but would fall,
As you have risen, with an unalter'd brow:
Your feelings now are of a different kind;
Something has stung your pride, not patriotism.

DOGE.

Pride! Angiolina? Alas! none is left me.

ANGIOLINA.

Yes—the same sin that overthrew the angels,
And of all sins most easily besets

Mortals the nearest to the angelic nature:
The vile are only vain; the great are proud.

DOGE.

I *had* the pride of honour, of *your* honour,
Deep at my heart—But let us change the theme.

ANGIOLINA.

Ah no!—As I have ever shared your kindness
In all things else, let me not be shut out
From your distress: were it of public import,
You know I never sought, would never seek
To win a word from you; but feeling now
Your grief is private, it belongs to me
To lighten or divide it. Since the day
When foolish Steno's ribaldry detected
Unfix'd your quiet, you are greatly changed,
And I would soothe you back to what you were.

DOGE.

To what I was!—Have you heard Steno's sentence?

ANGIOLINA.

No.

DOGE.

A month's arrest.

ANGIOLINA.

Is it not enough?

DOGE.

Enough!—Yes, for a drunken galley slave,
Who, stung by stripes, may murmur at his master;
But not for a deliberate, false, cool villain,
Who stains a lady's and a prince's honour,
Even on the throne of his authority.

ANGIOLINA.

There seems to me enough in the conviction
Of a patrician guilty of a falsehood:
All other punishment were light unto
His loss of honour.

DOGE.

Such men have no honour;
They have but their vile lives—and these are spared.

ANGIOLINA.

You would not have him die for this offence?

DOGE.

Not *now*:—being still alive, I 'd have him live
Long as *he* can; he has ceased to merit death;
The guilty saved hath damn'd his hundred judges,
And he is pure, for now his crime is theirs.

ANGIOLINA.

Oh! had this false and flippant libeller
Shed his young blood for his absurd lampoon,
Ne'er from that moment could this breast have known
A joyous hour, or dreamless slumber more.

DOGE.

Does not the law of Heaven say blood for blood?
And he who *taints* kills more than he who sheds it.
Is it the *pain* of blows, or *shame* of blows,
That makes such deadly to the sense of man?
Do not the laws of man say blood for honour?
And less than honour, for a little gold?
Say not the laws of nations blood for treason?
Is 't nothing to have fill'd these veins with poison
For their once healthful current? is it nothing
To have stain'd your name and mine? the noblest names?
Is 't nothing to have brought into contempt
A prince before his people? to have fail'd
In the respect accorded by mankind
To youth in woman, and old age in man?
To virtue in your sex, and dignity
In ours?—But let them look to it who have saved him.

ANGIOLINA.

Heaven bids us to forgive our enemies.

DOGE.

Doth Heaven forgive her own? Is Satan saved
From wrath eternal?

ANGIOLINA.

Do not speak thus wildly—
Heaven will alike forgive you and your foes.

DOGE.

Amen! May Heaven forgive them.

ANGIOLINA.

And will you?

DOGE.

Yes, when they are in heaven!

ANGIOLINA.

And not till then?

DOGE.

What matters my forgiveness? an old man's,
Worn out, scorn'd, spurn'd, abused; what matters then
My pardon more than my resentment? both
Being weak and worthless? I have lived too long.
But let us change the argument.—My child!
My injured wife, the child of Loredano,
The brave, the chivalrous, how little deem'd
Thy father, wedding thee unto his friend,
That he was linking thee to shame!—Alas!
Shame without sin, for thou art faultless. Hadst thou
But had a different husband, *any* husband
In Venice save the Doge, this blight, this brand,
This blasphemy had never fallen upon thee.
So young, so beautiful, so good, so pure,
To suffer this, and yet be unavenged!

ANGIOLINA.

I am too well avenged, for you still love me,
And trust, and honour me; and all men know
That you are just, and I am true: what more
Could I require, or you command?

DOGE.

'T is well,
And may be better; but whate'er betide,
Be thou at least kind to my memory.

ANGIOLINA.

Why speak you thus?

DOGE.

It is no matter why;
But I would still, whatever others think,
Have your respect both now and in my grave.

ANGIOLINA.

Why should you doubt it? has it ever fail'd?

DOGE.

Come hither, child; I would a word with you.
Your father was my friend; unequal fortune
Made him my debtor for some courtesies
Which bind the good more firmly: when opprest
With his last malady, he will'd our union:
It was not to repay me, long repaid
Before by his great loyalty in friendship;
His object was to place your orphan beauty
In honourable safety from the perils
Which, in this scorpion nest of vice, assail
A lonely and undower'd maid. I did not
Think with him, but would not oppose the thought
Which soothed his death-bed.

ANGIOLINA.

I have not forgotten
The nobleness with which you bade me speak

If my young heart held any preference
Which would have made me happier; nor your offer
To make my dowry equal to the rank
Of aught in Venice, and forego all claim
My father's last injunction gave you.

DOGE.

Thus,
'T was not a foolish dotard's vile caprice,
Nor the false edge of aged appetite,
Which made me covetous of girlish beauty,
And a young bride: for in my fieriest youth
I sway'd such passions; nor was this my age,
Infected with that leprosy of lust
Which taints the hoariest years of vicious men,
Making them ransack to the very last
The dregs of pleasure for their vanish'd joys;
Or buy in selfish marriage some young victim,
Too helpless to refuse a state that 's honest,
Too feeling not to know herself a wretch.
Our wedlock was not of this sort; you had
Freedom from me to choose, and urged in answer
Your father's choice.

ANGIOLINA.

I did so; I would do so
In face of earth and heaven; for I have never
Repented for my sake; sometimes for yours,
In pondering o'er your late disquietudes.

DOGE.

I knew my heart would never treat you harshly;
I knew my days could not disturb you long;
And then the daughter of my earliest friend,
His worthy daughter, free to choose again,
Wealthier and wiser, in the ripest bloom
Of womanhood, more skilful to select
By passing these probationary years;
Inheriting a prince's name and riches;
Secured, by the short penance of enduring
An old man for some summers, against all
That law's chicane or envious kinsmen might
Have urged against her right: my best friend's child
Would choose more fitly in respect of years,
And not less truly in a faithful heart.

ANGIOLINA.

My lord, I look'd but to my father's wishes,
Hallow'd by his last words, and to my heart
For doing all its duties, and replying
With faith to him with whom I was affianced.
Ambitious hopes ne'er cross'd my dreams; and should
The hour you speak of come, it will be seen so.

DOGE.

I do believe you; and I know you true:
For love, romantic love, which in my youth
I knew to be illusion, and ne'er saw
Lasting, but often fatal, it had been
No lure for me, in my most passionate days,
And could not be so now, did such exist.
But such respect, and mildly paid regard
As a true feeling for your welfare, and
A free compliance with all honest wishes;
A kindness to your virtues, watchfulness
Not shown, but shadowing o'er such little failings
As youth is apt in; so as not to check
Rashly, but win you from them ere you knew
You had been won, but thought the change your choice;
A pride not in your beauty, but your conduct,—
A trust in you—a patriarchal love,
And not a doting homage—friendship, faith—
Such estimation in your eyes as these
Might claim, I hoped for.

ANGIOLINA.

And have ever had.

DOGE.

I think so. For the difference in our years,
You knew it, choosing me, and chose: I trusted
Not to my qualities, nor would have faith
In such, nor outward ornaments of nature,
Were I still in my five-and-twentieth spring:
I trusted to the blood of Loredano,
Pure in your veins; I trusted to the soul
God gave you—to the truths your father taught you—
To your belief in heaven—to your mild virtues—
To your own faith and honour, for my own.

ANGIOLINA.

You have done well.—I thank you for that trust,
Which I have never for one moment ceased
To honour you the more for.

DOGE.

Where is honour,
Innate and precept-strengthen'd, 'tis the rock
Of faith connubial; where it is not—where
Light thoughts are lurking, or the vanities
Of worldly pleasure rankle in the heart,
Or sensual throbs convulse it, well I know
'T were hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 't were wed to him it covets most:
An incarnation of the poet's god
In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in
His majesty of superhuman manhood,
Would not suffice to bind where virtue is not;
It is consistency which forms and proves it:
Vice cannot fix, and virtue cannot change.
The once fallen woman must for ever fall,
For vice must have variety, while virtue
Stands like the sun, and all which rolls around
Drinks life, and light, and glory from her aspect.

ANGIOLINA.

And seeing, feeling thus this truth in others
(I pray you pardon me), but wherefore yield you
To the most fierce of fatal passions, and
Disquiet your great thoughts with restless hate
Of such a thing as Steno?

DOGE.

You mistake me.
It is not Steno who could move me thus;
Had it been so, he should—but let that pass.

ANGIOLINA.

What is 't you feel so deeply, then, even now?

DOGE.

The violated majesty of Venice,
At once insulted in her lord and laws.

ANGIOLINA.

Alas! why will you thus consider it?

DOGE.

I have thought on 't till—but let me lead you back
To what I urged; all these things being noted,
I wedded you; the world then did me justice
Upon the motive, and my conduct proved
They did me right, while yours was all to praise:
You had all freedom—all respect—all trust
From me and mine; and born of those who made

Princes at home, and swept kings from their thrones
On foreign shores, in all things you appear'd
Worthy to be our first of native dames.

ANGIOLINA.

To what does this conduct?

DOGE.

To thus much—that
A miscreant's angry breath may blast it all—
A villain whom, for his unbridled bearing,
Even in the midst of our great festival,
I caused to be conducted forth, and taught
How to demean himself in ducal chambers;
A wretch like this may leave upon the wall
The blighting venom of his sweltering heart,
And this shall spread itself in general poison;
And woman's innocence, man's honour, pass
Into a by-word; and the doubly felon
(Who first insulted virgin modesty
By a gross affront to your attendant damsels,
Amidst the noblest of our dames in public)
Requite himself for his most just expulsion,
By blackening publicly his sovereign's consort,
And be absolved by his upright compeers.

ANGIOLINA.

But he has been condemn'd into captivity.

DOGE.

For such as him a dungeon were acquittal;
And his brief term of mock-arrest will pass
Within a palace. But I' ve done with him;
The rest must be with you.

ANGIOLINA.

With me, my lord?

DOGE.

Yes, Angiolina. Do not marvel; I
Have let this prey upon me till I feel
My life cannot be long; and fain would have you
Regard the injunctions you will find within
This scroll. (*Giving her a paper*)——Fear not; they are for your advantage:
Read them hereafter, at the fitting hour.

ANGIOLINA.

My lord, in life, and after life, you shall
Be honour'd still by me: but may your days
Be many yet—and happier than the present!
This passion will give way, and you will be
Serene, and what you should be—what you were.

DOGE.

I will be what I should be, or be nothing;
But never more—oh! never, never more,
O'er the few days or hours which yet await
The blighted old age of Faliero, shall
Sweet quiet shed her sunset! Never more
Those summer shadows rising from the past
Of a not ill-spent nor inglorious life,
Mellowing the last hours as the night approaches,
Shall soothe me to my moment of long rest.
I had but little more to ask, or hope,
Save the regards due to the blood and sweat,
And the soul's labour through which I had toil'd
To make my country honour'd. As her servant—
Her servant, though her chief—I would have gone
Down to my fathers with a name serene
And pure as theirs; but this has been denied me.—
Would I had died at Zara!

ANGIOLINA.

There you saved
The state; then live to save her still. A day,
Another day like that would be the best
Reproof to them, and sole revenge for you.

DOGE.

But one such day occurs within an age;
My life is little less than one, and 'tis
Enough for Fortune to have granted *once*,
That which scarce one more favour'd citizen
May win in many states and years. But why
Thus speak I? Venice has forgot that day—
Then why should I remember it?—Farewell,
Sweet Angiolina! I must to my cabinet;
There 's much for me to do—and the hour hastens.

ANGIOLINA.

Remember what you were.

DOGE.

It were in vain!
Joy's recollection is no longer joy,
While sorrow's memory is a sorrow still.

ANGIOLINA.

At least, whate'er may urge, let me implore
That you will take some little pause of rest:
Your sleep for many nights has been so turbid,
That it had been relief to have awaked you,
Had I not hoped that nature would o'erpower
At length the thoughts which shook your slumbers thus.
An hour of rest will give you to your toils
With fitter thoughts and freshen'd strength.

DOGE.

I cannot—
I must not, if I could; for never was
Such reason to be watchful: yet a few—
Yet a few days and dream-perturbed nights,
And I shall slumber well—but where?—no matter.
Adieu, my Angiolina.

ANGIOLINA.

Let me be
An instant—yet an instant your companion;
I cannot bear to leave you thus.

DOGE.

Come then,
My gentle child—forgive me; thou wert made
For better fortunes than to share in mine,
Now darkling in their close toward the deep vale
Where death sits robed in his all-sweeping shadow.
When I am gone—it may be sooner than
Even these years warrant, for there is that stirring
Within—above—around, that in this city
Will make the cemeteries populous
As e'er they were by pestilence or war,—
When I *am* nothing, let that which I *was*
Be still, sometimes a name on thy sweet lips,
A shadow in thy fancy, of a thing
Which would not have thee mourn it, but remember;—
Let us begone, my child—the time is pressing.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A retired spot near the Arsenal.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO.

CALENDARO.

How sped you, Israel, in your late complaint?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Why, well.

CALENDARO.

Is't possible! will he be punish'd?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yes.

CALENDARO.

With what? a mulct or an arrest?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

With death!—

CALENDARO.

Now you rave, or must intend revenge,
Such as I counsell'd you, with your own hand.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yes; and for one sole draught of hate, forego
The great redress we meditate for Venice,
And change a life of hope for one of exile;
Leaving one scorpion crush'd, and thousands stinging
My friends, my family, my countrymen!
No, Calendaro; these same drops of blood,
Shed shamefully, shall have the whole of his
For their requital——But not only his;
We will not strike for private wrongs alone:
Such are for selfish passions and rash men,
But are unworthy a tyrannicide.

CALENDARO.

You have more patience than I care to boast.
Had I been present when you bore this insult,
I must have slain him, or expired myself
In the vain effort to repress my wrath.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Thank Heaven, you were not—all had else been marr'd:
As 't is, our cause looks prosperous still.

CALENDARO.

You saw
The Doge—what answer gave he?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

That there was
No punishment for such as Barbaro.

CALENDARO.

I told you so before, and that 't was idle
To think of justice from such hands.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

At least,
It lull'd suspicion, showing confidence.
Had I been silent, not a sbirro but
Had kept me in his eye, as meditating
A silent, solitary, deep revenge.

CALENDARO.

But wherefore not address you to the Council?
The Doge is a mere puppet, who can scarce
Obtain right for himself. Why speak to *him*?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You shall know that hereafter.

CALENDARO.

Why not now?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Be patient but till midnight. Get your musters,
And bid your friends prepare their companies:—
Set all in readiness to strike the blow,
Perhaps in a few hours; we have long waited
For a fit time—that hour is on the dial,
It may be of to-morrow's sun: delay
Beyond may breed us double danger. See
That all be punctual at our place of meeting,
And arm'd, excepting those of the Sixteen,
Who will remain among the troops to wait
The signal.

CALENDARO.

These brave words have breathed new life
Into my veins; I am sick of these protracted
And hesitating councils: day on day
Crawl'd on, and added but another link
To our long fetters, and some fresher wrong
Inflicted on our brethren or ourselves,
Helping to swell our tyrants' bloated strength.
Let us but deal upon them, and I care not
For the result, which must be death or freedom!
I 'm weary to the heart of finding neither.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We will be free in life or death! the grave
Is chainless. Have you all the musters ready?
And are the sixteen companies completed
To sixty?

CALENDARO.

All save two, in which there are
Twenty-five wanting to make up the number.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

No matter; we can do without. Whose are they?

CALENDARO.

Bertram's and old Soranzo's, both of whom
Appear less forward in the cause than we are.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Your fiery nature makes you deem all those
Who are not restless, cold: but there exists
Oft in concentred spirits, not less daring
Than in more loud avengers. Do not doubt them.

CALENDARO,

I do not doubt the elder; but in Bertram
There is a hesitating softness, fatal
To enterprise like ours: I 've seen that man
Weep like an infant o'er the misery
Of others, heedless of his own, though greater;
And, in a recent quarrel, I beheld him
Turn sick at sight of blood, although a villain's.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

The truly brave are soft of heart and eyes,
And feel for what their duty bids them do.
I have known Bertram long; there doth not breathe
A soul more full of honour.

CALENDARO.

It may be so:
I apprehend less treachery than weakness:
Yet, as he has no mistress, and no wife
To work upon his milkiness of spirit,
He may go through the ordeal; it is well
He is an orphan, friendless save in us:
A woman or a child had made him less
Than either in resolve.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Such ties are not
For those who are call'd to the high destinies
Which purify corrupted commonwealths;
We must forget all feelings save the *one*—
We must resign all passions save our purpose—
We must behold no object save our country—
And only look on death as beautiful,
So that the sacrifice ascend to heaven,
And draw down freedom on her evermore.

CALENDARO.

But, if we fail?——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

They never fail who die
In a great cause: the block may soak their gore:

Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,
They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts
Which o'erpower all others, and conduct
The world at last to freedom. What were we,
If Brutus had not lived? He died in giving
Rome liberty, but left a deathless lesson—
A name which is a virtue, and a soul
Which multiplies itself throughout all time,
When wicked men wax mighty, and a state
Turns servile: he and his high friend were styled
«The last of Romans!». Let us be the first
Of true Venetians, sprung from Roman sires.

CALENDARO.

Our fathers did not fly from Attila
Into these isles, where palaces have sprung
On banks redeem'd from the rude ocean's ooze,
To own a thousand despots in his place.
Better bow down before the Hun, and call
A Tartar lord, than these swoln silk-worms masters!
The first at least was man, and used his sword
As sceptre: these unmanly creeping things
Command our swords, and rule us with a word
As with a spell.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

It shall be broken soon.
You say that all things are in readiness;
To-day I have not been the usual round,
And why thou knowest; but thy vigilance
Will better have supplied my care: these orders
In recent council to redouble now
Our efforts to repair the galleys, have
Lent a fair colour to the introduction
Of many of our cause into the arsenal,
As new artificers for their equipment,
Or fresh recruits obtain'd in haste to man
The hoped-for fleet.—Are all supplied with arms?

CALENDARO.

All who were deem'd trustworthy: there are some
Whom it were well to keep in ignorance
Till it be time to strike, and then supply them;
When in the heat and hurry of the hour
They have no opportunity to pause,
But needs must on with those who will surround them.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You have said well.—Have you remark'd all such?

CALENDARO.

I 've noted most: and caused the other chiefs
To use like caution in their companies,
As far as I have seen, we are enough
To make the enterprise secure, if 't is
Commenced to-morrow; but till 't is begun,
Each hour is pregnant with a thousand perils.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let the Sixteen meet at the wonted hour,
Except Soranzo, Nicoletto Blondo,
And Marco Giuda, who will keep their watch
Within the arsenal, and hold all ready,
Expectant of the signal we will fix on.

CALENDARO.

We will not fail.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let all the rest be there;
I have a stranger to present to them.

CALENDARO.

A stranger! doth he know the secret?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Yes.

CALENDARO.

And have you dared to peril your friends' lives
On a rash confidence in one we know not?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I have risk'd no man's life except my own—
Of that be certain: he is one who may
Make our assurance doubly sure, according
His aid; and, if reluctant, he no less
Is in our power: he comes alone with me,
And cannot 'scape us; but he will not swerve.

CALENDARO.

I cannot judge of this until I know him:
Is he one of our order?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Ay, in spirit,
Although a child of greatness; he is one
Who would become a throne, or overthrow one—
One who has done great deeds, and seen great changes;
No tyrant, though bred up to tyranny;
Valiant in war, and sage in council; noble
In nature, although haughty; quick, yet wary:
Yet for all this, so full of certain passions,
That if once stirr'd and baffled, as he has been
Upon the tenderest points, there is no Fury
In Grecian story like to that which wrings
His vitals with her burning hands, till he
Grows capable of all things for revenge;
And add too, that his mind is liberal;
He sees and feels the people are oppress'd,
And shares their sufferings. Take him all in all,
We have need of such, and such have need of us.

CALENDARO.

And what part would you have him take with us?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

It may be, that of chief.

CALENDARO.

What! and resign
Your own command as leader?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Even so.
My object is to make your cause end well,
And not to push myself to power. Experience,
Some skill, and your own choice, had mark'd me out
To act in trust as your commander, till
Some worthier should appear: if I have found such
As you yourselves shall own more worthy, think you
That I would hesitate from selfishness,
And, covetous of brief authority,
Stake our deep interest on my single thoughts,
Rather than yield to one above me in
All leading qualities? No, Calendaro,
Know your friend better; but you all shall judge.—
Away! and let us meet at the fix'd hour.
Be vigilant, and all will yet go well.

CALENDARO.

Worthy Bertuccio, I have known you ever
Trusty and brave, with head and heart to plan
What I have still been prompt to execute.
For my own part, I seek no other chief;
What the rest will decide I know not, but
I am with you, as I have ever been,

In all our undertakings. Now farewell,
Until the hour of midnight sees us meet.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Scene, the Space between the Canal and the Church of San Giovanni e San Paolo. An equestrian Statue before it.—A Gondola lies in the Canal at some distance.

Enter the DOGE *alone, disguised.*

DOGE (*solus*).

I am before the hour, the hour whose voice,
Pealing into the arch of night, might strike
These palaces with ominous tottering,
And rock their marbles to the corner-stone,
Waking the sleepers from some hideous dream
Of indistinct but awful augury
Of that which will befal them. Yes, proud city!
Thou must be cleansed of the black blood which makes thee
A lazar-house of tyranny: the task
Is forced upon me, I have sought it not;
And therefore was I punish'd, seeing this
Patrician pestilence spread on and on,
Until at length it smote me in my slumbers,
And I am tainted, and must wash away
The plague-spots in the healing wave. Tall fane!
Where sleep my fathers, whose dim statues shadow
The floor which doth divide us from the dead,
Where all the pregnant hearts of our bold blood,
Moulder'd into a mite of ashes, hold
In one shrunk heap what once made many heroes,
When what is now a handful shook the earth—
Fane of the tutelar saints who guard our house!
Vault where two Doges rest—my sires! who died
The one of toil, the other in the field,
With a long race of other lineal chiefs
And sages, whose great labours, wounds, and state
I have inherited,—let the graves gape,
Till all thine aisles be peopled with the dead,
And pour them from thy portals to gaze on me!
I call them up, and them and thee to witness
What it hath been which put me to this task—
Their pure high blood, their blazon-roll of glories,
Their mighty name dishonour'd all *in* me,
Not *by* me, but by the ungrateful nobles
We fought to make our equals, not our lords:—
And chiefly thou, Ordelafo the brave,
Who perish'd in the field, where I since conquer'd,
Battling at Zara, did the hecatombs
Of thine and Venice' foes, there offer'd up
By thy descendant, merit such acquittance?
Spirits! smile down upon me; for my cause
Is yours, in all life now can be of yours,—
Your fame, your name, all mingled up in mine,
And in the future fortunes of our race!
Let me but prosper, and I make this city
Free and immortal, and our house's name
Worthier of what you were, now and hereafter!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Who goes there?

DOGE.

A friend to Venice.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'T is he.
Welcome, my lord,—you are before the time.

DOGE.

I am ready to proceed to your assembly.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Have with you.—I am proud and pleased to see
Such confident alacrity. Your doubts
Since our last meeting, then, are all dispell'd?

DOGE.

Not so—but I have set my little left
Of life upon this cast: the die was thrown
When I first listen'd to your treason—Start not!
That is the word; I cannot shape my tongue
To syllable black deeds into smooth names,
Though I be wrought on to commit them. When
I heard you tempt your sovereign, and forbore
To have you dragg'd to prison, I became
Your guiltiest accomplice: now you may,
If it so please you, do as much by me.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Strange words, my lord, and most unmerited;
I am no spy, and neither are we traitors.

DOGE.

We!—We!—no matter—you have earn'd the right
To talk of *us*.—But to the point.—If this
Attempt succeeds, and Venice, render'd free
And flourishing, when we are in our graves,
Conducts her generations to our tombs,
And makes her children with their little hands
Strew flowers o'er her deliverers' ashes, then
The consequence will sanctify the deed,
And we shall be like the two Bruti in
The annals of hereafter; but if not,
If we should fail, employing bloody means
And secret plot, although to a good end,
Still we are traitors, honest Israel;—thou
No less than he who was thy sovereign
Six hours ago, and now thy brother rebel.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

'T is not the moment to consider thus,
Else I could answer.—Let us to the meeting,
Or we may be observed in lingering here.

DOGE.

We *are* observed, and have been.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We observed!
Let me discover—and this steel——

DOGE.

Put up;
Here are no human witnesses: look there—
What see you?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Only a tall warrior's statue
Bestriding a proud steed, in the dim light
Of the dull moon.

DOGE.

That warrior was the sire
Of my sire's fathers, and that statue was
Decreed to him by the twice rescued city:—
Think you that he looks down on us, or no?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

My lord, these are mere phantasies; there are
No eyes in marble.

DOGE.

But there are in death.
I tell thee, man, there is a spirit in
Such things that acts and sees, unseen, though felt;
And, if there be a spell to stir the dead,
'T is in such deeds as we are now upon.
Deem'st thou the souls of such a race as mine
Can rest, when he, their last descendant chief,
Stands plotting on the brink of their pure graves
With stung plebeians?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

It had been as well
To have ponder'd this before,—ere you embark'd
In our great enterprise.—Do you repent?

DOGE.

No—but I *feel*, and shall do to the last.
I cannot quench a glorious life at once,
Nor dwindle to the thing I now must be,
And take men's lives by stealth, without some pause:
Yet doubt me not; it is this very feeling,
And knowing *what* has wrung me to be thus,
Which is your best security. There 's not
A roused mechanic in your busy plot
So wrong'd as I, so fallen, so loudly call'd
To his redress: the very means I am forced
By these fell tyrants to adopt is such,
That I abhor them doubly for the deeds
Which I must do to pay them back for theirs.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let us away—hark!——the hour strikes.

DOGE.

On—on—
It is our knell, or that of Venice.—On.—

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Say, rather, 't is her freedom's rising peal
Of triumph——This way—we are near the place.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The House where the Conspirators meet.

DAGOLINO, DORO, BERTRAM, FEDELE TREVISANO, CALENDARO, ANTONIO DELLE BENDE, etc. etc.

CALENDARO (*entering.*)

Are all here?

DAGOLINO.

All with you: except the three
On duty, and our leader Israel,
Who is expected momently.

CALENDARO.

Where 's Bertram?

BERTRAM.

Here!

CALENDARO.

Have you not been able to complete
The number wanting in your company?

BERTRAM.

I had mark'd out some: but I have not dared
To trust them with the secret, till assured
That they were worthy faith.

CALENDARO.

There is no need
Of trusting to their faith: *who*, save ourselves
And our more chosen comrades, is aware
Fully of our intent! they think themselves[3]
Engaged in secret to the Signory,
To punish some more dissolute young nobles
Who have defied the law in their excesses;
But once drawn up, and their new swords well-flesh'd
In the rank hearts of the more odious senators,
They will not hesitate to follow up
Their blow upon the others, when they see
The example of their chiefs; and I for one
Will set them such, that they for very shame
And safety will not pause till all have perish'd.

BERTRAM.

How say you? *all!*

CALENDARO.

Whom wouldst thou spare?

BERTRAM.

I spare?
I have no power to spare. I only question'd,
Thinking that even amongst these wicked men
There might be some, whose age and qualities
Might mark them out for pity.

CALENDARO.

Yes, such pity
As when the viper hath been cut to pieces,
The separate fragments quivering in the sun
In the last energy of venomous life,
Deserve and have. Why, I should think as soon
Of pitying some particular fang which made
One in the jaw of the swoln serpent, as
Of saving one of these: they form but links
Of one long chain—one mass, one breath, one body;
They eat, and drink, and live, and breed together,
Revel and lie, oppress, and kill in concert,—
So let them die as *one!*

DAGOLINO.

Should *one* survive,
He would be dangerous as the whole: it is not
Their number, be it tens or thousands, but
The spirit of this aristocracy
Which must be rooted out; and if there were
A single shoot of the old tree in life,
'T would fasten in the soil and spring again
To gloomy verdure and to bitter fruit.
Bertram, we must be firm!

CALENDARO.

Look to it well,
Bertram; I have an eye upon thee.

BERTRAM.

Who
Distrusts me?

CALENDARO.

Not I; for if I did so,
Thou wouldst not now be there to talk of trust;
It is thy softness, not thy want of faith,
Which makes thee to be doubted.

BERTRAM.

You should know,
Who hear me, who and what I am; a man
Roused like yourselves to overthrow oppression;
A kind man, I am apt to think, as some
Of you have found me; and if brave or no,
You, Calendaro, can pronounce, who have seen me
Put to the proof; or, if you should have doubts,
I 'll clear them on your person.

CALENDARO.

You are welcome,
When once our enterprise is o'er, which must not
Be interrupted by a private brawl.

BERTRAM.

I am no brawler; but can bear myself
As far among the foe as any he
Who hears me; else why have I been selected
To be of your chief comrades? but no less
I own my natural weakness; I have not
Yet learn'd to think of indiscriminate murder
Without some sense of shuddering; and the sight
Of blood which spouts through hoary scalps is not
To me a thing of triumph, nor the death
Of men surprised a glory. Well——too well
I know that we must do such things on those
Whose acts have raised up such avengers; but
If there were some of these who could be saved
From out this sweeping fate, for our own sakes
And for our honour, to take off some stain
Of massacre, which else pollutes it wholly,
I had been glad; and see no cause in this
For sneer, nor for suspicion!

DAGOLINO.

Calm thee, Bertram;
For we suspect thee not, and take good heart.
It is the cause, and not our will, which asks
Such actions from our hands: we'll wash away
All stains in Freedom's fountain!

Enter ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and the* DOGE, *disguised.*

DAGOLINO.

Welcome, Israel.

CONSPIRATORS.

Most welcome.—Brave Bertuccio, thou art late—
Who is this stranger?

CALENDARO.

It is time to name him.
Our comrades are even now prepared to greet him
In brotherhood, as I have made it known
That thou wouldst add a brother to our cause,
Approved by thee, and thus approved by all,
Such is our trust in all thine actions. Now
Let him unfold himself.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Stranger, step forth!

[*The* DOGE *discovers himself.*

CONSPIRATORS.

To arms!—we are betray'd—it is the Doge!
Down with them both! our traitorous captain, and
The tyrant he hath sold us to!

CALENDARO (*drawing his sword*).

Hold! Hold!
Who moves a step against them dies. Hold! hear,
Bertuccio.—What! are you appall'd to see
A lone, unguarded, weaponless old man
Amongst you?—Israel, speak! what means this mystery?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Let them advance and strike at their own bosoms,
Ungrateful suicides! for on our lives
Depend their own, their fortunes, and their hopes.

DOGE.

Strike!—If I dreaded death, a death more fearful
Than any your rash weapons can inflict,
I should not now be here:—Oh, noble courage!
The eldest born of Fear, which makes you brave
Against this solitary hoary head!
See the bold chiefs, who would reform a state
And shake down senates, mad with wrath and dread
At sight of one patrician.—Butcher me,
You can; I care not.—Israel, are these men
The mighty hearts you spoke of? look upon them!

CALENDARO.

Faith! he hath shamed us, and deservedly.
Was this your trust in your true chief Bertuccio,
To turn your swords against him and his guest?
Sheathe them, and hear him.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I disdain to speak.
They might and must have known a heart like mine
Incapable of treachery; and the power
They gave me to adopt all fitting means
To further their design was ne'er abused.
They might be certain that whoe'er was brought
By me into this council, had been led
To take his choice—as brother, or as victim.

DOGE.

And which am I to be? your actions leave
Some cause to doubt the freedom of the choice.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

My lord, we would have perish'd here together,
Had these rash men proceeded; but, behold,
They are ashamed of that mad moment's impulse,
And droop their heads; believe me, they are such
As I describe them.—Speak to them.

CALENDARO.

Ay, speak;
We are all listening in wonder.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Addressing the Conspirators.

You are safe,
Nay, more, almost triumphant—listen then,
And know my words for truth.

DOGE.

You see me here,
As one of you hath said, an old, unarm'd,
Defenceless man; and yesterday you saw me
Presiding in the hall of ducal state,
Apparent sovereign of our hundred isles,
Robed in official purple, dealing out
The edicts of a power which is not mine,
Nor yours, but of our masters—the patricians.
Why I was there you know, or think you know;
Why I am *here*, he who hath been most wrong'd,
He who among you hath been most insulted,
Outraged and trodden on, until he doubt
If he be worm or no, may answer for me,
Asking of his own heart what brought him here?
You know my recent story, all men know it,
And judge of it far differently from those
Who sate in judgment to heap scorn on scorn.
But spare me the recital—it is here,
Here at my heart, the outrage—but my words,
Already spent in unavailing plaints,
Would only show my feebleness the more,
And I come here to strengthen even the strong,
And urge them on to deeds, and not to war
With woman's weapons; but I need not urge you.
Our private wrongs have sprung from public vices
In this—I cannot call it commonwealth
Nor kingdom, which hath neither prince nor people,
But all the sins of the old Spartan state
Without its virtues—temperance and valour.
The lords of Lacedemon were true soldiers,
But ours are Sybarites, while we are Helots,
Of whom I am the lowest, most enslaved,

Although drest out to head a pageant, as
The Greeks of yore made drunk their slaves to form
A pastime for their children. You are met
To overthrow this monster of a state,
This mockery of a government, this spectre,
Which must be exorcised with blood, and then,
We will renew the times of truth and justice,
Condensing in a fair free commonwealth
Not rash equality, but equal rights,
Proportion'd like the columns to the temple,
Giving and taking strength reciprocal,
And making firm the whole with grace and beauty,
So that no part could be removed without
Infringement of the general symmetry.
In operating this great change, I claim
To be one of you—if you trust in me;
If not, strike home,—my life is compromised,
And I would rather fall by freemen's hands
Than live another day to act the tyrant
As delegate of tyrants; such I am not,
And never have been—read it in our annals:
I can appeal to my past government
In many lands and cities; they can tell you
If I were an oppressor, or a man
Feeling and thinking for my fellow men.
Haply had I been what the senate sought,
A thing of robes and trinkets, dizen'd out
To sit in state as for a sovereign's picture;
A popular scourge, a ready sentence-signer,
A stickler for the Senate and "the Forty,"
A sceptic of all measures which had not
The sanction of "The Ten," a council fawner,
A tool, a fool, a puppet,—they had ne'er
Foster'd the wretch who stung me. What I suffer
Has reach'd me through my pity for the people;
That many know, and they who know not yet
Will one day learn: meantime, I do devote,
Whate'er the issue, my last days of life—
My present power, such as it is, not that
Of Doge, but of a man who has been great
Before he was degraded to a Doge,
And still has individual means and mind;
I stake my fame (and I had fame)—my breath
(The least of all, for its last hours are nigh)—
My heart—my hope—my soul—upon this cast!
Such as I am, I offer me to you
And to your chiefs, accept me or reject me,
A prince who fain would be a citizen
Or nothing, and who has left his throne to be so.

CALENDARO.

Long live Faliero!—Venice shall be free!

CONSPIRATORS.

Long live Faliero!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Comrades! did I well?
Is not this man a host in such a cause?

DOGE.

This is no time for eulogies, nor place
For exultation. Am I one of you?

CALENDARO.

Ay, and the first amongst us, as thou hast been
Of Venice—be our general and chief.

DOGE.

Chief!—General!—I was general at Zara,
And chief in Rhodes and Cyprus, prince in Venice;
I cannot stoop——that is, I am not fit
To lead a band of——patriots: when I lay
Aside the dignities which I have borne,
'T is not to put on others, but to be
Mate to my fellows—but now to the point:
Israel has stated to me your whole plan—
'T is bold, but feasible if I assist it,
And must be set in motion instantly.

CALENDARO.

E'en when thou wilt—is it not so, my friends?
I have disposed all for a sudden blow;
When shall it be then?

DOGE.

At sunrise.

BERTRAM.

So soon?

DOGE.

So soon?—so late—each hour accumulates
Peril on peril, and the more so now
Since I have mingled with you; know you not
The Council, and "The Ten?" the spies, the eyes
Of the patricians dubious of their slaves,
And now more dubious of the prince they have made one?
I tell you you must strike, and suddenly,
Full to the hydra's heart—its heads will follow.

CALENDARO.

With all my soul and sword I yield assent:
Our companies are ready, sixty each,
And all now under arms by Israel's order;
Each at their different place of rendezvous,
And vigilant, expectant of some blow;
Let each repair for action to his post!
And now, my lord, the signal?

DOGE.

When you hear
The great bell of Saint Mark's, which may not be
Struck without special order of the Doge
(The last poor privilege they leave their prince),
March on Saint Mark's!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

And there?

DOGE.

By different routes
Let your march be directed, every sixty
Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of war
And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn
Discern'd before the port; form round the palace,
Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial; while the bell tolls on,
Shout ye, "Saint Mark!—the foe is on our waters!"

CALENDARO.

I see it now—but on, my noble lord.

DOGE.

All the patricians flocking to the Council
(Which they dare not refuse, at the dread signal
Pealing from out their patron saint's proud tower),
Will then be gather'd in unto the harvest,
And we will reap them with the sword for sickle.
If some few should be tardy or absent them,
'T will be but to be taken faint and single,
When the majority are put to rest.

CALENDARO.

Would that the hour were come! we will not scotch,
But kill.

BERTRAM.

Once more, sir, with your pardons, I
Would now repeat the question which I ask'd
Before Bertuccio added to our cause
This great ally who renders it more sure,
And therefore safer, and as such admits
Some dawn of mercy to a portion of
Our victims—must all perish in this slaughter?

CALENDARO.

All who encounter me and mine, be sure,
The mercy they have shown, I show.

CONSPIRATORS.

All! all!
Is this a time to talk of pity? when
Have they e'er shown, or felt, or feign'd it?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Bertram,
This false compassion is a folly, and
Injustice to thy comrades and thy cause!
Dost thou not see, that if we single out
Some for escape, they live but to avenge
The fallen? and how distinguish now the innocent
From out the guilty? all their acts are *one*—
A single emanation from one body,
Together knit for our oppression! 'T is
Much that we let their children live; I doubt
If all of these even should be set apart:
The hunter may reserve some single cub
From out the tiger's litter, but who e'er
Would seek to save the spotted sire or dam,
Unless to perish by their fangs? However,
I will abide by Doge Faliero's counsel;
Let him decide if any should be saved.

DOGE.

Ask me not—tempt me not with such a question—
Decide yourselves.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You know their private virtues
Far better than we can, to whom alone
Their public vices, and most foul oppression,
Have made them deadly; if there be amongst them
One who deserves to be repeal'd, pronounce.

DOGE.

Dolfino's father was my friend, and Lando
Fought by my side, and Marc Cornaro shared
My Genoese embassy; I saved the life
Of Veniero—shall I save it twice?
Would that I could save them and Venice also!
All these men, or their fathers, were my friends
Till they became my subjects; then fell from me
As faithless leaves drop from the o'erblown flower,
And left me a lone blighted thorny stalk,
Which, in its solitude, can shelter nothing;
So, as they let me wither, let them perish!

CALENDARO.

They cannot co-exist with Venice' freedom!

DOGE.

Ye, though you know and feel our mutual mass
Of many wrongs, even ye are ignorant
What fatal poison to the springs of life,
To human ties, and all that 's good and dear,
Lurks in the present institutes of Venice.
All these men were my friends; I loved them, they
Requited honourably my regards;
We served and fought; we smiled and wept in concert;
We revell'd or we sorrow'd side by side;
We made alliances of blood and marriage;
We grew in years and honours fairly, till
Their own desire, not my ambition, made
Them choose me for their prince, and then farewell!
Farewell all social memory! all thoughts
In common! and sweet bonds which link old friendships,
When the survivors of long years and actions,
Which now belong to history, soothe the days
Which yet remain by treasuring each other,
And never meet, but each beholds the mirror
Of half a century on his brother's brow,
And sees a hundred beings, now in earth,
Flit round them, whispering of the days gone by,
And seeming not all dead, as long as two
Of the brave, joyous, reckless, glorious band,
Which once were one and many, still retain
A breath to sigh for them, a tongue to speak
Of deeds that else were silent, save on marble——
Oime! Oime!—and must I do this deed?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

My lord, you are much moved: it is not now
That such things must be dwelt upon.

DOGE.

Your patience
A moment—I recede not: mark with me
The gloomy vices of this government.
From the hour that made me Doge, the *Doge* THEY *made* me—
Farewell the past! I died to all that had been,
Or rather they to me: no friends, no kindness,
No privacy of life—all were cut off:
They came not near me, such approach gave umbrage;
They could not love me, such was not the law;
They thwarted me, 'twas the state's policy;
They baffled me, 'twas a patrician's duty;
They wrong'd me, for such was to right the state;
They could not right me, that would give suspicion;
So that I was a slave to my own subjects;
So that I was a foe to my own friends;
Begirt with spies for guards—with robes for power—
With pomp for freedom—gaolers for a council—
Inquisitors for friends—and hell for life!
I had one only fount of quiet left,
And *that* they poison'd! My pure household gods
Were shiver'd on my hearth, and o'er their shrine
Sate grinning ribaldry and sneering scorn.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You have been deeply wrong'd, and now shall be
Nobly avenged before another night.

DOGE.

I had borne all—it hurt me, but I bore it—
Till this last running over of the cup
Of bitterness—until this last loud insult,
Not only unredress'd, but sanction'd; then,
And thus, I cast all further feelings from me—
The feelings which they crush'd for me, long, long
Before, even in their oath of false allegiance!
Even in that very hour and vow, they abjured
Their friend, and made a sovereign, as boys make
Playthings, to do their pleasure and be broken!
I from that hour have seen but senators
In dark suspicious conflict with the Doge,
Brooding with him in mutual hate and fear;
They dreading he should snatch the tyranny
From out their grasp, and he abhorring tyrants.

To me, then, these men have no *private* life,
Nor claim to ties they have cut off from others;
As senators for arbitrary acts
Amenable, I look on them—as such
Let them be dealt upon.

CALENDARO.

And now to action!
Hence, brethren, to our posts, and may this be
The last night of mere words: I'd fain be doing!
Saint Mark's great bell at dawn shall find me wakeful!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Disperse then to your posts; be firm and vigilant;
Think on the wrongs we bear, the rights we claim.
This day and night shall be the last of peril!
Watch for the signal, and then march: I go
To join my band; let each be prompt to marshal
His separate charge: the Doge will now return
To the palace to prepare all for the blow.
We part to meet in freedom and in glory!

CALENDARO.

Doge, when I greet you next, my homage to you
Shall be the head of Steno on this sword!

DOGE.

No; let him be reserved unto the last,
Nor turn aside to strike at such a prey,
Till nobler game is quarried: his offence
Was a mere ebullition of the vice,
The general corruption generated
By the foul aristocracy; he could not—
He dared not in more honourable days
Have risk'd it! I have merged all private wrath
Against him, in the thought of our great purpose.
A slave insults me—I require his punishment
From his proud master's hands; if he refuse it,
The offence grows his, and let him answer it.

CALENDARO.

Yet, as the immediate cause of the alliance
Which consecrates our undertaking more,
I owe him such deep gratitude, that fain
I would repay him as he merits; may I?

DOGE.

You would but lop the hand, and I the head;
You would but smite the scholar, I the master;
You would but punish Steno, I the senate.
I cannot pause on individual hate,
In the absorbing, sweeping, whole revenge,
Which, like the sheeted fire from heaven, must blast
Without distinction, as it fell of yore,
Where the Dead Sea hath quench'd two cities' ashes.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Away, then, to your posts! I but remain
A moment to accompany the Doge
To our late place of trust, to see no spies
Have been upon the scout, and thence I hasten
To where my allotted band is under arms.

CALENDARO.

Farewell, then, until dawn.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Success go with you!

CONSPIRATORS.

We will not fail—away! My lord, farewell!

[*The Conspirators salute the* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO, *and retire, headed by* PHILIP CALENDARO. *The* DOGE *and* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *remain.*

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We have them in the toil—it cannot fail!
Now thou 'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make
A name immortal greater than the greatest:
Free citizens have struck at kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crush'd dictators, as the popular steel
Has reach'd patricians; but until this hour,
What prince has plotted for his people's freedom?
Or risk'd a life to liberate his subjects?
For ever, and for ever, they conspire
Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!
Now, my lord, to our enterprise; 't is great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!

DOGE.

And is it then decided? must they die?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Who?

DOGE.

My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days—the senators?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

You passed their sentence, and it is a just one.

DOGE.

Ay, so it seems, and so it is to *you;*
You are a patriot, a plebeian Gracchus—
The rebel's oracle—the people's tribune—
I blame you not, you act in your vocation;
They smote you, and oppress'd you, and despised you;
So they have *me:* but *you* ne'er spake with them;
You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt;
You never had their wine-cup at your lips;
You grew not up with them, nor laugh'd, nor wept,
Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claim'd their smile
In social interchange for yours, nor trusted
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, as I have:
These hairs of mine are gray, and so are theirs,
The elders of the council; I remember
When all our locks were like the raven's
As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles wrung from the false Mahometan:
And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood?
Each stab to them will seem my suicide.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Doge! Doge! this vacillation is unworthy
A child; if you are not in second childhood,
Call back your nerves to your own purpose, nor
Thus shame yourself and me. By heavens! I 'd rather
Forego even now, or fail in our intent,
Than see the man I venerate subside
From high resolves into such shallow weakness!
You have seen blood in battle, shed it, both
Your own and that of others; can you shrink then
From a few drops from veins of hoary vampires,
Who but give back what they have drain'd from millions?

DOGE.

Bear with me! Step by step, and blow on blow,
I will divide with you; think not I waver:

Ah! no; it is the *certainty* of all
Which I must do doth make me tremble thus.
But let these last and lingering thoughts have way,
To which you only and the night are conscious,
And both regardless: when the hour arrives,
'T is mine to sound the knell, and strike the blow,
Which shall unpeople many palaces,
And hew the highest genealogic trees
Down to the earth, strew'd with their bleeding fruit,
And crush their blossoms into barrenness;
This will I—must I—have I sworn to do,
Nor aught can turn me from my destiny;
But still I quiver to behold what I
Must be, and think what I have been! Bear with me.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Re-man your breast; I feel no such remorse,
I understand it not: why should you change?
You acted, and you act on your free will.

DOGE.

Ay, there it is—*you* feel not, nor do I,
Else I should stab thee on the spot, to save
A thousand lives, and, killing, do no murder;
You *feel* not—*you* go to this butcher-work
As if these high-born men were steers for shambles!
When all is over, you 'll be free and merry,
And calmly wash those hands incarnadine;
But I, outgoing thee and all thy fellows
In this surpassing massacre, shall be,
Shall see, and feel—oh God! oh God! 't is true,
And thou dost well to answer that it was
« My own free will and act; » and yet you err,
For I *will* do this! Doubt not—fear not; I
Will be your most unmerciful accomplice!
And yet I act no more on my free will,
Nor my own feelings—both compel me back;
But there is *hell* within me and around,
And like the demon who believes and trembles
Must I abhor and do. Away! Away!
Get thee unto thy fellows, I will hie me
To gather the retainers of our house.
Doubt not, Saint Mark's great bell shall wake all Venice,
Except her slaughter'd senate: ere the sun
Be broad upon the Adriatic, there
Shall be a voice of weeping, which shall drown
The roar of waters in the cry of blood!
I am resolved—come on.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

With all my soul!
Keep a firm rein upon these bursts of passion;
Remember what these men have dealt to thee,
And that this sacrifice will be succeeded
By ages of prosperity and freedom
To this unshackled city: a true tyrant
Would have depopulated empires, nor
Have felt the strange compunction which hath wrung you
To punish a few traitors to the people!
Trust me, such were a pity more misplaced
Than the late mercy of the state to Steno.

DOGE.

Man, thou hast struck upon the chord which jars
All nature from my heart. Hence to our task!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Palazzo of the Patrician LIONI. LIONI *laying aside the mask and cloak which the Venetian Nobles wore in public, attended by a Domestic.*

LIONI.

I will to rest, right weary of this revel,
The gayest we have held for many moons,
And yet, I know not why, it cheer'd me not;
There came a heaviness across my heart,
Which in the lightest movement of the dance,
Though eye to eye, and hand in hand united
Even with the lady of my love, oppress'd me,
And through my spirit chill'd my blood, until
A damp like death rose o'er my brow; I strove
To laugh the thought away, but 't would not be;
Through all the music ringing in my ears
A knell was sounding as distinct and clear,
Though low and far, as e'er the Adrian wave
Rose o'er the city's murmur in the night,
Dashing against the outward Lido's bulwark;
So that I left the festival before
It reach'd its zenith, and will woo my pillow
For thoughts more tranquil, or forgetfulness.
Antonio, take my mask and cloak, and light
The lamp within my chamber.

ANTONIO.

Yes, my lord:
Command you no refreshment?

LIONI.

Nought, save sleep,
Which will not be commanded. Let me hope it,

[*Exit* ANTONIO.

Though my breast feels too anxious; I will try
Whether the air will calm my spirits: 't is
A goodly night; the cloudy wind which blew
From the Levant hath crept into its cave,
And the broad moon has brighten'd. What a stillness!

[*Goes to an open lattice.*

And what a contrast with the scene I left,
Where the tall torches' glare, and silver lamps'
More pallid gleam along the tapestried walls,
Spread over the reluctant gloom which haunts
Those vast and dimly-latticed galleries
A dazzling mass of artificial light,
Which show'd all things, but nothing as they were.
There Age essaying to recal the past,
After long striving for the hues of youth
At the sad labour of the toilet, and
Full many a glance at the too faithful mirror,
Prankt forth in all the pride of ornament,
Forgot itself, and trusting to the falsehood
Of the indulgent beams, which show, yet hide,
Believed itself forgotten, and was fool'd.
There Youth, which needed not, nor thought of such
Vain adjuncts, lavish'd its true bloom, and health,
And bridal beauty, in the unwholesome press
Of flush'd and crowded wassailers, and wasted
Its hours of rest in dreaming this was pleasure,
And so shall waste them till the sunrise streams
On sallow cheeks and sunken eyes, which should not
Have worn this aspect yet for many a year.
The music, and the banquet, and the wine—

The garlands, the rose odours, and the flowers—
The sparkling eyes and flashing ornaments—
The white arms and the raven hair—the braids
And bracelets; swanlike bosoms, and the necklace,
An India in itself, yet dazzling not
The eye like what it circled; the thin robes
Floating like light clouds 'twixt our gaze and heaven;
The many-twinkling feet so small and sylphlike,
Suggesting the more secret symmetry
Of the fair forms which terminate so well—
All the delusion of the dizzy scene,
Its false and true enchantments—art and nature,
Which swam before my giddy eyes, that drank
The sight of beauty as the parch'd pilgrim's
On Arab sands the false mirage, which offers
A lucid lake to his eluded thirst,
Are gone.—Around me are the stars and waters—
Worlds mirror'd in the ocean, goodlier sight
Than torches glared back by a gaudy glass;
And the great element, which is to space
What ocean is to earth, spreads its blue depths,
Soften'd with the first breathings of the spring;
The high moon sails upon her beauteous way,
Serenely smoothing o'er the lofty walls
Of those tall piles and sea-girt palaces,
Whose porphyry pillars, and whose costly fronts,
Fraught with the orient spoil of many marbles,
Like altars ranged along the broad canal,
Seem each a trophy of some mighty deed
Rear'd up from out the waters, scarce less strangely
Than those more massy and mysterious giants
Of architecture, those Titanian fabrics,
Which point in Egypt's plains to times that have
No other record. All is gentle: nought
Stirs rudely; but, congenial with the night,
Whatever walks is gliding like a spirit.
The tinklings of some vigilant guitars
Of sleepless lovers to a wakeful mistress,
And cautious opening of the casement, showing
That he is not unheard; while her young hand,
Fair as the moonlight of which it seems part,
So delicately white, it trembles in
The act of opening the forbidden lattice,
To let in love through music, makes his heart
Thrill like his lyre-strings at the sight;—the dash
Phosphoric of the oar, or rapid twinkle
Of the far lights of skimming gondolas,
And the responsive voices of the choir
Of boatmen answering back with verse for verse;
Some dusky shadow chequering the Rialto;
Some glimmering palace roof, or tapering spire,
Are all the sights and sounds which here pervade
The ocean-born and earth-commanding city;
How sweet and soothing is this hour of calm!
I thank thee, night! for thou hast chased away
Those horrid bodements which, amidst the throng,
I could not dissipate: and with the blessing
Of thy benign and quiet influence,
Now will I to my couch, although to rest
Is almost wronging such a night as this——

[*A knocking is heard from without.*

Hark! what is that? or who at such a moment?

Enter ANTONIO.

ANTONIO.

My lord, a man without, on urgent business,
Implores to be admitted.

LIONI.

Is he a stranger?

ANTONIO.

His face is muffled in his cloak, but both
His voice and gestures seem familiar to me;
I craved his name, but this he seem'd reluctant
To trust, save to yourself; most earnestly
He sues to be permitted to approach you.

LIONI.

'T is a strange hour, and a suspicious bearing!
And yet there is slight peril: 't is not in
Their houses noble men are struck at; still,
Although I know not that I have a foe
In Venice, 't will be wise to use some caution.
Admit him, and retire; but call up quickly
Some of thy fellows, who may wait without.—
Who can this man be?

Exit ANTONIO, *and returns with* BERTRAM *muffled.*

BERTRAM.

My good lord Lioni,
I have no time to lose, nor thou—dismiss
This menial hence; I would be private with you.

LIONI.

It seems the voice of Bertram—go, Antonio.

Exit ANTONIO.

Now, stranger, what would you at such an hour?

BERTRAM (*discovering himself*).

A boon, my noble patron; you have granted
Many to your poor client, Bertram; add
This one, and make him happy.

LIONI.

Thou hast known me
From boyhood, ever ready to assist thee
In all fair objects of advancement, which
Beseem one of thy station; I would promise
Ere thy request was heard, but that the hour,
Thy bearing, and this strange and hurried mode
Of suing, gives me to suspect this visit
Hath some mysterious import—but say on—
What has occurred, some rash and sudden broil?—
A cup too much, a scuffle, and a stab?—
Mere things of every day; so that thou hast not
Spilt noble blood, I guarantee thy safety;
But then thou must withdraw, for angry friends
And relatives, in the first burst of vengeance,
Are things in Venice deadlier than the laws.

BERTRAM.

My lord, I thank you; but——

LIONI.

But what? You have not
Raised a rash hand against one of our order?
If so, withdraw and fly, and own it not;
I would not slay—but then I must not save thee!
He who has shed patrician blood——

BERTRAM.

I come
To save patrician blood, and not to shed it!
And thereunto I must be speedy, for
Each minute lost may lose a life: since Time
Has changed his slow scythe for the two-edged sword,
And is about to take, instead of sand,
The dust from sepulchres to fill his hour-glass!—
Go not *thou* forth to-morrow!

LIONI.

Wherefore not?—
What means this menace?

BERTRAM.

Do not seek its meaning,
But do as I implore thee;—stir not forth,
Whate'er be stirring; though the roar of crowds—
The cry of women, and the shrieks of babes—
The groans of men—the clash of arms—the sound
Of rolling drum, shrill trump, and hollow bell,
Peal in one wide alarum!—Go not forth
Until the tocsin 's silent, nor even then
Till I return!

LIONI.

Again, what does this mean?

BERTRAM.

Again, I tell thee, ask not; but by all
Thou holdest dear on earth or heaven—by all
The souls of thy great fathers, and thy hope
To emulate them, and to leave behind
Descendants worthy both of them and thee—
By all thou hast of blest in hope or memory—
By all thou hast to fear here or hereafter—
By all the good deeds thou hast done to me,
Good I would now repay with greater good,
Remain within—trust to thy household gods
And to my word for safety, if thou dost
As I now counsel—but if not, thou art lost!

LIONI.

I am indeed already lost in wonder:
Surely thou ravest! what have *I* to dread?
Who are my foes? or if there be such, *why*
Art *thou* leagued with them?—*thou!* or if so leagued,
Why comest thou to tell me at this hour,
And not before?

BERTRAM.

I cannot answer this.
Wilt thou go forth despite of this true warning?

LIONI.

I was not born to shrink from idle threats,
The cause of which I know not: at the hour
Of council, be it soon or late, I shall not
Be found among the absent.

BERTRAM.

Say not so!
Once more, art thou determined to go forth?

LIONI.

I am; nor is there aught which shall impede me!

BERTRAM.

Then Heaven have mercy on thy soul!—Farewell!

[*Going.*

LIONI.

Stay—there is more in this than my own safety
Which makes me call thee back; we must not part thus:
Bertram, I have known thee long.

BERTRAM.

From childhood, signor,
You have been my protector: in the days
Of reckless infancy when rank forgets,
Or, rather, is not yet taught to remember
Its cold prerogative, we play'd together;
Our sports, our smiles, our tears, were mingled oft;
My father was your father's client, I
His son's scarce less than foster-brother; years
Saw us together—happy, heart-full hours!—
Oh God! the difference 'twixt those hours and this!

LIONI.

Bertram, 't is thou who hast forgotten them.

BERTRAM.

Nor now, nor ever; whatsoe'er betide,
I would have saved you: when to manhood's growth
We sprung, and you, devoted to the state,
As suits your station, the more humble Bertram
Was left unto the labours of the humble,
Still you forsook me not: and if my fortunes
Have not been towering, 't was no fault of him
Who oft-times rescued and supported me
When struggling with the tides of circumstance
Which bear away the weaker: noble blood
Ne'er mantled in a nobler heart than thine
Has proved to me, the poor plebeian Bertram.
Would that thy fellow senators were like thee!

LIONI,

Why, what hast thou to say against the senate?

BERTRAM.

Nothing.

LIONI.

I know that there are angry spirits
And turbulent mutterers of stifled treason,
Who lurk in narrow places, and walk out
Muffled to whisper curses to the night;
Disbanded soldiers, discontented ruffians,
And desperate libertines who brawl in taverns.
Thou herdest not with such: 't is true, of late
I have lost sight of thee, but thou wert wont
To lead a temperate life, and break thy bread
With honest mates, and bear a cheerful aspect.
What hath come to thee? in thy hollow eye
And hueless cheek, and thine unquiet motions,
Sorrow and shame and conscience seem at war
To waste thee.

BERTRAM.

Rather shame and sorrow light
On the accursed tyranny which rides
The very air in Venice, and makes men
Madden as in the last hours of the plague
Which sweeps the soul deliriously from life!

LIONI.

Some villains have been tampering with thee, Bertram;
This is not thy old language, nor own thoughts;
Some wretch has made thee drunk with disaffection;
But thou must not be lost so; thou *wert* good
And kind, and art not fit for such base acts
As vice and villany would put thee to:
Confess—confide in me—thou know'st my nature—
What is it thou and thine are bound to do,
Which should prevent thy friend, the only son
Of him who was a friend unto thy father,
So that our good-will is a heritage
We should bequeath to our posterity
Such as ourselves received it, or augmented;
I say, what is it thou must do, that I
Should deems thee dangerous, and keep the house
Like a sick girl?

BERTRAM.

Nay, question me no further:
I must be gone.——

LIONI.

And I be murder'd!—say,
Was it not thus thou said'st, my gentle Bertram?

BERTRAM.

Who talks of murder? what said I of murder?—
'T is false! I did not utter such a word.

LIONI.

Thou didst not; but from out thy wolfish eye,
So changed from what I knew it, there glares forth
The gladiator. If *my* life 's thine object,
Take it—I am unarm'd,—and then away!
I would not hold my breath on such a tenure
As the capricious mercy of such things
As thou and those who have set thee to thy task-work.

BERTRAM.

Sooner than spill thy blood, I peril mine;
Sooner than harm a hair of thine, I place
In jeopardy a thousand heads, and some
As noble, nay, even nobler than thine own.

LIONI.

Ay, is it even so? Excuse me, Bertram;
I am not worthy to be singled out
From such exalted hecatombs—who are they
That *are* in danger, and that *make* the danger?

BERTRAM.

Venice, and all that she inherits, are
Divided like a house against itself,
And so will perish ere to-morrow's twilight!

LIONI.

More mysteries, and awful ones! But now,
Or thou, or I, or both, it may be, are
Upon the verge of ruin; speak once out,
And thou art safe and glorious; for 't is more
Glorious to save than slay, and slay i' the dark too—
Fie, Bertram! that was not a craft for thee!
How would it look to see upon a spear
The head of him whose heart was open to thee,
Borne by thy hand before the shuddering people?
And such may be my doom; for here I swear,
Whate'er the peril or the penalty
Of thy denunciation, I go forth,
Unless thou dost detail the cause, and show
The consequence of all which led thee here!

BERTRAM.

Is there no way to save thee? minutes fly,
And thou art lost!—*thou!* my sole benefactor,
The only being who was constant to me
Through every change. Yet, make me not a traitor!
Let me save thee—but spare my honour!

LIONI.

Where
Can lie the honour in a league of murder?
And who are traitors save unto the state?

BERTRAM.

A league is still a compact, and more binding
In honest hearts when words must stand for law;
And in my mind, there is no traitor like
He whose domestic treason plants the poniard
Within the breast which trusted to his truth.

LIONI.

And *who* will strike the steel to mine?

BERTRAM.

Not I;
I could have wound my soul up to all things
Save this. *Thou* must not die! and think how dear
Thy life is, when I risk so many lives,
Nay, more, the life of lives, the liberty
Of future generations, *not* to be
The assassin thou miscall'st me;—once, once more
I do adjure thee, pass not o'er thy threshold!

LIONI.

It is in vain—this moment I go forth.

BERTRAM.

Then perish Venice rather than my friend!
I will disclose—ensnare—betray—destroy—
Oh, what a villain I become for thee!

LIONI.

Say, rather thy friend's saviour and the state's!—
Speak—pause not—all rewards, all pledges for
Thy safety and thy welfare; wealth such as
The state accords her worthiest servants; nay,
Nobility itself I guarantee thee,
So that thou art sincere and penitent.

BERTRAM.

I have thought again: it must not be—I love thee—
Thou knowest it—that I stand here is the proof,
Not least though last; but having done my duty
By thee, I now must do it by my country!
Farewell!—we meet no more in life!—farewell!

LIONI.

What, ho! Antonio—Pedro—to the door!
See that none pass—arrest this man!——
Enter ANTONIO *and other armed Domestics, who seize*

BERTRAM.

LIONI (*continues*).

Take care
He hath no harm; bring me my sword and cloak,
And man the gondola with four oars—quick—
Exit ANTONIO.

We will unto Giovanni Gradenigo's.
And send for Marc Cornaro:—Fear not, Bertram;
This needful violence is for thy safety,
No less than for the general weal.

BERTRAM.

Where wouldst thou
Bear me a prisoner?

LIONI.

Firstly, to "The Ten;"
Next to the Doge.

BERTRAM.

To the Doge?

LIONI.

Assuredly;
Is he not chief of the state?

BERTRAM.

Perhaps at sunrise—

LIONI.

What mean you?—but we 'll know anon.

BERTRAM.

Art sure?

LIONI.

Sure as all gentle means can make; and if
They fail, you know "The Ten" and their tribunal,
And that Saint Mark's has dungeons, and the dungeons
A rack.

BERTRAM.

Apply to it before the dawn
Now hastening into heaven.—One more such word,
And you shall perish piecemeal, by the death
Ye think to doom to me.

Re-enter ANTONIO.

ANTONIO.

The bark is ready,
My lord, and all prepared.

LIONI.

Look to the prisoner.
Bertram, I'll reason with thee as we go
To the Magnifico's, sage Gradenigo. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Ducal Palace—the Doge's Apartment.
The DOGE *and his nephew* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

DOGE.

Are all the people of our house in muster?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

They are array'd, and eager for the signal,
Within our palace precincts at San Polo.
I come for your last orders.

DOGE.

It had been
As well had there been time to have got together
From my own fief, Val di Marino, more
Of our retainers—but it is too late.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Methinks, my lord, 't is better as it is;
A sudden swelling of our retinue
Had waked suspicion; and, though fierce and trusty,
The vassals of that district are too rude
And quick in quarrel to have long maintain'd
The secret discipline we need for such
A service, till our foes are dealt upon.

DOGE.

True; but when once the signal has been given,
These are the men for such an enterprise:
These city slaves have all their private bias,
Their prejudice *against* or *for* this noble,
Which may induce them to o'erdo or spare
Where mercy may be madness; the fierce peasants,
Serfs of my county of Val di Marino,
Would do the bidding of their lord without
Distinguishing for love or hate his foes;
Alike to them Marcello or Cornaro,
A Gradenigo or a Foscari;
They are not used to start at those vain names,
Nor bow the knee before a civic senate:
A chief in armour is their Suzerain,
And not a thing in robes.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO

We are enough;
And for the dispositions of our clients
Against the senate I will answer.

DOGE.

Well,
The die is thrown; but for a warlike service,
Done in the field, commend me to my peasants;
They made the sun shine through the host of Huns
When sallow burghers slunk back to their tents,
And cower'd to hear their own victorious trumpet.
If there be small resistance, you will find
These citizens all lions, like their standard;
But if there 's much to do, you 'll wish with me
A band of iron rustics at our backs.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Thus thinking, I must marvel you resolved
To strike the blow so suddenly.

DOGE.

Such blows
Must be struck suddenly or never. When
I had o'ermaster'd the weak false remorse
Which yearn'd about my heart, too fondly yielding
A moment to the feelings of old days,
I was most fain to strike; and, firstly, that
I might not yield again to such emotions;
And, secondly, because of all these men,
Save Israel and Philip Calendaro,
I know not well the courage or the faith:
To-day might find 'mongst them a traitor to us,
As yesterday a thousand to the senate;
But once in, with their hilts hot in their hands,
They must *on* for their own sakes; one stroke struck,
And the mere instinct of the first-born Cain,
Which ever lurks somewhere in human hearts,
Though circumstance may keep it in abeyance,
Will urge the rest on like to wolves; the sight
Of blood to crowds begets the thirst of more,
As the first wine-cup leads to the long revel;
And you will find a harder task to quell
Than urge them when they *have* commenced; but *till*
That moment, a mere voice, a straw, a shadow,
Are capable of turning them aside.—
How goes the night?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Almost upon the dawn.

DOGE.

Then it is time to strike upon the bell.
Are the men posted?

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

By this time they are;
But they have orders not to strike, until
They have command from you through me in person.

DOGE.

'T is well.—Will the morn never put to rest
These stars which twinkle yet o'er all the heavens?
I am settled and bound up, and being so,
The very effort which it cost me to
Resolve to cleanse this commonwealth with fire,
Now leaves my mind more steady. I have wept,
And trembled at the thought of this dread duty;
But now I have put down all idle passion,
And look the growing tempest in the face,
As doth the pilot of an admiral galley:
Yet (wouldst thou think it, kinsman?) it hath been
A greater struggle to me, than when nations
Beheld their fate merged in the approaching fight,
Where I was leader of a phalanx, where
Thousands were sure to perish—Yes, to spill
The rank polluted current from the veins
Of a few bloated despots needed more
To steel me to a purpose such as made
Timoleon immortal, than to face
The toils and dangers of a life of war.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

It gladdens me to see your former wisdom
Subdue the furies which so wrung you ere
You were decided.

DOGE.

It was ever thus
With me; the hour of agitation came
In the first glimmerings of a purpose, when
Passion had too much room to sway; but in
The hour of action I have stood as calm
As were the dead who lay around me: this
They knew who made me what I am, and trusted
To the subduing power which I preserved
Over my mood, when its first burst was spent.
But they were not aware that there are things
Which make revenge a virtue by reflection,
And not an impulse of mere anger: though
The laws sleep, justice wakes, and injured souls
Oft do a public right with private wrong,

And justify their deeds unto themselves.—
Methinks the day breaks—is it not so? look,
Thine eyes are clear with youth;—the air puts on
A morning freshness, and, at least to me,
The sea looks grayer through the lattice.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

True,
The morn is dappling in the sky.

DOGE.

Away, then!
See that they strike without delay, and with
The first toll from St Mark's, march on the palace
With all our house's strength; here I will meet you—
The Sixteen and their companies will move
In separate columns at the self-same moment—
Be sure you post yourself by the great gate,
I would not trust «The Ten» except to us—
The rest, the rabble of patricians, may
Glut the more careless swords of those leagued with us.
Remember that the cry is still «Saint Mark!
The Genoese are come—ho! to the rescue!
Saint Mark and liberty!»—Now—now to action!

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Farewell then, noble uncle! we will meet
In freedom and true sovereignty, or never!

DOGE.

Come hither, my Bertuccio—one embrace—
Speed, for the day grows broader—Send me soon
A messenger to tell me how all goes
When you rejoin our troops, and then sound—sound
The storm-bell from Saint Mark's!

[*Exit* BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

DOGE (*solus*).

He is gone,
And on each footstep moves a life.—'T is done.
Now the destroying angel hovers o'er
Venice, and pauses ere he pours the vial,
Even as the eagle overlooks his prey,
And for a moment poised in middle air,
Suspends the motion of his mighty wings,
Then swoops with his unerring beak.—Thou day!
That slowly walk'st the waters! march—march on—
I would not smite i' the dark, but rather see
That no stroke errs. And you, ye blue sea-waves!
I have seen you dyed ere now, and deeply too,
With Genoese, Saracen, and Hunnish gore,
While that of Venice flow'd too, but victorious:
Now thou must wear an unmix'd crimson; no
Barbaric blood can reconcile us now
Unto that horrible incarnadine,
But friend or foe will roll in civic slaughter.
And have I lived to fourscore years for this?
I, who was named preserver of the city?
I, at whose name the million's caps were flung
Into the air, and cries from tens of thousands
Rose up, imploring Heaven to send me blessings,
And fame and length of days—to see this day?
But this day black within the calendar,
Shall be succeeded by a bright millennium.
Doge Dandolo survived to ninety summers
To vanquish empires and refuse their crown;
I will resign a crown, and make the state
Renew its freedom—but oh! by what means?
The noble end must justify them—What
Are a few drops of human blood? 't is false,
The blood of tyrants is not human; they,
Like to incarnate Molochs, feed on ours,
Until 't is time to give them to the tombs
Which they have made so populous.—Oh world!
Oh men! what are ye, and our best designs,
That we must work by crime to punish crime?
And slay as if Death had but this one gate,
When a few years would make the sword superfluous?
And I, upon the verge of th' unknown realm,
Yet send so many heralds on before me?—
I must not ponder this.

[*A pause.*

Hark! was there not
A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?
What phantoms even of sound our wishes raise!
It cannot be—the signal hath not rung—
Why pauses it? My nephew's messenger
Should be upon his way to me, and he
Himself perhaps even now draws grating back
Upon its ponderous hinge the steep tower portal,
Where swings the sullen huge oracular bell,
Which never knells but for a princely death,
Or for a state in peril, pealing forth
Tremendous bodements; let it do its office,
And be this peal its awfullest and last.
Sound till the strong tower rock!—What, silent still?
I would go forth, but that my post is here,
To be the centre of re-union to
The oft discordant elements which form
Leagues of this nature, and to keep compact
The wavering or the weak, in case of conflict:
For if they should do battle, 't will be here,
Within the palace, that the strife will thicken;
Then here must be my station as becomes
The master mover.—Hark! he comes—he comes,
My nephew, brave Bertuccio's messenger.—
What tidings? Is he marching? Hath he sped?—
They here!—all 's lost—yet will I make an effort.

Enter a SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT,[5] *with Guards, etc.*

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Doge, I arrest thee of high treason!

DOGE.

Me!
Thy prince, of treason?—Who are they that dare
Cloak their own treason under such an order?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT (*showing his order*).

Behold my order from the assembled Ten.

DOGE.

And *where* are they, and *why* assembled? no
Such council can be lawful, till the prince
Preside there, and that duty's mine: on thine
I charge thee, give me way, or marshal me
To the council chamber.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Duke, it may not be;
Nor are they in the wonted Hall of Council,
But sitting in the convent of Saint Saviour's.

DOGE.

You dare to disobey me then?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

I serve
The state, and needs must serve it faithfully.
My warrant is the will of those who rule it.

DOGE.

And till that warrant has my signature
It is illegal, and as *now* applied,

Rebellious—Hast thou weigh'd well thy life's worth,
That thus you dare assume a lawless function?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

'T is not my office to reply, but act—
I am placed here as guard upon thy person,
And not as judge to hear or to decide.

DOGE (*aside*).

I must gain time—So that the storm-bell sound,
All may be well yet.—Kinsman, speed—speed—speed!
Our fate is trembling in the balance, and
Woe to the vanquish'd! be they prince and people,
Or slaves and senate—

[*The great bell of St Mark's tolls.*

Lo! it sounds—it tolls!

DOGE (*aloud*).

Hark, Signor of the night! and you, ye hirelings,
Who wield your mercenary staves in fear,
It is your knell—Swell on, thou lusty peal!
Now, knaves, what ransom for your lives?

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Confusion!
Stand to your arms, and guard the door—all 's lost
Unless that fearful bell be silenced soon.
The officer hath miss'd his path or purpose,
Or met some unforeseen and hideous obstacle.
Anselmo, with thy company proceed
Straight to the tower; the rest remain with me.

[*Exit a part of the Guard.*

DOGE.

Wretch! if thou wouldst have thy vile life, implore it;
It is not now a lease of sixty seconds.
Ay, send thy miserable ruffians forth;
They never shall return.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

So let it be!
They die then in their duty, as will I.

DOGE.

Fool! the high eagle flies at nobler game
Than thou and thy base myrmidons,—live on;
So thou provok'st not peril by resistance,
And learn (if souls so much obscured can bear
To gaze upon the sunbeams) to be free.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

And learn thou to be captive—It hath ceased,

[*The bell ceases to toll.*

The traitorous signal, which was to have set
The bloodhound mob on their patrician prey—
The knell hath rung, but it is not the senate's!

DOGE (*after a pause*).

All 's silent, and all 's lost!

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

Now, Doge, denounce me
As rebel slave of a revolted council!
Have I not done my duty?

DOGE.

Peace, thou thing!
Thou hast done a worthy deed, and earn'd the price
Of blood, and they who use thee will reward thee.
But thou wert sent to watch, and not to prate,
As thou said'st even now—then do thine office,
But let it be in silence, as behoves thee,
Since, though thy prisoner, I am thy prince.

SIGNOR OF THE NIGHT.

I did not mean to fail in the respect
Due to your rank: in this I shall obey you.

DOGE (*aside*).

There now is nothing left me save to die;
And yet how near success! I would have fallen,
And proudly, in the hour of triumph, but
To miss it thus!

Enter other SIGNORS OF THE NIGHT *with* BERTUCCIO FALIERO *prisoner.*

SECOND SIGNOR.

We took him in the act
Of issuing from the tower, where, at his order,
As delegated from the Doge, the signal
Had thus begun to sound.

FIRST SIGNOR.

Are all the passes
Which lead up to the palace well secured?

SECOND SIGNOR.

They are—besides, it matters not; the chiefs
Are all in chains, and some even now on trial—
Their followers are dispersed, and many taken.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Uncle!

DOGE.

It is in vain to war with Fortune;
The glory hath departed from our house.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Who would have deem'd it?—Ah! one moment sooner!

DOGE.

That moment would have changed the face of ages;
This gives us to eternity—We 'll meet it
As men whose triumph is not in success,
But who can make their own minds all in all,
Equal to every fortune. Droop not, 'tis
But a brief passage—I would go alone,
Yet if they send us, as 't is like, together,
Let us go worthy of our sires and selves.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I shall not shame you, uncle.

FIRST SIGNOR.

Lords, our orders
Are to keep guard on both in separate chambers,
Until the council call ye to your trial.

DOGE.

Our trial! will they keep their mockery up
Even to the last? but let them deal upon us
As we had dealt on them, but with less pomp.
'T is but a game of mutual homicides,
Who have cast lots for the first death, and they
Have won with false dice.—Who hath been our Judas?

FIRST SIGNOR.

I am not warranted to answer that.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

I'll answer for thee—'t is a certain Bertram,
Even now deposing to the secret giunta.

DOGE.

Bertram, the Bergamask! With what vile tools
We operate to slay or save! This creature,
Black with a double treason, now will earn
Rewards and honours, and be stampt in story
With the geese in the Capitol, which gabbled
Till Rome awoke, and had an annual triumph,
While Manlius, who hurl'd down the Gauls, was cast
From the Tarpeian.

FIRST SIGNOR.

He aspired to treason,
And sought to rule the state.

DOGE.

He saved the state,
And sought but to reform what he revived—
But this is idle—Come, sirs, do your work.

FIRST SIGNOR.

Noble Bertuccio, we must now remove you
Into an inner chamber.

BERTUCCIO FALIERO.

Farewell, uncle!
If we shall meet again in life I know not,
But they perhaps will let our ashes mingle.

DOGE.

Yes, and our spirits, which shall yet go forth,
And do what our frail clay, thus clogg'd, hath fail'd in!
They cannot quench the memory of those
Who would have hurl'd them from their guilty thrones,
And such examples will find heirs, though distant.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Hall of the Council of Ten assembled with the additional Senators, who on the Trials of the Conspirators for the Treason of MARINO FALIERO, *composed what was called the Giunta.—Guards, Officers, etc. etc.—*ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO *as Prisoners.—*BERTRAM, LIONI, *and Witnesses, etc.*

The Chief of the Ten, BENINTENDE.

BENINTENDE.

There now rests, after such conviction of
Their manifold and manifest offences,
But to pronounce on these obdurate men
The sentence of the law: a grievous task
To those who hear and those who speak. Alas!
That it should fall to me! and that my days
Of office should be stigmatised through all
The years of coming time, as bearing record
To this most foul and complicated treason
Against a just and free state, known to all
The earth as being the Christian bulwark 'gainst
The Saracen and the schismatic Greek,
The savage Hun, and not less barbarous Frank;
A city which has open'd India's wealth
To Europe; the last Roman refuge from
O'erwhelming Attila; the ocean's queen;
Proud Genoa's prouder rival! 'T is to sap
The throne of such a city, these lost men
Have risk'd and forfeited their worthless lives—
So let them die the death.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We are prepared;
Your racks have done that for us. Let us die.

BENINTENDE.

If ye have that to say which would obtain
Abatement of your punishment, the Giunta
Will hear you; if you have aught to confess,
Now is your time, perhaps it may avail ye.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

We stand to hear, and not to speak.

BENINTENDE.

Your crimes
Are fully proved by your accomplices,
And all which circumstance can add to aid them;
Yet we would hear from your own lips, complete
Avowal of your treason: on the verge
Of that dread gulf which none repass, the truth
Alone can profit you on earth or heaven—
Say, then, what was your motive?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Justice!

BENINTENDE.

What
Your object?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Freedom!

BENINTENDE.

You are brief, sir.

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

So my life grows: I
Was bred a soldier, not a senator.

BENINTENDE.

Perhaps you think by this blunt brevity
To brave your judges to postpone the sentence?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Do you be brief as I am, and believe me,
I shall prefer that mercy to your pardon.

BENINTENDE.

Is this your sole reply to the tribunal?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Go, ask your racks what they have wrung from us,
Or place us there again; we have still some blood left,
And some slight sense of pain in these wrench'd limbs:
But this ye dare not do; for if we die there—
And you have left us little life to spend
Upon your engines, gorged with pangs already—
Ye lose the public spectacle with which
You would appal your slaves to further slavery!
Groans are not words, nor agony assent,
Nor affirmation truth, if nature's sense
Should overcome the soul into a lie,
For a short respite—Must we bear or die?

BENINTENDE.

Say, who were your accomplices?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

The senate!

BENINTENDE.

What do you mean?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Ask of the suffering people,
Whom your patrician crimes have driven to crime.

BENINTENDE.

You know the Doge?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I served with him at Zara
In the field, when *you* were pleading here your way
To present office; we exposed our lives,
While you but hazarded the lives of others,
Alike by accusation or defence;
And, for the rest, all Venice knows her Doge,
Through his great actions, and the senate's insults!

BENINTENDE.

You have held conference with him?

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I am weary—
Even wearier of your questions than your tortures:
I pray you pass to judgment.

BENINTENDE.

It is coming.—
And you, too, Philip Calendaro, what

Have you to say why you should not be doom'd?

CALENDARO.

I never was a man of many words,
And now have few left worth the utterance.

BENINTENDE.

A further application of yon engine
May change your tone.

CALENDARO.

Most true, it *will* do so;
A former application did so; but
It will not change my words, or, if it did——

BENINTENDE.

What then?

CALENDARO.

Will my avowal on yon rack
Stand good in law?

BENINTENDE.

Assuredly.

CALENDARO.

Whoe'er
The culprit be whom I accuse of treason?

BENINTENDE.

Without doubt, he will be brought up to trial.

CALENDARO.

And on this testimony would he perish?

BENINTENDE.

So your confession be detail'd and full,
He will stand here in peril of his life.

CALENDARO.

Then look well to thy proud self, President!
For by the eternity which yawns before me,
I swear that *thou*, and only thou, shall be
The traitor I denounce upon that rack,
If I be stretch'd there for the second time.

ONE OF THE GIUNTA.

Lord President, 't were best to proceed to judgment;
There is no more to be drawn from these men.

BENINTENDE.

Unhappy men! prepare for instant death.
The nature of your crime—our law—and peril
The state now stands in, leave not an hour's respite—
Guards! lead them forth, and upon the balcony
Of the red columns, where, on festal Thursday,[6]
The Doge stands to behold the chase of bulls,
Let them be justified: and leave exposed
Their wavering relics, in the place of judgment,
To the full view of the assembled people!
And Heaven have mercy on their souls!

THE GIUNTA.

Amen!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Signors, farewell! we shall not all again
Meet in one place.

BENINTENDE.

And lest they should essay
To stir up the distracted multitude—
Guards! let their mouths be gagg'd,[7] even in the act
Of execution.—Lead them hence!

CALENDARO.

What! must we
Not even say farewell to some fond friend,
Nor leave a last word with our confessor?

BENINTENDE.

A priest is waiting in the ante-chamber;
But, for your friends, such interviews would be
Painful to them, and useless all to you.

CALENDARO.

I knew that we were gagg'd in life; at least,
All those who had not heart to risk their lives
Upon their open thoughts; but still I deem'd
That, in the last few moments, the same idle
Freedom of speech accorded to the dying,
Would not now be denied to us; but since——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

Even let them have their way, brave Calendaro!
What matter a few syllables? let 's die
Without the slightest show of favour from them;
So shall our blood more readily arise
To heaven against them, and more testify
To their atrocities, than could a volume
Spoken or written of our dying words!
They tremble at our voices—nay, they dread
Our very silence—let them live in fear!—
Leave them unto their thoughts, and let us now
Address our own above!—Lead on; we are ready.

CALENDARO.

Israel, hadst thou but hearken'd unto me,
It had not now been thus; and yon pale villain,
The coward Bertram, would——

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO,

Peace, Calendaro!
What brooks it now to ponder upon this?

BERTRAM.

Alas! I fain you died in peace with me:
I did not seek this task; 't was forced upon me:
Say, you forgive me, though I never can
Retrieve my own forgiveness—frown not thus!

ISRAEL BERTUCCIO.

I die and pardon thee!

CALENDARO (*spitting at him*),

I die and scorn thee!

[*Exeunt* ISRAEL BERTUCCIO *and* PHILIP CALENDARO, *Guards, etc.*

BENINTENDE.

Now that these criminals have been disposed of,
'T is time that we proceed to pass our sentence
Upon the greatest traitor upon record
In any annals, the Doge Faliero!
The proofs and process are complete; the time
And crime require a quick procedure: shall
He now be called in to receive the award!

THE GIUNTA.

Ay, ay.

BENINTENDE.

Avogadori, order that the Doge
Be brought before the council.

ONE OF THE GIUNTA.

And the rest,
When shall they be brought up?

BENINTENDE,

When all the chiefs
Have been disposed of. Some have fled to Chiozza;
But there are thousands in pursuit of them,
And such precaution ta'en on terra firma,
As well as in the islands, that we hope
None will escape to utter in strange lands
His libellous tale of treasons 'gainst the senate.

Enter the DOGE *as Prisoner, with Guards, etc. etc.*

BENINTENDE.

Doge—for such still you are, and by the law
Must be consider'd, till the hour shall come
When you must doff the ducal bonnet from

That head, which could not wear a crown more noble
Than empires can confer, in quiet honour,
But it must plot to overthrow your peers,
Who made you what you are, and quench in blood
A city's glory—we have laid already
Before you in your chamber at full length,
By the Avogadori, all the proofs
Which have appear'd against you; and more ample
Ne'er rear'd their sanguinary shadows to
Confront a traitor. What have you to say
In your defence?

DOGE.

What shall I say to ye,
Since my defence must be your condemnation?
You are at once offenders and accusers,
Judges and executioners!—Proceed
Upon your power.

BENINTENDE.

Your chief accomplices
Having confess'd, there is no hope for you.

DOGE.

And who be they?

BENINTENDE.

In number many; but
The first now stands before you in the court,
Bertram, of Bergamo,—would you question him?

DOGE (*looking at him contemptuously*).

No.

BENINTENDE.

And two others, Israel Bertuccio,
And Philip Calendaro, have admitted
Their fellowship in treason with the Doge!

DOGE.

And where are they?

BENINTENDE.

Gone to their place, and now
Answering to Heaven for what they did on earth.

DOGE.

Ah! the plebeian Brutus, is he gone?
And the quick Cassius of the arsenal?—
How did they meet their doom?

BENINTENDE.

Think of your own;
It is approaching. You decline to plead, then?

DOGE.

I cannot plead to my inferiors, nor
Can recognise your legal power to try me:
Show me the law!

BENINTENDE.

On great emergencies,
The law must be remodell'd or amended:
Our fathers had not fix'd the punishment
Of such a crime, as on the old Roman tables
The sentence against parricide was left
In pure forgetfulness; they could not render
That penal, which had neither name nor thought
In their great bosoms: who would have foreseen
That nature could be filed to such a crime
As sons 'gainst sires, and princes 'gainst their realms?
Your sin hath made us make a law which will
Become a precedent 'gainst such haught traitors,
As would with treason mount to tyranny;
Not even contented with a sceptre, till
They can convert it to a two-edged sword!
Was not the place of Doge sufficient for ye?
What 's nobler than the signory of Venice?

DOGE.

The signory of Venice! You betray'd me—
You—you, who sit there, traitors as ye are!
From my equality with you in birth,
And my superiority in action,
You drew me from my honourable toils
In distant lands—on flood—in field—in cities—
You singled me out like a victim to
Stand crown'd, but bound and helpless, at the altar
Where you alone could minister. I knew not—
I sought not—wish'd not—dream'd not the election,
Which reach'd me first at Rome, and I obey'd;
But found on my arrival, that besides
The jealous vigilance which always led you
To mock and mar your sovereign's best intents,
You had, even in the interregnum of
My journey to the capital, curtail'd
And mutilated the few privileges
Yet left the duke: all this I bore, and would
Have borne, until my very hearth was stain'd
By the pollution of your ribaldry,
And he, the ribald, whom I see amongst you—
Fit judge in such tribunal!——

BENINTENDE (*interrupting him*).

Michel Steno
Is here in virtue of his office, as
One of the Forty; «The Ten» having craved
A Giunta of patricians from the senate
To aid our judgment in a trial arduous
And novel as the present: he was set
Free from the penalty pronounced upon him,
Because the Doge, who should protect the law,
Seeking to abrogate all law, can claim
No punishment of others by the statutes
Which he himself denies and violates!

DOGE.

His PUNISHMENT! I rather see him *there*,
Where he now sits, to glut him with my death,
Than in the mockery of castigation,
Which your foul, outward, juggling show of justice
Decreed as sentence! Base as was his crime,
'T was purity compared with your protection.

BENINTENDE.

And can it be, that the great Doge of Venice,
With three parts of a century of years
And honours on his head, could thus allow
His fury, like an angry boy's, to master
All feeling, wisdom, faith, and fear, on such
A provocation as a young man's petulance?

DOGE.

A spark creates the flame; 't is the last drop
Which makes the cup run o'er, and mine was full
Already: you oppress'd the prince and people;
I would have freed both, and have fail'd in both:
The price of such success would have been glory,
Vengeance, and victory, and such a name
As would have made Venetian history
Rival to that of Greece and Syracuse
When they were freed, and flourish'd ages after,
And mine to Gelon and to Thrasybulus:
Failing, I know the penalty of failure
Is present infamy and death—the future
Will judge, when Venice is no more, or free;
Till then, the truth is in abeyance. Pause not;
I would have shown no mercy, and I seek none;
My life was staked upon a mighty hazard,

And being lost, take what I would have taken!
I would have stood alone amidst your tombs;
Now you may flock round mine, and trample on it,
As you have done upon my heart while living.

BENINTENDE.

You do confess then, and admit the justice
Of our tribunal?

DOGE.

I confess to have fail'd:
Fortune is female; from my youth her favours
Were not withheld; the fault was mine to hope
Her former smiles again at this late hour.

BENINTENDE,

You do not then in aught arraign our equity?

DOGE.

Noble Venetians! stir me not with questions.
I am resign'd to the worst; but in me still
Have something of the blood of brighter days,
And am not over-patient. Pray you, spare me
Further interrogation, which boots nothing,
Except to turn a trial to debate.
I shall but answer that which will offend you,
And please your enemies—a host already:
'T is true, these sullen walls should yield no echo;
But walls have ears—nay, more, they have tongues;
and if
There were no other way for truth to o'erleap them,
You who condemn me, you who fear and slay me,
Yet could not bear in silence to your graves
What you would hear from me of good or evil;
The secret were too mighty for your souls:
Then let it sleep in mine, unless you court
A danger which would double that you escape.
Such my defence would be, had I full scope
To make it famous; for true *words* are *things*,
And dying men's are things which long outlive,
And oftentimes avenge them; bury mine,
If ye would fain survive me: take this counsel,
And though too oft ye made me live in wrath,
Let me die calmly; you may grant me this;—
I deny nothing—defend nothing—nothing
I ask of you, but silence for myself,
And sentence from the court!

BENINTENDE.

This full admission
Spares us the harsh necessity of ordering
The torture to elicit the whole truth.

DOGE.

The torture! you have put me there already
Daily since I was Doge; but if you will
Add the corporeal rack, you may: these limbs
Will yield with age to crushing iron; but
There 's that within my heart shall strain your engines.

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

Noble Venetians! Duchess Faliero
Requests admission to the Giunta's presence.

BENINTENDE.

Say, conscript fathers, [8] shall she be admitted?

ONE OF THE GIUNTA.

She may have revelations of importance
Unto the state, to justify compliance
With her request.

BENINTENDE.

Is this the general will?

ALL.

It is.

DOGE.

Oh, admirable laws of Venice!
Which would admit the wife, in the full hope
That she might testify against the husband.
What glory to the chaste Venetian dames!
But such blasphemers 'gainst all honour, as
Sit here, do well to act in their vocation.
Now, villain Steno! if this woman fail,
I 'll pardon thee thy lie, and thy escape,
And my own violent death, and thy vile life.

The DUCHESS *enters.*

BENINTENDE.

Lady! this just tribunal has resolved,
Though the request be strange, to grant it, and,
Whatever be its purport, to accord
A patient hearing with the due respect
Which fits your ancestry, your rank, and virtues:
But you turn pale—ho! there, look to the lady!
Place a chair instantly.

ANGIOLINA.

A moment's faintness—
'T is past; I pray you pardon me, I sit not
In presence of my prince, and of my husband,
While he is on his feet.

BENINTENDE.

Your pleasure, lady?

ANGIOLINA.

Strange rumours, but most true, if all I hear
And see be sooth, have reach'd me, and I come
To know the worst; even at the worst; forgive
The abruptness of my entrance and my bearing.
Is it——I cannot speak—I cannot shape
The question—but you answer it ere spoken,
With eyes averted, and with gloomy brows—
Oh God! this is the silence of the grave!

BENINTENDE (*after a pause*).

Spare us, and spare thyself the repetition
Of our most awful, but inexorable
Duty to Heaven and man!

ANGIOLINA.

Yet speak; I cannot—
I cannot—no—even now believe these things.
Is *he* condemn'd?

BENINTENDE.

Alas!

ANGIOLINA.

And was he guilty?

BENINTENDE.

Lady! the natural distraction of
Thy thoughts at such a moment makes the question
Merit forgiveness; else a doubt like this
Against a just and paramount tribunal
Were deep offence. But question even the Doge,
And if he can deny the proofs, believe him
Guiltless as thy own bosom.

ANGIOLINA.

Is it so?
My lord—my sovereign—my poor father's friend—
The mighty in the field, the sage in council;
Unsay the words of this man!—Thou art silent!

BENINTENDE.

He hath already own'd to his own guilt,
Nor, as thou seest, doth he deny it now.

ANGIOLINA.

Ay, but he must not die! Spare his few years,
Which grief and shame will soon cut down to days!
One day of baffled crime must not efface
Near sixteen lustres crowded with brave acts.

BENINTENDE.

His doom must be fulfill'd without remission
Of time or penalty—'t is a decree.

ANGIOLINA.

He hath been guilty, but there may be mercy.

BENINTENDE.

Not in this case with justice.

ANGIOLINA.

Alas! signor,
He who is only just is cruel; who
Upon the earth would live, were all judged justly?

BENINTENDE.

His punishment is safety to the state.

ANGIOLINA.

He was a subject, and hath served the state;
He was your general, and hath saved the state;
He is your sovereign, and hath ruled the state.

ONE OF THE COUNCIL.

He is a traitor, and betray'd the state.

ANGIOLINA.

And, but for him, there now had been no state
To save or to destroy; and you who sit
There to pronounce the death of your deliverer,
Had now been groaning at a Moslem oar,
Or digging in the Hunnish mines in fetters!

ONE OF THE COUNCIL.

No, lady, there are others who would die
Rather than breathe in slavery!

ANGIOLINA.

If there are so
Within *these* walls, *thou* art not of the number:
The truly brave are generous to the fallen!—
Is there no hope?

BENINTENDE.

Lady, it cannot be.

ANGIOLINA (*turning to the* DOGE).

Then die, Faliero! since it must be so;
But with the spirit of my father's friend.
Thou hast been guilty of a great offence,
Half-cancell'd by the harshness of these men.
I would have sued to them—have pray'd to them—
Have begg'd as famish'd mendicants for bread—
Have wept as they will cry unto their God
For mercy, and be answer'd as they answer—
Had it been fitting for thy name or mine,
And if the cruelty in their cold eyes
Had not announced the heartless wrath within.
Then, as a prince, address thee to thy doom!

DOGE.

I have lived too long not to know how to die!
Thy suing to these men were but the bleating
Of the lamb to the butcher, or the cry
Of seamen to the surge: I would not take
A life eternal, granted at the hands
Of wretches, from whose monstrous villanies
I sought to free the groaning nations!

MICHEL STENO.

Doge,
A word with thee, and with this noble lady,
Whom I have grievously offended. Would
Sorrow, or shame, or penance on my part,
Could cancel the inexorable past!
But since that cannot be, as Christians let us
Say farewell, and in peace: with full contrition
I crave, not pardon, but compassion from you,
And give, however weak, my prayers for both.

ANGIOLINA.

Sage Benintende, now chief judge of Venice,
I speak to thee in answer to yon signor.
Inform the ribald Steno, that his words
Ne'er weigh'd in mind with Loredano's daughter
Further than to create a moment's pity
For such as he is; would that others had
Despised him as I pity! I prefer
My honour to a thousand lives, could such
Be multiplied in mine, but would not have
A single life of others lost for that
Which nothing human can impugn—the sense
Of virtue, looking not to what is called
A good name for reward, but to itself.
To me the scorner's words were as the wind
Unto the rock: but as there are—alas!
Spirits more sensitive, on which such things
Light as the whirlwind on the waters; souls
To whom dishonour's shadow is a substance
More terrible than death here and hereafter;
Men whose vice is to start at vice's scoffing,
And who, though proof against all blandishments
Of pleasure, and all pangs of pain, are feeble
When the proud name on which they pinnacled
Their hopes is breathed on, jealous as the eagle
Of her high aiery; let what we now
Behold, and feel, and suffer, be a lesson
To wretches how they tamper in their spleen
With beings of a higher order. Insects
Have made the lion mad ere now; a shaft
I' the heel o'erthrew the bravest of the brave;
A wife's dishonour was the bane of Troy;
A wife's dishonour unking'd Rome for ever;
An injured husband brought the Gauls to Clusium,
And thence to Rome, which perish'd for a time;
An obscene gesture cost Caligula
His life, while earth yet bore his cruelties;
A virgin's wrong made Spain a Moorish province;
And Steno's lie, couch'd in two worthless lines,
Hath decimated Venice, put in peril
A senate which hath stood eight hundred years,
Discrown'd a prince, cut off his crownless head,
And forged new fetters for a groaning people!
Let the poor wretch, like to the courtesan
Who fired Persepolis, be proud of this,
If it so please him—'t were a pride fit for him!
But let him not insult the last hours of
Him, who, whate'er he now is, *was* a hero,
By the intrusion of his very prayers;
Nothing of good can come from such a source,
Nor would we aught with him, nor now, nor ever:
We leave him to himself, that lowest depth
Of human baseness. Pardon is for men,
And not for reptiles—we have none for Steno,
And no resentment; things like him must sting,
And higher beings suffer; 't is the charter
Of life. The man who dies by the adder's fang
May have the crawler crush'd, but feels no anger:
'T was the worm's nature; and some men are worms
In soul, more than the living things of tombs.

DOGE (*to* BENINTENDE).
Signor, complete that which you deem your duty.

BENINTENDE.
Before we can proceed upon that duty,
We would request the princess to withdraw;
'T will move her too much to be witness to it.

ANGIOLINA.
I know it will, and yet I must endure it;
For 't is a part of mine—I will not quit,
Except by force, my husband's side.—Proceed!
Nay, fear not either shriek, or sigh, or tear!
Though my heart burst, it shall be silent.—Speak!
I have that within which shall o'ermaster all.

BENINTENDE.
Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice,
Count of Val di Marino, Senator,
And some time General of the Fleet and Army,
Noble Venetian, many times and oft
Entrusted by the state with high employments,
Even to the highest, listen to the sentence.
Convict by many witnesses and proofs,
And by thine own confession, of the guilt
Of treachery and treason, yet unheard of
Until this trial—the decree is death.
Thy goods are confiscate unto the state,
Thy name is razed from out her records, save
Upon a public day of thanksgiving
For this our most miraculous deliverance,
When thou art noted in our calendars
With earthquakes, pestilence, and foreign foes,
And the great enemy of man, as subject
Of grateful masses for Heaven's grace in snatching
Our lives and country from thy wickedness.
The place wherein as Doge thou shouldst be painted,
With thine illustrious predecessors, is
To be left vacant, with a death-black veil
Flung over these dim words engraved beneath,—
« This place is of Marino Faliero,
Decapitated for his crimes.»

DOGE.
What crimes!
Were it not better to record the facts,
So that the contemplator might approve,
Or at the least learn *whence* the crimes arose?
When the beholder knows a Doge conspired,
Let him be told the cause—it is your history.

BENINTENDE.
Time must reply to that; our sons will judge
Their fathers' judgment, which I now pronounce.
As Doge, clad in the ducal robes and cap,
Thou shalt be led hence to the Giant's Staircase,
Where thou and all our princes are invested;
And there, the ducal crown being first resumed
Upon the spot where it was first assumed,
Thy head shall be struck off; and Heaven have mercy
Upon thy soul!

DOGE.
Is this the Giunta's sentence?

BENINTENDE.
It is.

DOGE.
I can endure it.—And the time?

BENINTENDE.
Must be immediate.—Make thy peace with God;
Within an hour thou must be in his presence.

DOGE.
I am already; and my blood will rise
To Heaven before the souls of those who shed it.—
Are all my lands confiscated?

BENINTENDE.
They are;
And goods, and jewels, and all kind of treasure,
Except two thousand ducats—these dispose of.

DOGE.
That 's harsh—I would have fain reserved the lands
Near to Treviso, which I hold by investment
From Lawrence the Count-bishop of Ceneda,
In fief perpetual to myself and heirs,
To portion them (leaving my city spoil,
My palace and my treasures, to your forfeit)
Between my consort and my kinsmen.

BENINTENDE.
These
Lie under the state's ban, their chief, thy nephew,
In peril of his own life; but the council
Postpones his trial for the present. If
Thou will'st a state unto thy widow'd princess,
Fear not, for we will do her justice.

ANGIOLINA.
Signors,
I share not in your spoil! From henceforth, know
I am devoted unto God alone,
And take my refuge in the cloister.

DOGE.
Come!
The hour may be a hard one, but 't will end.
Have I aught else to undergo save death?

BENINTENDE.
You have nought to do except confess and die.
The priest is robed, the scimitar is bare,
And both await without.—But, above all,
Think not to speak unto the people; they
Are now by thousands swarming at the gates,
But these are closed: the Ten, the Avogadori,
The Giunta, and the chief men of the Forty,
Alone will be beholders of thy doom,
And they are ready to attend the Doge.

DOGE.
The Doge!

BENINTENDE.
Yes, Doge, thou hast lived and thou shalt die
A sovereign; till the moment which precedes
The separation of that head and trunk,
That ducal crown and head shall be united.
Thou hast forgot thy dignity in deigning
To plot with petty traitors; not so we,
Who in the very punishment acknowledge
The prince. Thy vile accomplices have died
The dog's death, and the wolf's; but thou shalt fall
As falls the lion by the hunters, girt
By those who feel a proud compassion for thee,
And mourn even the inevitable death
Provoked by thy wild wrath and regal fierceness.
Now we remit thee to thy preparation:
Let it be brief, and we ourselves will be
Thy guides unto the place where first we were
United to thee as thy subjects, and
Thy senate; and must now be parted from thee
As such for ever on the self-same spot.—
Guards! form the Doge's escort to his chamber.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Doge's Apartment.

The DOGE *as prisoner, and the* DUCHESS *attending him.*

DOGE.

Now that the priest is gone, 't were useless all
To linger out the miserable minutes;
But one pang more, the pang of parting from thee,
And I will leave the few last grains of sand,
Which yet remain of the accorded hour,
Still falling—I have done with Time.

ANGIOLINA.

Alas!
And I have been the cause, the unconscious cause;
And for this funeral marriage, this black union,
Which thou, compliant with my father's wish,
Didst promise at *his* death, thou hast sealed thine own.

DOGE.

Not so: there was that in my spirit ever
Which shaped out for itself some great reverse;
The marvel is, it came not until now—
And yet it was foretold me.

ANGIOLINA.

How foretold you?

DOGE.

Long years ago—so long, they are a doubt
In memory, and yet they live in annals:
When I was in my youth, and served the senate
And signory as podesta and captain
Of the town of Treviso, on a day
Of festival, the sluggish bishop who
Convey'd the Host aroused my rash young anger,
By strange delay, and arrogant reply
To my reproof; I raised my hand and smote him,
Until he reel'd beneath his holy burthen;
And, as he rose from earth again, he raised
His tremulous hands in pious wrath towards Heaven.
Thence pointing to the Host, which had fallen from him,
He turn'd to me, and said, «The hour will come
When he thou hast o'erthrown shall overthrow thee:
The glory shall depart from out thy house,
The wisdom shall be shaken from thy soul,
And in thy best maturity of mind,
A madness of the heart shall seize upon thee;
Passion shall tear thee when all passions cease
In other men, or mellow into virtues;
And majesty, which decks all other heads,
Shall crown to leave thee headless; honours shall
But prove to thee the heralds of destruction,
And hoary hairs of shame, and both of death,
But not such death as fits an aged man.»
Thus saying, he pass'd on.—That hour is come.

ANGIOLINA.

And with this warning couldst thou not have striven
To avert the fatal moment, and atone
By penitence for that which thou hadst done?

DOGE.

I own the words went to my heart, so much
That I remember'd them amid the maze
Of life, as if they form'd a spectral voice,
Which shook me in a supernatural dream;
And I repented; but 't was not for me
To pull in resolution: what must be
I could not change, and would not fear. Nay, more,
Thou canst not have forgot what all remember,
That on my day of landing here as Doge,
On my return from Rome, a mist of such
Unwonted density went on before
The bucentaur, like the columnar cloud
Which usher'd Israel out of Egyt, till
The pilot was misled, and disembark'd us
Between the pillars of Saint Mark's, where 't is
The custom of the state to put to death
Its criminals, instead of touching at
The Riva della Paglia, as the wont is,—
So that all Venice shudder'd at the omen.

ANGIOLINA.

Ah! little boots it now to recollect
Such things.

DOGE.

And yet I find a comfort in
The thought that these things are the work of Fate;
For I would rather yield to gods than men,
Or cling to any creed of destiny,
Rather than deem these mortals, most of whom
I know to be as worthless as the dust,
And weak as worthless, more than instruments
Of an o'er-ruling power; they in themselves
Were all incapable—they could not be
Victors of him who oft had conquer'd for them!

ANGIOLINA.

Employ the minutes left in aspirations
Of a more healing nature, and in peace
Even with these wretches take thy flight to heaven.

DOGE.

I *am* at peace: the peace of certainty
That a sure hour will come, when their sons' sons
And this proud city, and these azure waters,
And all which makes them eminent and bright,
Shall be a desolation and a curse,
A hissing and a scoff unto the nations,
A Carthage, and a Tyre, an Ocean-Babel!

ANGIOLINA.

Speak not thus now; the surge of passion still
Sweeps o'er thee to the last; thou dost deceive
Thyself and canst not injure them—be calmer.

DOGE.

I stand within eternity, and see
Into eternity, and I behold—
Ay, palpable as I see thy sweet face
For the last time—the days which I denounce
Unto all time against these wave-girt walls,
And they who are indwellers.

GUARD (*coming forward*).

Doge of Venice,
The Ten are in attendance on your highness.

DOGE.

Then farewell, Angiolina!—one embrace—
Forgive the old man who hath been to thee
A fond but fatal husband—love my memory—
I would not ask so much for me still living,
But thou canst judge of me more kindly now,
Seeing my evil feelings are at rest.
Besides, of all the fruit of these long years,
Glory, and wealth, and power, and fame, and name,
Which generally leave some flowers to bloom
Even o'er the grave, I have nothing left, not even
A little love, or friendship, or esteem,
No, not enough to extract an epitaph
From ostentatious kinsmen; in one hour
I have uprooted all my former life,
And outlived every thing, except thy heart,

The pure, the good, the gentle, which will oft
With unimpair'd but not a clamorous grief
Still keep——Thou turn'st so pale—Alas! she faints,
She hath no breath, no pulse! Guards! lend your aid—
I cannot leave her thus, and yet 'tis better,
Since every lifeless moment spares a pang.
When she shakes off this temporary death,
I shall be with the Eternal.—Call her women—
One look!—how cold her hand! as cold as mine
Shall be ere she recovers.—Gently tend her,
And take my last thanks.——I am ready now.

[*The Attendants of* ANGIOLINA *enter and surround their mistress, who has fainted.—Exeunt the* DOGE, *Guards, etc. etc.*

SCENE III.

The Court of the Ducal Palace: the outer gates are shut against the people.—The DOGE *enters in his ducal robes, in procession with the Council of Ten and other Patricians, attended by the Guards, till they arrive at the top of the «Giant's Staircase» (where the Doges took the oaths); the Executioner is stationed there with his sword. On arriving, a Chief of the Ten takes off the ducal cap from the Doge's head.*

DOGE.

So, now the Doge is nothing, and at last
I am again Marino Faliero:
'T is well to be so, though but for a moment.
Here was I crown'd, and here, bear witness, Heaven!
With how much more contentment I resign
That shining mockery, the ducal bauble,
Than I received the fatal ornament.

ONE OF THE TEN.

Thou tremblest, Faliero!

DOGE.

'T is with age, then. [9]

BENINTENDE.

Faliero! hast thou aught further to commend,
Compatible with justice, to the senate?

DOGE.

I would commend my nephew to their mercy,
My consort to their justice; for methinks
My death, and such a death, might settle all
Between the state and me.

BENINTENDE.

They shall be cared for;
Even notwithstanding thine unheard-of crime.

DOGE.

Unheard-of! ay, there 's not a history
But shows a thousand crown'd conspirators
Against the people; but to set them free
One sovereign only died, and one is dying.

BENINTENDE.

And who are they who fell in such a cause?

DOGE.

The King of Sparta, and the Doge of Venice—
Agis and Faliero!

BENINTENDE.

Hast thou more
To utter or to do?

DOGE.

May I speak?

BENINTENDE.

Thou may'st;
But recollect the people are without,
Beyond the compass of the human voice.

DOGE.

I speak to Time and to Eternity,
Of which I grow a portion, not to man.
Ye elements! in which to be resolved
I hasten, let my voice be as a spirit
Upon you! Ye blue waves! which bore my banner,
Ye winds! which flutter'd o'er as if you loved it,
And fill'd my swelling sails as they were wafted
To many a triumph! Thou, my native earth,
Which I have bled for, and thou foreign earth,
Which drank this willing blood from many a wound!
Ye stones, in which my gore will not sink, but
Reek up to Heaven! Ye skies, which will receive it!
Thou sun! which shinest on these things, and Thou!
Who kindlest and who quenchest suns!—Attest
I am not innocent—but are these guiltless?
I perish, but not unavenged; far ages
Float up from the abyss of time to be,
And show these eyes, before they close, the doom
Of this proud city, and I leave my curse
On her and hers for ever!——Yes, the hours
Are silently engendering of the day,
When she who built 'gainst Attila a bulwark,
Shall yield, and bloodlessly and basely yield
Unto a bastard Attila, without
Shedding so much blood in her last defence
As these old veins, oft drain'd in shielding her,
Shall pour in sacrifice.—She shall be bought
And sold, and be an appanage to those
Who shall despise her!—She shall stoop to be
A province for an empire, petty town
In lieu of capital, with slaves for senates,
Beggars for nobles, panders for a people! [10]
Then, when the Hebrew 's in thy palaces, [11]
The Hun in thy high places, and the Greek
Walks o'er thy mart, and smiles on it for his!
When thy patricians beg their bitter bread
In narrow streets, and in their shameful need
Make their nobility a plea for pity!
Then, when the few who still retain a wreck
Of their great fathers' heritage shall fawn
Round a barbarian Vice of Kings Vice-gerent
Even in the palace where they sway'd as sovereigns,
Even in the palace where they slew their sovereign,
Proud of some name they have disgraced, or sprung
From an adulteress boastful of her guilt
With some large gondolier or foreign soldier,
Shall bear about their bastardy in triumph
To the third spurious generation;—when
Thy sons are in the lowest scale of being,
Slaves turn'd o'er to the vanquish'd by the victors,
Despised by cowards for greater cowardice,
And scorn'd even by the vicious for such vices
As in the monstrous grasp of their conception
Defy all codes to image or to name them;
Then, when of Cyprus, now thy subject kingdom,
All thine inheritance shall be her shame
Entail'd on thy less virtuous daughters, grown
A wider proverb for worse prostitution;—
When all the ills of conquer'd states shall cling thee,
Vice without splendour, sin without relief
Even from the gloss of love to smooth it o'er.
But in its stead coarse lusts of habitude,
Prurient yet passionless, cold studied lewdness,

Depraving nature's frailty to an art;—
When these and more are heavy on thee, when
Smiles without mirth, and pastimes without pleasure,
Youth without honour, age without respect,
Meanness and weakness, and a sense of woe
'Gainst which thou wilt not strive, and dar'st not murmur,
Have made thee last and worst of peopled deserts;
Then, in the last gasp of thine agony,
Amidst thy many murders, think of *mine!*
Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes![12]
Gehenna of the waters! thou sea Sodom!
Thus I devote thee to the infernal gods!
Thee and thy serpent seed!

Here the DOGE *turns, and addresses the Executioner.*

Slave, do thine office;
Strike as I struck the foe! Strike as I would
Have struck those tyrants! Strike deep as my curse!
Strike—and but once!

[*The* DOGE *throws himself upon his knees, and as the Executioner raises his sword the scene closes.*

SCENE IV.

The Piazza and Piazzetta of Saint Mark's.—The People in crowds gathered round the grated gates of the Ducal Palace, which are shut.

FIRST CITIZEN.

I have gain'd the gate, and can discern the Ten,
Robed in their gowns of state, ranged round the Doge.

SECOND CITIZEN.

I cannot reach thee with mine utmost effort.
How is it? let us hear at least, since sight
Is thus prohibited unto the people,
Except the occupiers of those bars.

FIRST CITIZEN.

One has approached the Doge, and now they strip
The ducal bonnet from his head—and now
He raises his keen eyes to heaven. I see
Them glitter, and his lips move—Hush! hush!—No,
'T was but a murmur—Curse upon the distance!
His words are inarticulate, but the voice
Swells up like mutter'd thunder; would we could
But gather a sole sentence!

SECOND CITIZEN.

Hush! we perhaps may catch the sound.

FIRST CITIZEN.

'T is vain.
I cannot hear him.—How his hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now—now—he kneels—and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden—but I see
The lifted sword in air——Ah! hark! it falls!

[*The people murmur.*

THIRD CITIZEN.

Then they have murder'd him who would have freed us.

FOURTH CITIZEN.

He was a kind man to the commons ever.

FIFTH CITIZEN.

Wisely they did to keep their portals barr'd.
Would we had known the work they were preparing
Ere we were summon'd here; we would have brought
Weapons, and forced them!

SIXTH CITIZEN.

Are you sure he 's dead?

FIRST CITIZEN.

I saw the sword fall—Lo! what have we here?

[*Enter on the Balcony of the Palace which fronts Saint Mark's Place a* CHIEF OF THE TEN,[13] *with a bloody sword. He waves it thrice before the People, and exclaims,*

« Justice hath dealt upon the mighty Traitor!»

[*The gates are opened; the populace rush in towards the «Giant's Staircase,» where the execution has taken place. The foremost of them exclaims to those behind,*

The gory head rolls down the « Giant's Steps!»

[*The curtain falls.*

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 248, line 59.

I smote, the tardy bishop at Treviso.

An historical fact. See Marin Sanuto's Lives of the Doges.

Note 2. Page 251, line 69.

A gondola with one oar only.

A gondola is not like a common boat, but is as easily rowed with one oar as with two (though of course not so swiftly), and often is so from motives of privacy, and (since the decay of Venice) of economy.

Note 3. Page 260, line 65.

They think themselves
Engaged in secret to the Signory.

An historical fact.

Note 4. Page 269, line 8.

Within our palace precincts at San Polo.

The Doge's private family palace.

Note 5. Page 270, line 105.

« Signor of the Night.»

« I Signori di Notte » held an important charge in the old Republic.

Note 6, Page 273, line 43.

Festal Thursday.

« Giovedì *Grasso*,» «*fat* or greasy Thursday,» which I cannot literally translate in the text, was the day.

Note 7. Page 273, line 57.

Guards! let their mouths be gagg'd, even in the act.

Historical fact. See Sanuto, in the Appendix to this tragedy.

Note 8. Page 275, line 59.

Say, conscript fathers, shall she be admitted?

The Venetian senate took the same title as the Roman, of « Conscript Fathers.»

Note 9. Page 279, line 36.

'T is with age, then.

This was the actual reply of Bailli, maire of Paris, to a Frenchman who made him the same reproach on his way to execution, in the earliest part of their revolution. I find in reading over (since the completion of this tragedy), for the first time these six years, « Venice Preserved,» a similar reply on a different occasion by Renault, and other coincidences arising from the subject. I need hardly remind the gentlest reader, that such coincidences must be accidental, from the very facility of their detection by reference to so popular a

play on the stage and in the closet as Otway's *chef-d'œuvre.*

Note 10. Page 279, line 35.

Beggars for nobles, panders for a people!

Should the dramatic picture seem harsh, let the reader look to the historical, of the period prophesied, or rather of the few years preceding that period. Voltaire calculated their «nostre benemerite Meretrici» at twelve thousand of regulars, without including volunteers and local militia, on what authority I know not; but it is perhaps the only part of the population not decreased. Venice once contained two hundred thousand inhabitants; there are now about ninety thousand, and THESE!! Few individuals can conceive, and none could describe the actual state into which the more than infernal tyranny of Austria has plunged this unhappy city.

Note 11. Page 279, line 36.

Then, when the Hebrew's in thy palaces.

The chief palaces on the Brenta now belong to the Jews; who in the earlier times of the Republic were only allowed to inhabit Mestri, and not to enter the city of Venice. The whole commerce is in the hands of the Jews and Greeks, and the Huns form the garrison.

Note 12. Page 280, line 10.

Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!

Of the first fifty Doges, *five* abdicated—*five* were banished with their eyes put out—*five* were MASSACRED—and *nine* deposed; so that *nineteen* out of fifty lost the throne by violence, besides two who fell in battle: this occurred long previous to the reign of Marino Faliero. One of his more immediate predecessors, Andrea Dandolo, died of vexation. Marino Faliero himself perished as related. Amongst his successors, *Foscari,* after seeing his son repeatedly tortured and banished, was deposed, and died of breaking a blood-vessel, on hearing the bell of Saint Mark's toll for the election of his successor. Morosini was impeached for the loss of Candia; but this was previous to his dukedom, during which he conquered the Morea, and was styled the Peloponnesian. Faliero might truly say,

Thou den of drunkards with the blood of princes!

Note 13. Page 280, line 70.

Chief of the Ten.

«Un Capo de' Dieci» are the words of Sanuto's Chronicle.

APPENDIX.

I.

MCCCLIV.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE XLIX.

«Fu eletto da quarantuno Elettori, il quale era Cavaliere e conte di Valdemarino in Trivigiana, ed era ricco, e si trovava Ambasciadore a Roma. E a dì 9, di Settembre, dopo sepolto il suo predecessore, fu chiamato il gran Consiglio, e fu preso di fare il Doge giusta il solito. E furono fatti i cinque Correttori, Ser Bernardo Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser Paolo Loredano, Ser Filippo Aurio, Ser Pietro Trivisano, e Ser Tommaso Viadro. I quali a dì 10, misero queste correzioni alla promessione del Doge: che i Consiglieri non odano gli Oratori e Nunzi de' Signori, senza i Capi de' quaranta, né possano rispondere ad alcuno, se non saranno quattro Consiglieri e due Capi de' Quaranta. E che osservino la forma del suo Capitolare. E che Messer lo Doge si metta nella miglior parte, quando i Giudici tra loro non fossero d'accordo. E ch' egli non possa far vendere i suoi imprestiti, salvo con legittima causa, e col voler di cinque Consiglieri, di due Capi de' Quaranta, e delle due parti del Consiglio de' Pregati. *Item,* che in luogo di tre mila pelli di Conigli, che debbon dare i Zaratini per regalia al Doge, non trovandosi tante pelli, gli diano Ducati ottanta l' anno. E poi a dì 11, detto, misero *etiam* altre correzioni, che se il Doge, che sarà eletto, fosse fuori di Venezia, i Savj possano provvedere del suo ritorno. E quando fosse il Doge ammalato, sia Vicedoge uno de' Consiglieri, da essere eletto tra loro. E che il detto sia nominato Viceluogotenente di Messer lo Doge, quando i Giudici faranno i suoi atti. E nota, perchè fu fatto Doge uno, ch'era assente, che fu Vicedoge Ser Marino Badoero più vecchio de' Consiglieri. *Item,* che'l governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri, e a' Capi de' Quaranta, quando vacherà il Ducato, finchè sarà eletto l' altro Doge. E così a dì 11 di Settembre fu creato il prefato Marino Faliero Doge. E fu preso, che il governo del Ducato sia commesso a' Consiglieri e a' Capi de' Quaranta. I quali stiano in Palazzo di continuo, fino che verrà il Doge. Sicchè di continuo stiano in Palazzo due Consiglieri e un Capo de' Quaranta. E subito furono spedite lettere al detto Doge, il quale era a Roma Oratore al Legato di Papa Innocenzo VI ch'era in Avignone. Fu preso nel gran Consiglio d'eleggere dodici Ambasciadori incontro a Marino Faliero Doge il quale veniva da Roma. E giunto a Chioggia, il Podestà mandò Taddeo Giustiniani suo figliuolo incontro, con quindici Ganzaruoli. E poi venuto a S. Clemente nel Bucintoro, venne un gran caligo, *adeo* che il Bucintoro non si potè levare. Laonde il Doge co' Gentiluomini nelle piatte vennero di lungo in questa Terra a' 5 d'Ottobre del 1354. E dovendo smontare alla riva della Paglia per lo caligo andarono ad ismontare alla riva della Piazza in mezzo alle due Colonne dove si fà la Giustizia, che fu un malissimo augurio. E a' 6, la mattina venne alla Chiesa di San Marco alla laudazione di quello. Era in questo tempo Cancellier Grande Messer Benintende. I quarantuno Elettori furono, Ser Giovanni Contarini, Ser' Andrea Giustiniani, Ser Michele Morossini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Pietro Lando, Ser Marino Gradenigo, Ser Marco Dolfino, Ser Nicolò Faliero, Ser' Giovanni Quirini, Ser Lorenzo Soranzo, Ser Marco Bembo, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Francesco Loredano, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, Ser Andrea Barbaro, Ser Lorenzo Barbarigo, Ser Bettino da Mollino, Sef' Andrea Erizzo Procuratore, Ser Marco Celsi, Ser Paolo Donato, Ser Bertucci Grimani, Ser Pietro Steno, Ser Luca Duodo, Ser' Andrea Pisani, Ser Francesco Caravello, Ser Jacopo Trivisano, Sere Schiavo Marcello, Ser Maffeo Aimo, Ser Marco Capello, Ser Pancrazio Giorgio, Ser Giovanni Foscarini, Ser Tommaso Viadro, Sere Schiava Polani, Ser Marco Polo, Ser Marino Sagredo, Sere Stefano Mariani, Ser Francesco Suriano, Ser Orio Pasqualigo, Ser' Andrea Gritti, Ser Buono da Mosto.

«*Trattato di Messer Marino Faliero Doge, tratto da una Cronica antica.* Essendo venuto il Giovedì della Caccia, fu fatta giusta il solito la Caccia. E a' que'

tempi dopo fatta la Caccia s' andava in Pallazo del Doge in una di quelle Sale, e con donne facevasi una festicciuola, dove si ballava fino alla prima Campana, e veniva una Colazione; la quale spesa faceva Messer lo Doge, quando v' era la Dogaressa. E poscia tutti andavano a casa sua. Sopra la qual festa, pare, che Ser Michele Steno, molto giovane e povero Gentiluomo, ma ardito e astuto, il qual' era innamorato in certa donzella della Dogaressa, essendo sul Solajo appresso le Donne, facesse cert' atto non conveniente, *adeo* che il Doge comandò ch'e' fosse buttato giù dal Solajo. E così quegli Scudieri del Doge lo spinsero giù di quel Solajo. Laonde a Ser Michele parve, che fossegli stata fatta troppo grande ignominia. E non considerando altramente il fine, ma sopra quella passione fornita la Festa, e andati tutti via, quella notte egli andò, e sulla cadrega, dove sedeva il Doge nella Sala dell' Udienza (perchè allora i Dogi non tenevano panno di seta sopra la cadrega, ma sedevano in una cadrega di legno) scrisse alcune parole disoneste del Doge e della Dogaressa, cioè: *Marin Faliero dalla bella moglie: Altri la gode, ed egli la mantiene.* E la mattina furono vedute tali parole scritte. E parve una brutta cosa. E per la Signoria fu commessa la cosa agli Avvogadori del Comune con grande efficacia. I quali Avvogadori subito diedero taglia grande per venire in chiaro della verità di chi avea scritto tal lettera. E *tandem* si seppe, che Michele Steno aveale scritte. E fu per la Quarantia preso di ritenerlo; e ritenuto confessò, che in quella passione d' essere stato spinto giù dal Solajo, presente la sua amante, egli aveale scritte. Onde poi fu placitato nel detto Consiglio, e parve al Consiglio sì per rispetto all' età, come per la caldezza d'amore, di condannarlo a compiere due mesi in prigione serrato, e poi ch' e' fosse bandito di Venezia e dal distretto per un' anno. Per la qual condennagione tanto piccola il Doge ne prese grande sdegno, parendogli che non fosse stata fatta quella estimazione della cosa, che ricercava la sua dignità del Ducato. E diceva, ch' eglino doveano averlo fatto appiccare per la gola, o *saltem* bandirlo in perpetuo da Venezia. E perchè (quando dee succedere un' effetto è necessario che vi concorra la cagione a fare tal' effetto) era destinato, che a Messer Marino Doge fosse tagliata la testa, perciò occorse, che entrata la Quaresima il giorno dopo che fu condannato il detto Ser Michele Steno, un Gentiluomo da Cà Barbaro, di natura collerico, andasse all' Arsenale, domandasse certe cose ai Padroni, ed era alla presenza de' Signori l'Ammiraglio dell' Arsenale. Il quale intesa la domanda, disse, che non si poteva fare. Quel Gentiluomo venne a parole coll' Ammiraglio, e diedegli un pugno su un'occhio. E perchè avea un'anello in dito, coll' anello gli ruppe la pelle, e fece sangue. E l'Ammiraglio così battuto e insanguinato andò al Doge a lamentarsi, acciocchè il Doge facesse fare gran punizione contra il detto da Cà Barbaro: Il Doge disse: *Che vuoi che ti faccia? Guarda le ignominiose parole scritte di me, e il modo ch'è stato punito quel ribaldo di Michele Steno, che le scrisse. E quale stima hanno i Quaranta fatto della persona nostra.* Laonde l'Ammiraglio gli disse: *Messer lo Doge, se voi volete farvi Signore, e fare tagliare tutti questi becchi Gentiluomini a pezzi, mi basta l'animo, dandomi voi ajuto, di farvi Signore di questa Terra. E allora voi potrete castigare tutti costoro.* Inteso questo, il Doge disse, *Come si può fare una simile cosa?* E così entrarono in ragionamento.

« Il Doge mandò a chiamare Ser Bertucci Faliero suo nipote, il quale stava con lui in Palazzo, e entrarono in questa macchinazione. Nè si partirono di lì, che mandarono per Filippo Calendaro, uomo marittimo e di gran seguito, e per Bertucci Israello, ingegnere e uomo astutissimo. E consigliatisi insieme diede ordine di chiamare alcuni altri. E così per alcuni giorni la notte si riducevano insieme in Palazzo in casa del Doge. E chiamarono a parte a parte altri, *videlicet* Niccolò Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfù, Stefano Fagiano, Niccolò dalle Bende, Niccolò Biondo, e Stefano Trivisano. E ordinò di fare sedici o diciassette Capi in diversi luoghi della Terra, i quali avessero cadaun di loro quarant'uomini provvigionati, preparati, non dicendo a' detti suoi quaranta quello, che volessero fare. Ma che il giorno stabilito si mostrasse di far quistione tra loro in diversi luoghi, acciocchè il Doge facesse sonare a San Marco le Campane, le quali non si possono suonare, s' egli nol comanda. E al suono delle Campane questi sedici o diciassette co' suoi uomini venissero a San Marco alle strade, che buttano in Piazza. E così i nobili e primarj Cittadini, che venissero in Piazza, per sapere del romore ciò ch'era, li tagliassero a pezzi. E seguito questo, chè fosse chiamato per Signore Messer Marino Faliero Doge. E fermate le cose tra loro, stabilito fu, che questo dovess' essere a' 15 d'Aprile del 1355 in giorno di Mercoledì. La quale macchinazione trattata fu tra loro tanto segretamente, che mai nè pure se ne sospettò, non che se ne sapesse cos' alcuna. Ma il Signor' Iddio, che ha sempre ajutato questa gloriosissima Città, e che per le santimonie e giustizie sue mai non l'ha abbandonata, ispirò a un Beltramo Bergamasco, il quale fu messo Capo di quarant' uomini per uno de' detti congiurati (il quale intese qualche parola, sicchè comprese l'effetto, che doveva succedere, e il qual era di casa di Ser Niccolò Lioni di Santo Stefano) di andare a dì..... d'Aprile a Casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni. E gli disse ogni cosa dell' ordin dato. Il quale intese le cose, rimase come mortò; e intese molte particolarità, il detto Beltramo il pregò che lo tenesse segreto, e glielo disse, acciocchè il detto Ser Niccolò non si partisse di casa a dì 15 acciocchè egli non fosse morto. Ed egli volendo partirsi, il fece ritenere a suoi di casa, e serrarlo in una camera. Ed esso andò a casa di M. Giovanni Gradenigo Nasone, il quale fu poi Doge, che stava anch' egli a Santo Stefano; e dissegli la cosa. La quale parendogli, com'era, d'una grandissima importanza, tutti e due andarono a casa di Ser Marco Cornaro, chè stava a San Felice. E dettogli il tutto, tutti e tre deliberarono di venire a casa del detto Ser Niccolò Lioni, ed esaminare il detto Beltramo. E quello esaminato, intese le cose, il fecero stare serrato. E andarono tutti e tre a San Salvatore in Sacristia, e mandarono i loro famigli a chiamare i Consiglieri, gli Avvogadori, i Capi de' Dieci, e que' del Consiglio. E ridotti insieme dissero loro le cose. I quali rimasero morti. E deliberarono di mandare pel detto Beltramo, e fattolo venire cautamente, ed esaminatolo, e verificate le cose, uncorchè ne sentissero gran passione, pure pensarono la provvisione. E mandarono pe' Capi de' Quaranta, pe' Signori di notte, pe' Capi de' Sestieri, e pe' Cinque della Pace. E ordinato, ch' eglino co' loro uomini trovassero degli altri buoni uomini, e mandassero a casa de' Capi de' congiurati, *ut supra* mettessero loro le mani addosso. E tolsero i detti le Maestrerie dell' Arsenale, acciocchè i provvisionati de' congiurati non potessero offenderli. E si ridussero in Palazzo verso la sera. Dove ridotti

fecero serrare le porte de la corte del Palazzo. E mandarono a ordinare al Campanaro, che non sonasse le Campane. E così fu eseguito, e messe le mani addosso a tutti i nominati di sopra, furono que' condotti al Palazzo. E vedendo il Consiglio de' Dieci, che il Doge era nella cospirazione, presero di eleggere venti de' primarj della Terra, di giunta al detto Consiglio a consigliare, non però che potessero mettere pallotta.

«I Consiglieri furono questi: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo del Sestiero di San Marco; Ser Almorò Veniero da Santa Marina del Sestiero di Castello; Ser Tommaso Viadro del Sestiero di Caneregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo del Sestiero di Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano del Sestiero di San Paolo, Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grande del Sestiero d'Ossoduro. Gli Avvogadori del Comune furono Ser Zufredo Morosini, e Ser Orio Pasqualigo, e questi non ballottarono. Que' del Consiglio de' Dieci; furono: Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tommaso Sanudo, e Ser Michelento Dolfino, Capi del detto Consiglio de' Dieci; Ser Luca da Legge, e Ser Pietro da Mosto, Inquisitori del detto Consiglio: Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, Ser Nicoletto Trivisano da Sant' Angiolo. Questi elessero tra loro una Giunta, nella notte ridotti quasi sul romper del giorno, di venti Nobili di Venezia de' migliori, de' più Savj, e de' più antichi, per consultare, non però che mettessero pallottola. E non vi vollero alcuno da Cà Faliero. E cacciarono fuori del Consiglio Niccolò Faliero, e un' altro Niccolò Faliero da San Tommaso, per essere della Casata del Doge. E questa provigione di chiamare i venti della Giunta fu molto commendata per tutta la Terra. Questi furono i venti della Giunta, Ser Marco Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Erizzo Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani Procuratore, Ser' Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Niccolò Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovonni Gradenigo, Ser' Andrea Cornaro cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri da Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosino, Sere Stefano Belegno, Ser Niccolò Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini. E chiamati questi venti nel Consiglio de' Dieci, fu mandato per Messer Marino Faliero Doge, il quale andava pel Palazzo con gran gente, gentiluomini, e altra buona gente, che non sapeano ancora come il fatto stava. In questo tempo fu condotto, preso, e legato, Bertuccio Israello, uno de' Capi del trattato per que' di Santa Croce, e ancora fu preso Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, e Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiaga, e altri uomini da mare, e d' altre condizioni. I quali furono esaminati, e trovata la verità del tradimento. A dì 16 d'Aprile fu sentenziato pel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, che Filippo Calandario, e Bertucci Israello fossero appiccati alle Colonne rosse del balconate del Palazzo, nelle quali sta a vedere il Doge la festa della Caccia. E così furono Apiccati con sprunghe in bocca. E nel giorno seguente' questi furono condannati, Niccolò Zuccuolo, Nicoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Geuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fedele figliuolo di Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello detto Israello, Stefano Trivisano Cambiatore di Santa Margherita, Antonio dalle Bende. Furono tutti presi a Chioggia, che fuggivano, e dipoi in diversi giorni a due a due, e a uno a uno, per sentenza fatta nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, furono appiccati per la gola alle Colonne, continuando dalle rosse del Palazzo, seguendo fin verso il Canale. E altri presi furono lasciati, perchè sentirono il fatto, ma non vi furono tal che fu dato loro ad intendere per questi capi, che venissero coll' arme, per prendere alcuni malfattori in servigio della Signoria, nè altro sapeano. Fu ancora liberato Nicoletto Alberto, il Guardiaga, e Bartolommeo Ciriuola, e suo figliuolo, e molti altri, che non erano in colpa.

E a dì 16 d' Aprile, giorno di Venerdì, fu sentenziato nel detto Consiglio de' Dieci, di tagliare la testa a Messer Marino Faliero Doge sul pato della scala di pietra, dove i Dogi giurano il primo sagramento, quando montano prima in Palazzo. E così serrato il Palazzo, la mattina seguente a ora di Terza, fu tagliata la testa al detto Doge a dì 17 d' Aprile. E prima la berretta fu tolta di testa al detto Doge, avanti che venisse giù dalla Scala. E compiuta la giustizia, pare che un Capo de' Dieci andasse alle Colonne del Palazzo sopra la Piazza, e mostrasse la spada insanguinata a tutti, dicendo: *E stata fatta la gran giustizia del Traditore.* E aperta la Porta tutti entrarono dentro con gran furia a vedere il Doge, ch' era stato giustiziato. E' da sapere, che a fare la detta giustizia non fu Ser Giovanni Sanudo il Consigliere, perchè era andato a casa per difetto della persona, sicchè furono quatordici soli, che ballottarono, cioè cinque Consiglieri, e nove del Consiglio de' Dieci. E fu preso, che tutti i beni del Doge fossero confiscati nel Comune, e così degli altri traditori. E fu conceduto al detto Doge pel detto Consiglio de Dieci, ch' egli potesse ordinare del suo per Ducati due mila. Ancora fu preso, che tutti i Consiglieri, e Avvogadori del Comune, que' del Consiglio de' Dieci, e della Giunta, ch' erano stati a fare la detta sentenza del Doge, e l'altri, avessero licenza di portar' arme di dì e di notte in Venezia e da Grado fino a Cavarzere, ch' è sotto il Dogato, con due fanti in vita loro, stando i fanti con essi in casa al suo pane e al suo vino. E chi non avesse fanti, potesse dar tal licenza a' suoi figliuoli ovvero fratelli, due però e non più. Eziandio fu data licenza dell' arme a quattro Notaj della Cancelleria, cioè della Corte Maggiore, che furono a prendere le deposizioni e inquisizioni, in perpetuo a loro soli, i quali furono Amadio, Nicoletto di Loreno, Steffanello, e Pietro de' Compostelli, Scrivani de' Signori di notte. Ed essendo stati impiccati i traditori, e tagliata la testa al Doge, rimase la Terra in gran riposo, e quiete. E come in una Cronica ho trovato, fu portato il Corpo del Doge in una barca con otto doppieri a seppelire nella sua arca a San Giovanni e Paolo, la quale al presente è in quell' andito per mezzo la Chiesuola di Santa Maria della Pace, fatta fare pel Vescovo Gabriello di Bergamo, e un Cassone di Pietra con queste lettere: *Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.* E nel gran Consiglio non gli è stato fatto alcun Brieve, ma il luogo vacuo con lettere, che dicono così: *Hic est locus Marini Faletro, decapitati pro criminibus.* E pare, che la sua casa fosse data alla Chiesa di Sant' Apostolo, la qual era quella grande sul Ponte. *Tamen* vedo il contrario che è pure di Cà Faliero, o che i Falieri la ricuperassero con danari dalla Chiesa. Nè voglio restar di scrivere alcuni, che volevano, che fosse messo nel suo breve, cioè: *Marinus Faletro Dux. Temeritas me cepit. Pœnas lui, decapitatus pro criminibus.* Altri vi fecero un Distico assai degno al suo merito, il quale è questo, da essere posto su la sua sepultura:

«Dux Venetum jacet hoic, patriam qui prodere tentans,
Sceptra, decus, rerum, perdidit, atque caput.»

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«Non voglio restar di scrivere quello che ho letto in una Cronica, cioè, che Marino Faliero trovandosi Podestà e Capitano a Treviso, e dovendosi fare una Processione, il Vescovo stette troppo a far venire il Corpo di Cristo. Il detto Faliero era di tanta superbia e arroganza, che diede un buffetto al prefato Vescovo, per modo ch' egli quasi cadde in terra. Però fu permesso, che il Faliero perdette l'intelletto, e fece la mala morte, come ho scritto di sopra.»

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Cronica di Sanuto—Muratori S. S. Rerum Italicarum —vol. xxii. 628—639.

II.

MCCCLIV.

MARINO FALIERO, DOGE XLIX.

On the eleventh day of September, in the year of our Lord 1354, Marino Faliero was elected and chosen to be the Duke of the Commonwealth of Venice. He was Count of Valdemarino, in the Marches of Treviso, and a Knight and a wealthy man to boot. As soon as the election was completed, it was resolved in the Great Council, that a deputation of twelve should be dispatched to Marino Faliero, the Duke, who was then on his way from Rome; for, when he was chosen, he was ambassador at the court of the Holy Father, at Rome, —the Holy Father himself held his court at Avignon. When Messer Marino Faliero the Duke was about to land in this city, on the fifth day of October, 1354, a thick haze came on, and darkened the air; and he was enforced to land on the place of Saint Mark, between the two columns on the spot where evil doers are put to death; and all thought that this was the worst of tokens.—Nor must I forget to write that which I have read in a chronicle.—When Messer Marino Faliero was podesta and Captain of Treviso, the bishop delayed coming in with the holy sacrament, on a day when a procession was to take place. Now the said Marino Faliero was so very proud and wrathful that he buffeted the bishop, and almost struck him to the ground. And therefore, Heaven allowed Marino Faliero to go out of his right senses, in order that he might bring himself to an evil death.

When this Duke had held the dukedom during nine months and six days, he being wicked and ambitious, sought to make himself lord of Venice, in the manner which I have read in an ancient chronicle. When the Thursday arrived upon which they were wont to hunt the bull, the bull hunt took place as usual; and according to the usage of those times, after the bull hunt had ended, they all proceeded unto the palace of the Duke, and assembled together in one of his halls; and they disported themselves with the women. And until the first bell tolled they danced, and then a banquet was served up. My Lord the Duke paid the expenses thereof, provided he had a Duchess, and after the banquet they all returned to their homes.

Now to this feast there came a certain Ser Michele Steno, a gentleman of poor estate and very young, but crafty and daring, and who loved one of the damsels of the Duchess. Ser Michele stood amongst the women upon the solajo; and he behaved indiscreetly, so that my Lord the Duke ordered that he should be kicked off the solajo; and the esquires of the Duke flung him down from the solajo accordingly. Ser Michele thought that such an affront was beyond all bearing; and when the feast was over, and all other persons had left the palace, he, continuing heated with anger, went to the hall of audience, and wrote certain unseemly words relating to the Duke and the Duchess, upon the chair in which the Duke was used to sit; for in those days the Duke did not cover his chair with cloth of sendal, but he sat in a chair of wood. Ser Michele wrote thereon: —«*Marin Falier, the husband of the fair wife; others kiss her, but he keeps her.*' In the morning the words were seen, and the matter was considered to be very scandalous; and the Senate commanded the Avogadori of the Commonwealth to proceed therein with the greatest diligence. A largesse of great amount was immediately proffered by the Avogadori in order to discover who had written these words. And at length it was known that Michele Steno had written them. It was resolved in the Council of Forty that he should be arrested; and he then confessed, that in a fit of vexation and spite, occasioned by his being thrust off the solajo in the presence of his mistress, he had written the words. Therefore the Council debated thereon. And the Council took his youth into consideration, and that he was a lover, and therefore they adjudged that he should be kept in close confinement during two months, and that afterwards he should be banished from Venice and the state during one year. In consequence of this merciful sentence the Duke became exceedingly wroth, it appearing to him that the Council had not acted in such a manner as was required by the respect due to his ducal dignity; and he said that they ought to have condemned Ser Michele to be hanged by the neck, or at least to be banished for life.

Now it was fated that my Lord Duke Marino was to have his head cut off. And as it is necessary when any effect is to be brought about, that the cause of such effect must happen, it therefore came to pass, that on the very day after sentence had been pronounced on Ser Michele Steno, being the first day of Lent, a gentleman of the house of Barbaro, a choleric gentleman, went to the arsenal and required certain things of the masters of the galleys. This he did in the presence of the admiral of the arsenal, and he, hearing the request, answered,—No, it cannot be done.—High words arose between the gentleman and the admiral, and the gentleman struck him with his fist just above the eye; and as he happened to have a ring on his finger, the ring cut the admiral and drew blood. The admiral, all bruised and bloody, ran straight to the Duke to complain, and with the intent of praying him to inflict some heavy punishment upon the gentleman of Ca Barbaro.—«What wouldst thou have me do for thee?» answered the Duke;—«think upon the shameful gibe which hath been written concerning me; and think on the manner in which they have punished that ribald Michele Steno, who wrote it; and see how the Council of Forty respect our person.»—Upon this the admiral answered;—«My Lord Duke, if you would wish to make yourself a Prince, and to cut all those cuckoldy gentlemen to pieces, I have the heart, if you do but help me, to make you Prince of all this state; and then you may punish them all.»—Hearing this, the Duke said;—«How can such a matter be brought about?»—and so they discoursed thereon.

The Duke called for his nephew, Ser Bertuccio Faliero, who lived with him in the palace, and they communed

about this plot. And without leaving the place, they sent for Philip Calendaro, a seaman of great repute, and for Bertucci Israello, who was exceedingly wily and cunning. Then, taking counsel amongst themselves, they agreed to call in some others; and so for several nights successively, they met with the Duke at home in his palace. And the following men were called in singly; to wit;—Niccolo Fagiuolo, Giovanni da Corfu, Stefano Fagiano, Niccolo dalle Bende, Niccolo Biondo, and Stefano Trivisiano.—It was concerted that sixteen or seventeen leaders should be stationed in various parts of the city, each being at the head of forty men, armed and prepared; but the followers were not to know their destination. On the appointed day they were to make affrays amongst themselves here and there, in order that the Duke might have a pretence for tolling the bells of San Marco: these bells are never rung but by the order of the Duke. And at the sound of the bells, these sixteen or seventeen, with their followers, were to come to San Marco, through the streets which open upon the Piazza. And when the noble and leading citizens should come into the Piazza, to know the cause of the riot, then the conspirators were to cut them in pieces; and this work being finished, my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke was to be proclaimed the Lord of Venice. Things having been thus settled, they agreed to fulfil their intent on Wednesday, the fifteenth day of April, in the year 1355. So covertly did they plot, that no one ever dreamt of their machinations.

But the Lord, who hath always helped this most glorious city, and who, loving its righteousness and holiness, hath never forsaken it, inspired one Beltramo Bergamasco to be the cause of bringing the plot to light in the following manner. This Beltramo, who belonged to Ser Niccolo Lioni of Santo Stefano, had heard a word or two of what was to take place; and so, in the beforementioned month of April, he went to the house of the aforesaid Ser Niccolo Lioni, and told him all the particulars of the plot. Ser Niccolo, when he heard all these things, was struck dead, as it were, with affright. He heard all the particulars, and Beltramo prayed him to keep it all secret; and, if he told Ser Niccolo, it was in order that Ser Niccolo might stop at home on the fifteenth of April, and thus save his life. Beltramo was going, but Ser Niccolo ordered his servants to lay hands upon him and lock him up. Ser Niccolo then went to the house of Messer Giovanni Gradenigo Nasoni, who afterwards became Duke, and who also lived at Santo Stefano, and told him all. The matter seemed to him to be of the very greatest importance, as indeed it was; and they two went to the house of Ser Marco Cornaro, who lived at San Felice; and, having spoken with him, they all three then determined to go back to the house of Ser Niccolo Lioni, to examine the said Beltramo; and having questioned him, and heard all that he had to say, they left him in confinement. And then they all three went into the sacristy of San Salvatore, and sent their men to summon the Counsellers, the Avogadori, the Capi de Dieci, and those of the Great Council.

When all were assembled, the whole story was told to them. They were struck dead, as it were, with affright. They determined to send for Beltramo. He was brought in before them. They examined him, and ascertained that the matter was true; and, although they were exceedingly troubled, yet they determined upon their measures. And they sent for the Capi de Quaranta, the Signori di Notte, the Capi de Sestieri, and the Cinque della Pace; and they were ordered to associate to their men, other good men and true, who were to proceed to the houses of the ringleaders of the conspiracy and secure them. And they secured the foremen of the arsenal, in order that the conspirators might not do mischief. Towards nightfall they assembled in the palace. When they were assembled in the palace, they caused the gates of the quadrangle of the palace to be shut. And they sent to the keeper of the Bell-tower, and forbade the tolling of the bells. All this was carried into effect. The before-mentioned conspirators were secured, and they were brought to the palace; and as the Council of Ten saw that the Duke was in the plot, they resolved that twenty of the leading men of the state should be associated to them, for the purpose of consultation and deliberation, but that they should not be allowed to ballot.

The counsellors were the following: Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, of the Sestiero of San Marco; Ser Almoro Veniero da Santa Marina, of the Sestiero of Castello; Ser Tomaso Viadro, of the Sestiero of Canaregio; Ser Giovanni Sanudo, of the Sestiero of Santa Croce; Ser Pietro Trivisano, of the Sestiero of San Paolo; Ser Pantalione Barbo il Grande, of the Sestiero of Ossoduro. The Avogadori of the Commonwealth were Zufredo Morosini, and Ser Orio Pasqualigo; and these did not ballot. Those of the Council of Ten were Ser Giovanni Marcello, Ser Tomaso Sanudo, and Ser Micheletto Dolfino, the heads of the aforesaid Council of Ten. Ser Luca da Legge, and Ser Pietro da Mosto, inquisitors of the aforesaid Council. And Ser Marco Polani, Ser Marino Veniero, Ser Lando Lombardo, and Ser Nicoletto Trivisano, of Sant' Angelo.

Late in the night, just before the dawning, they chose a junto of twenty noblemen of Venice from amongst the wisest and the worthiest and the oldest. They were to give counsel, but not to ballot. And they would not admit any one of Cà Faliero. And Niccolo Faliero, and another Niccolo Faliero, of San Tomaso, were expelled from the Council, because they belonged to the family of the Doge. And this resolution of creating the junta of twenty was much praised throughout the state. The following were the members of the junta of twenty:—Ser Marco Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Erizzo, Procuratore, Ser Lionardo Giustiniani, Procuratore, Ser Andrea Contarini, Ser Simone Dandolo, Ser Nicolo Volpe, Ser Giovanni Loredano, Ser Marco Diedo, Ser Giovanni Gradenigo, Ser Andrea Cornaro, Cavaliere, Ser Marco Soranzo, Ser Rinieri da Mosto, Ser Gazano Marcello, Ser Marino Morosini, Ser Stefano Belegno, Ser Nicolo Lioni, Ser Filippo Orio, Ser Marco Trivisano, Ser Jacopo Bragadino, Ser Giovanni Foscarini.

These twenty were accordingly called in to the Council of Ten; and they sent for my Lord Marino Faliero the Duke; and my Lord Marino was then consorting in the palace with people of great estate, gentlemen, and other good men, none of whom knew yet how the fact stood.

At the same time Bertucci Israello, who, as one of the ringleaders, was to head the conspirators in Santa Croce, was arrested and bound, and brought before the Council. Zanello del Brin, Nicoletto di Rosa, Nicoletto Alberto, and the Guardiaga, were also taken together,

with several seamen, and people of various ranks. These were examined, and the truth of the plot was ascertained.

On the sixteenth of April, judgment was given in the Council of Ten, that Filippo Calendaro and Bertucci Israello should be hanged upon the red pillars of the balcony of the palace, from which the Duke is wont to look at the bull-hunt: and they were hanged with gags in their mouths.

The next day the following were condemned:—Niccolo Zuccuolo, Nicoletto Blondo, Nicoletto Doro, Marco Giuda, Jacomello Dagolino, Nicoletto Fidele, the son of Filippo Calendaro, Marco Torello, called Israello, Stefano Trivisano, the money-changer of Santa Margherita, and Antonio dalle Bende. These were all taken at Chiozza, for they were endeavouring to escape. Afterwards, by virtue of the sentence which was passed upon them in the Council of Ten, they were hanged on successive days, some singly and some in couples, upon the columns of the palace, beginning from the red columns, and so going onwards towards the canal. And other prisoners were discharged, because, although they had been involved in the conspiracy, yet they had not assisted in it: for they were given to understand by some of the heads of the plot, that they were to come armed and prepared for the service of the state, and in order to secure certain criminals, and they knew nothing else. Nicoletto Alberto, the Guardiaga, and Bartolommeo Ciriuola and his son, and several others, who were not guilty, were discharged.

On Friday, the sixteenth day of April, judgment was also given, in the aforesaid Council of Ten, that my Lord Marino Faliero, the Duke, should have his head cut off, and that the execution should be done on the landing-place of the stone staircase, where the Dukes take their oath when they first enter the palace. On the following day, the seventeenth of April, the doors of the palace being shut, the Duke had his head cut off, about the hour of noon. And the cap of estate was taken from the Duke's head before he came down stairs. When the execution was over, it is said that one of the Council of Ten went to the columns of the palace over against the place of St Mark, and that he showed the bloody sword unto the people, crying out with a loud voice—«The terrible doom hath fallen upon the traitor!»—and the doors were opened, and the people all rushed in, to see the corpse of the Duke who had been beheaded.

It must be known, that Ser Giovanni Sanudo, the councillor, was not present when the aforesaid sentence was pronounced; because he was unwell and remained at home. So that only fourteen balloted; that is to say, five councillors, and nine of the Council of Ten. And it was adjudged, that all the lands and chattels of the Duke, as well as of the other traitors, should be forfeited to the state. And, as a grace to the Duke, it was resolved in the Council of Ten, that he should be allowed to dispose of two thousand ducats out of his own property. And it was resolved, that all the councillors and all the Avogadori of the commonwealth, those of the Council of Ten, and the members of the junta who had assisted in passing sentence on the Duke and the other traitors, should have the privilege of carrying arms both by day and by night in Venice, and from Grado to Cavazere. And they were also to be allowed two footmen carrying arms, the aforesaid footmen living and boarding with them in their own houses. And he who did not keep two footmen might transfer the privilege to his sons or his brothers; but only to two. Permission of carrying arms was also granted to the four Notaries of the Chancery, that is to say, of the Supreme Court, who took the depositions; and they were Amedio, Nicoletto di Lorino, Steffanello, and Pietro de Compostelli, the secretaries of the Signori di Notte.

After the traitors had been hanged, and the Duke had had his head cut off, the state remained in great tranquillity and peace. And, as I have read in a chronicle, the corpse of the Duke was removed in a barge, with eight torches, to his tomb in the church of San Giovanni e Paolo, where it was buried. The tomb is now in that aisle in the middle of the little church of Santa Maria della Pace, which was built by Bishop Gabriel of Bergamo. It is a coffin of stone, with these words engraved thereon: «*Heic jacet Dominus Marinus Faletro Dux.*»—And they did not paint his portrait in the hall of the Great Council:—But in the place where it ought to have been, you see these words:—«*Hic est locus Marini Faletro decapitati pro criminibus*»—and it is thought that his house was granted to the church of Sant' Apostolo; it was that great one near the bridge. Yet this could not be the case, or else the family bought it back from the church; for it still belongs to Cà Faliero. I must not refrain from noting, that some wished to write the following words in the place where his portrait ought to have been, as aforesaid:—«*Marinus Faletro Dux, temeritas me cepit, pœnas lui, decapitatus pro criminibus.*»—Others, also, indited a couplet, worthy of being inscribed upon his tomb.

> «Dux Venetum jacet heic, patriam qui prodere tentans,
> Sceptra, decus, census, perdidit, atque caput.»

[I am obliged for this excellent translation of the old chronicle to Mr F. Cohen, to whom the reader will find himself indebted for a version that I could not myself (though after many years' intercourse with Italian) have given by any means so purely and so faithfully.]

III.

«Al giovane Doge Andrea Dandolo succedette un vecchio, il quale tardi si pose al timone della repubblica, ma sempre prima di quel, che facea d' uopo a lui, ed alla patria: egli è Marino Faliero, personnaggio a me noto per antica dimestichezza. Falsa era l' opinione intorno a lui, giacchè egli si mostrò fornito più di coraggio, che di senno. Non pago della prima dignità, entrò con sinistro piede nel pubblico Palazzo: imperciocchè questo Doge dei Veneti, magistrato sacro in tutti i secoli, che dagli antichi fu sempre venerato qual nume in quella città, l' altr' jeri fu decollato nel vestibolo dell'i stesso Palazzo. Discorrerei fin dal principio le cause di un tale evento, se così vario, ed ambiguo non ne fosse il grido. Nessuno però lo scusa, tutti affermano, che egli abbia voluto cangiar qualche cosa nell' ordine della repubblica a lui tramandato dai maggiori. Che desiderava egli di più? Io son d'avviso, che egli abbia ottenuto ciò, che non si concedette a nessun altro: mentre adempiva gli uffiçj di legato presso il Pontefice, e sulle rive del Rodano trattava la pace, che io prima di lui avevo indarno tentato di conchiudere, gli fù conferito l' onore del Ducato, che nè chiedeva, nè s' aspettava. Tornato in patria, pensò a quello, cui nessuno non pose mente giammai, e soffrì quello che a niuno accade mai di soffrire: giacchè in quel luogo celeber-

rimo, e chiarissimo, e bellissimo infra tutti quelli, che io vidi, ove i suoi antenati avevano ricevuti grandissimi onori in mezzo alle pompe trionfali, ivi egli fu trascinato in modo servile, e spogliato delle insegne ducali, perdette la testa, e macchiò col proprio sangue le soglie del tempio, l' atrio del Palazzo, e le scale marmoree rendute spesse volte illustri o dalle solenni festività, o dalle ostili spoglie. Ho notato il luogo, ora noto il tempo: è l' anno del Natale di Cristo 1355, fù il giorno 18 d'Aprile. Sì alto è il grido sparso, che se alcuno esaminerà la disciplina, e le costumanze di quella città, e quanto mutamento di cose venga minacciato dalla morte di un sol uomo (quantunque molti altri, come narrano, essendo complici, o subirono l' istesso supplicio, o lo aspettano) si accorgerà, che nulla di più grande avvenne ai nostri tempi nell' Italia. Tu forse quì attendi il mio giudizio; assolvo il popolo, se credere alla fama, benchè abbia potuto e castigare più mitamente, e con maggior dolcezza vendicare il suo dolore: ma non così facilmente, si modera un' ira giusta insieme, e grande in un numeroso popolo principalmente, nel quale il precipitoso, ed instabile volgo aguzza gli stimoli dell' iracondia con rapidi, e sconsigliati clamori. Compatisco, e nell' istesso tempo mi adiro con quell' infelice uomo, il quale adorno di un' insolito onore, non so, che cosa si volesse negli estremi anni della sua vita: la calamità di lui diviene sempre più grave, perchè dalla sentenza contra di esso promulgata apparirà, che egli fu non solo misero, ma insano, e demente, e che con vane arti si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza. Ammonisco i Dogi, i quali gli succederanno, che questo è un esempio posto innanzi ai loro occhi, quale specchio, nel quale veggano di essere non Signori, ma Duci, anzi nemmeno Duci; ma onorati servi della Repubblica. Tu sta sano; e giacchè fluttuano le publicche cose, sforziamoci di governar modestissimamente i privati nostri affari.»

Levati. Viaggi di Petrarca, vol. IV. p. 323.

The above Italian translation from the Latin epistles of Petrarch proves—

1stly, That Marino Faliero was a personal friend of Petrarch's: «antica dimestichezza,» old intimacy, is the phrase of the poet.

2dly, That Petrarch thought that he had more courage than conduct, «più di *coraggio* che di senno.»

3dly, That there was some jealousy on the part of Petrarch; for he says that Marino Faliero was treating of the peace which he himself had «vainly attempted to conclude.»

4thly, That the honour of the dukedom was conferred upon him, which he neither sought nor expected, «che nè chiedeva nè aspettava,» and which had never been granted to any other in like circumstances, «ciò che non si concedette a nessun altro; a «proof of the high esteem in which he must have been held.

5thly, That he *had* a reputation for *wisdom, only* forfeited by the last enterprise of his life, «si usurpò per tanti anni una falsa fama di sapienza.»—«He had usurped for so many years a false fame of wisdom;» rather a difficult task I should think. People are generally found out before eighty years of age, at least in a republic.

From these, and the other historical notes which I have collected, it may be inferred, that Marino Faliero possessed many of the qualities, but not the success of a hero; and that his passions were too violent. The paltry and ignorant account of Dr Moore falls to the ground. Petrarch says, «that there had been no greater event in his times» (*our times* literally), «nostri tempi,» in Italy. He also differs from the historian in saying that Faliero was «on the banks of the *Rhone*,» instead of at Rome, when elected; the other accounts say, that the deputation of the Venetian senate met him at Ravenna. How this may have been, it is not for me to decide, and is of no great importance. Had the man succeeded, he would have changed the face of Venice, and perhaps of Italy. As it is, what *are* they both?

IV.

Extrait de l'ouvrage—Histoire de la République de Venise, par P. Daru, de l'Académie Française, tom. V, livre XXXV, p. 95, etc. Edition de Paris, MDCCCXIX.

«A ces attaques si fréquentes que le gouvernement dirigeait contre le clergé, à ces luttes établies entre les différens corps constitués, à ces entreprises de la masse de la noblesse contre les dépositaires du pouvoir, à toutes ces propositions d'innovation qui se terminaient toujours par des coups d'état; il faut ajouter une autre cause, non moins propre à propager le mépris des anciennes doctrines, *c'était l'excès de la corruption.*

«Cette liberté de mœurs, qu'on avait long-temps vantée comme le charme principal de la société de Venise, était devenue un désordre scandaleux; le lien du mariage était moins sacré dans ce pays catholique que dans ceux où les lois civiles et religieuses permettent de le dissoudre. Faute de pouvoir rompre le contrat, on supposait qu'il n'avait jamais existé, et les moyens de nullité, allégués avec impudeur par les époux, étaient admis avec la même facilité par des magistrats et par des prêtres également corrompus. Ces divorces colorés d'un autre nom devinrent si fréquents, que l'acte le plus important de la société civile se trouva de la compétence d'un tribunal d'exception, et que ce fut à la police de réprimer le scandale. Le conseil des dix ordonna, en 1782, que toute femme qui intenterait une demande en dissolution de mariage serait obligée d'en attendre le jugement dans un couvent que le tribunal désignerait.[1] Bientôt après il évoqua devant lui toutes les causes de cette nature.[2] Cet empiétement sur la jurisdiction ecclésiastique ayant occasionné des réclamations de la part de la cour de Rome, le conseil se réserva le droit de débouter les époux de leur demande; et consentit à la renvoyer devant l'officialité, toutes les fois qu'il ne l'aurait pas rejetée.[3]

«Il y eut un moment où sans doute le renversement des fortunes, la perte des jeunes gens, les discordes domestiques, déterminèrent le gouvernement à s'écarter des maximes qu'il s'était faites sur la liberté de mœurs qu'il permettait à ses sujets: on chassa de Venise toutes les courtisanes. Mais leur absence ne suffisait pas pour ramener aux bonnes mœurs toute une population élevée dans la plus honteuse licence. Le désordre pénétra dans l'intérieur des familles, dans les cloitres; et l'on se

[1] Correspondance de M. Schlick, chargé d'affaires de France, dépêche du 25 Aout, 1782.
[2] Ibid. Dépêche du 31 Aout.
[3] Ibid. Dépêche du 3 Septembre, 1785.

crut obligé de rappeler, d'indemniser même[1] des femmes qui surprenaient quelquefois d'importants secrets, et qu'on pouvait employer utilement à ruiner des hommes que leur fortune aurait pu rendre dangereux. Depuis, la licence est toujours allée croissant, et l'on a vu non seulement des mères trafiquer de la virginité de leurs filles, mais la vendre par un contrat, dont l'authenticité était garantie par la signature d'un officier public, et l'exécution mise sous la protection des lois.[2]

« Les parloirs des couvents où étaient renfermées les filles nobles, les maisons des courtisanes, quoique la police y entretînt soigneusement un grand nombre de surveillans, étaient les seuls points de réunion de la société de Venise, et dans ces deux endroits si divers on était également libre. La musique, les collations, la galanterie, n'étaient pas plus interdites dans les parloirs que dans les casins. Il y avait un grand nombre de casins destinés aux réunions publiques, où le jeu était la principale occupation de la société. C'était un singulier spectacle de voir autour d'une table des personnes des deux sexes en masque, et de graves personnages en robe de magistrature, implorant le hasard, passant des angoisses du désespoir aux illusions de l'espérance, et cela sans proférer une parole.

« Les riches avaient des casins particuliers; mais ils y vivaient avec mystère; leurs femmes délaissées trouvaient un dédommagement dans la liberté dont elles jouissaient; la corruption des mœurs les avait privées de tout leur empire; on vient de parcourir toute l'histoire de Venise, et on ne les a pas vues une seule fois exercer la moindre influence.»

V.

Extract from the History of the Republic of Venice, by P. Daru, Member of the French Academy, vol. v, b. xxxv, p. 95, etc. Paris Edit. 1819.

«To these attacks, so frequently pointed by the government against the clergy,—to the continual struggles between the different constituted bodies,—to these enterprises carried on by the mass of the nobles against the depositaries of power,—to all those projects of innovation, which always ended by a stroke of state policy,—we must add a cause not less fitted to spread contempt for ancient doctrines; *this was the excess of corruption.*

«That freedom of manners, which had been long boasted of as the principal charm of Venetian society, had degenerated into scandalous licentiousness; the tie of marriage was less sacred in that Catholic country, than among those nations where the laws and religion admit of its being dissolved. Because they could not break the contract, they feigned that it had not existed; and the ground of nullity, immodestly alledged by the married pair, was admitted with equal facility by priests and magistrates, alike corrupt. These divorces, veiled under another name, became so frequent, that the most important act of civil society was discovered to be amenable to a tribunal of exceptions; and to restrain the open scandal of such proceedings became the office of the police. In 1782 the Council of Ten decreed, that every woman who should sue for a dissolution of her marriage should be compelled to await the decision of the judges in some convent, to be named by the court.[1] Soon afterwards the same council summoned all causes of that nature before itself.[2] This infringement on ecclesiastical jurisdiction having occasioned some remonstrance form Rome, the council retained only the right of rejecting the petition of the married persons, and consented to refer such causes to the holy office as it should not previously have rejected.[3]

«There was a moment in which, doubtless, the destruction of private fortunes, the ruin of youth, the domestic discord occasioned by these abuses, determined the government to depart from its established maxims concerning the freedom of manners allowed the subject. All the courtisans were banished from Venice, but their absence was not enough to reclaim and bring back good morals to a whole people brought up in the most scandalous licentiousness. Depravity reached the very bosoms of private families, and even into the cloister; and they found themselves obliged to recal, and even to indemnify[4] women who sometimes gained possession of important secrets, and who might be usefully employed in the ruin of men whose fortunes might have rendered them dangerous. Since that time licentiousness has gone on increasing, and we have seen mothers, not only selling the innocence of their daughters, but selling it by a contract, authenticated by the signature of a public officer, and the performance of which was secured by the protection of the laws.[5]

«The parlours of the convents of noble ladies, and the houses of the courtisans, though the police carefully kept up a number of spies about them, were the only assemblies for society in Venice; and in these two places, so different from each other, there was equal freedom. Music, collations, gallantry, were not more forbidden in the parlours than at the casinos. There were a number of casinos for the purpose of public assemblies, where gaming was the principal pursuit of the company. It was a strange sight to see persons of either sex, masked, or grave personages in their magisterial robes, round a table, invoking chance, and giving way at one instant to the agonies of despair, at the next to the illusions of hope, and that without uttering a single word.

«The rich had private casinos, but they lived *incognito* in them; and the wives whom they abandoned found compensation in the liberty they enjoyed. The corruption of morals had deprived them of their empire. We have just reviewed the whole history of Venice, and we have not once seen them exercise the slightest influence.»

From the present decay and degeneracy of Venice under the barbarians, there are some honourable individual exceptions. There is Pasqualigo, the last, and, alas! *posthumous* son of the marriage of the Doges with the Adriatic, who fought his frigate with far greater gallantry than any of his French coadjutors in the me-

[1] Le décret de rappel les désignait sous le nom de *nostre benemerite meretrici*. On leur assigna un fonds et des maisons appelées *Case rampane*, d'ou vient la dénomination injurieuse de *Carampane*.

[2] Mayer, *Description de Venise*, tom. ii. et M. Archenholtz, *Tableau de l'Italie*, tom. i. chap. 2.

[1] Correspondence of Mr Schlick, French chargé d'affaires. Despatch of 24th August, 1782.

[2] Ibid. Despatch, 31st August.

[3] Ibid. Despatch, 3d September, 1785.

[4] The decree for their recal designates them as *nostre benemerite meretrici*. A fund and some houses called *Case rampane* were assigned to them: hence the opprobrious appellation of *Carampane*.

[5] Mayer, *Description of Venice*, vol ii. and M. Archenholtz, *Picture of Italy*, vol. i. chap. 2.

morable action off Lissa. I came home in the squadron with the prizes in 1811, and recollect to have heard Sir William Hoste, and the other officers engaged in that glorious conflict, speak in the highest terms of Pasqualigo's behaviour. There is the Abbate Morelli. There is Alvise Querini, who, after a long and honourable diplomatic career, finds some consolation for the wrongs of his country, in the pursuits of literature with his nephew, Vittor Benzon, the son of the celebrated beauty, the heroine of «La Biondina in Gondoletta.» There are the patrician poet Morosini, and the poet Lamberti, the author of the «Biondina,» etc. and many other estimable productions; and not least in an Englishman's estimation, Madame Michelli, the translator of Shakspeare. There are the young Dandolo, and the improvvisatore Carrer, and Giuseppe Albrizzi, the accomplished son of an accomplished mother. There is Aglietti, and, were there nothing else, there is the immortality of Canova. Cicognara, Mustoxithi, Bucati, etc. etc. I do not reckon, because the one is a Greek, and the others were born at least a hundred miles off, which, throughout Italy, constitutes, if not a *foreigner, at least a stranger* (*forestiere*).

VI.

Extrait de l'ouvrage—Histoire littéraire d'Italie, par P. L. Ginguéné, tom. ix. chap. xxxvi. p. 144. Edition de Paris, MDCCCXIX.

«Il y a une prédiction fort singulière sur Venise: 'Si tu ne changes pas,' dit-il à cette république altière, 'ta liberté qui déjà s'enfuit, ne comptera pas un siècle après la millième année.'

«En faisant remonter l'époque de la liberté Vénitienne jusqu'à l'établissement du gouvernement sous lequel la république a fleuri, on trouvera que l'élection du premier Doge date de 697, et si l'on y ajoute un siècle après mille, c'est-à-dire onze cents ans, on trouvera encore que le sens de la prédiction est littéralement celui-ci: 'Ta liberté ne comptera pas jusqu'à l'an 1797.' Rappelez-vous maintenant que Venise a cessé d'etre libre en l'an cinq de la République française, ou en 1796; vous verrez qu'il n'y eut jamais de prédiction plus précise et plus ponctuellement suivie de l'effet Vous noterez donc comme très remarquables ces trois vers de l'Alamanni, adressés à Venise, que personne pourtant n'a remarqués:

'Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Bien des prophéties ont passé pour telles, et bien des gens ont été appelés prophetes à meilleur marché.»

VII.

Extract from the Literary History of Italy, by P. L. Ginguéné, vol. ix. p. 144. Paris Edit. 1819.

«There is one very singular prophecy concerning Venice: 'If thou dost not change,' it says to that proud republic, 'thy liberty, which is already on the wing, will not reckon a century more than the thousandth year.'

«If we carry back the epocha of Venetian freedom to the establishment of the government under which the republic flourished, we shall find that the date of the election of the first Doge is 697; and if we add one century to a thousand, that is, eleven hundred years, we shall find the sense of the prediction to be literally this: 'Thy liberty will not last till 1797.' Recollect that Venice ceased to be free in the year 1796, the fifth year of the French republic; and you will perceive that there never was prediction more pointed, or more exactly followed by the event. You will, therefore, note as very remarkable the three lines of Alamanni, addressed to Venice, which, however, no one has pointed out:

'Se non cangi pensier, l'un secol solo
Non conterà sopra 'l millesimo anno
Tua libertà, che va fuggendo a volo.'

Many prophecies have passed for such, and many men have been called prophets for much less.»

If the Doge's prophecy seem remarkable, look to the above, made by Alamanni two hundred and seventy years ago.

The author of «Sketches Descriptive of Italy,» etc. one of the hundred tours lately published, is extremely anxious to disclaim a possible charge of plagiarism from «Childe Harold» and «Beppo.» He adds, that still less could this presumed coincidence arise from «my conversation,» as he had *repeatedly declined an introduction to me while in Italy.*

Who this person may be I know not; but he must have been deceived by all or any of those who «repeatedly offered to introduce» him, as I have invariably refused to receive any English with whom I was not previously acquainted, even when they had letters from England. If the whole assertion is not an invention, I request this person not to sit down with the notion that he could have been introduced, since there has been nothing I have so carefully avoided as any kind of intercourse with his countrymen,—excepting the very few who were a considerable time resident in Venice, or had been of my previous acquaintance. Whoever made him any such offer was possessed of impudence equal to that of making such an assertion without having had it. The fact is, that I hold in utter abhorrence any contact with the travelling English, as my friend the Consul General Hoppner, and the Countess Benzoni (in whose house the Conversazione mostly frequented by them is held), could amply testify, were it worth while. I was persecuted by these tourists even to my riding ground at Lido, and reduced to the most disagreeable circuits to avoid them. At Madame Benzoni's I repeatedly refused to be introduced to them;—of a thousand such presentations pressed upon me, I accepted two, and both were to Irish women.

I should hardly have descended to speak of such trifles publicly, if the impudence of this «sketcher» had not forced me to a refutation of a disingenuous and gratuitously impertinent assertion;—so meant to be, for what could it import to the reader to be told that the author «had repeatedly declined an introduction,» even had it been true, which for the reasons I have above given, is scarcely possible. Except Lords Lansdown, Jersey, and Lauderdale; Messrs Scott, Hammond, Sir Humphry Davy, the late M. Lewis, W. Bankes, Mr Hoppner, Thomas Moore, Lord Kinnaird, his brother, Mr Joy, and Mr Hobhouse, I do not recollect to have exchanged a word with another Englishman since I left their country; and almost all these I had known before. The others,—and God knows there were some hundreds,—who bored me with letters or visits, I refused to have any communication with, and shall be proud and happy when that wish becomes mutual.

Sardanapalus,

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

PREFACE.

In publishing the Tragedies of *Sardanapalus*, and of *The Two Foscari*, I have only to repeat that they were not composed with the most remote view to the stage.

On the attempt made by the managers in a former instance, the public opinion has been already expressed.

With regard to my own private feelings, as it seems that they are to stand for nothing, I shall say nothing.

For the historical foundation of the compositions in question, the reader is referred to the Notes.

The Author has in one instance attempted to preserve, and in the other to approach the « unities;» conceiving that, with any very distant departure from them, there may be poetry, but can be no drama. He is aware of the unpopularity of this notion in present English literature; but it is not a system of his own, being merely an opinion which, not very long ago, was the law of literature throughout the world, and is still so in the more civilized parts of it. But « Nous avons changé tout cela,» and are reaping the advantages of the change. The writer is far from conceiving that any thing he can adduce by personal precept or example can at all approach his regular, or even irregular predecessors: he is merely giving a reason why he preferred the more regular formation of a structure, however feeble, to an entire abandonment of all rules whatsoever. Where he has failed, the failure is in the architect,—and not in the art.

ADVERTISEMENT.

In this tragedy it has been my intention to follow the account of Diodorus Siculus, reducing it, however, to such dramatic regularity as I best could, and trying to approach the unities. I therefore suppose the rebellion to explode and succeed in one day by a sudden conspiracy, instead of the long war of the history.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

SARDANAPALUS, *King of Nineveh and Assyria, etc.*
ARBACES, *the Mede who aspired to the Throne.*
BELESES, *a Chaldean and Soothsayer.*
SALEMENES, *the King's Brother-in-law.*
ALTADA, *an Assyrian Officer of the Palace.*
PANIA.
ZAMES.
SFERO.
BALEA.

WOMEN

ZARINA, *the Queen.*
MYRRHA, *an Ionian female Slave, and the favourite of* SARDANAPALUS.
Women composing the Harem of SARDANAPALUS, *Guards, Attendants, Chaldean Priests, Medes, etc. etc.*

Scene—a Hall in the Royal Palace of Nineveh.

SARDANAPALUS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Palace.

SALEMENES (*solus*).

He hath wrong'd his queen, but still he is her lord;
He hath wrong'd my sister, still he is my brother;
He hath wrong'd his people, still he is their sovereign,
And I must be his friend as well as subject;
He must not perish thus. I will not see
The blood of Nimrod and Semiramis
Sink in the earth, and thirteen hundred years
Of empire ending like a shepherd's tale;
He must be roused. In his effeminate heart
There is a careless courage, which corruption
Has not all quench'd, and latent energies,
Represt by circumstance, but not destroy'd—
Steep'd, but not drown'd, in deep voluptuousness.
If born a peasant, he had been a man
To have reach'd an empire; to an empire born,
He will bequeath none; nothing but a name,
Which his sons will not prize in heritage:—
Yet, not all lost, even yet he may redeem
His sloth and shame, by only being that
Which he should be, as easily as the thing
He should not be and is. Were it less toil
To sway his nations than consume his life?
To head an army than to rule a harem?
He sweats in palling pleasures, dulls his soul,
And saps his goodly strength, in toils which yield not
Health like the chase, nor glory like the war—
He must be roused. Alas! there is no sound
[*Sound of soft music heard from within.*
To rouse him short of thunder. Hark! the lute,
The lyre, the timbrel; the lascivious tinklings
Of lulling instruments, the softening voices
Of women, and of beings less than women,
Must chime in to the echo of his revel,
While the great king of all we know of earth
Lolls crown'd with roses, and his diadem
Lies negligently by to be caught up
By the first manly hand which dares to snatch it.
Lo, where they come! already I perceive
The reeking odours of the perfumed trains,
And see the bright gems of the glittering girls,
Who are his comrades and his council, flash
Along the gallery, and amidst the damsels,
As femininely garb'd, and scarce less female,
The grandson of Semiramis, the man-queen.—
He comes! Shall I await him? yes, and front him,
And tell him what all good men tell each other,
Speaking of him and his. They come, the slaves,
Led by the monarch subject to his slaves.

SCENE II.

Enter SARDANAPALUS, *effeminately dressed, his Head crowned with Flowers, and his Robe negligently flowing, attended by a Train of Women and young Slaves.*

SARDANAPALUS (*speaking to some of his attendants.*)
Let the pavilion over the Euphrates
Be garlanded, and lit, and furnish'd forth
For an especial banquet; at the hour
Of midnight we will sup there: see nought wanting,
And bid the galley be prepared. There is
A cooling breeze which crisps the broad clear river:
We will embark anon. Fair nymphs, who deign
To share the soft hours of Sardanapalus,
We 'll meet again in that the sweetest hour,
When we shall gather like the stars above us,
And you will form a heaven as bright as theirs;
Till then, let each be mistress of her time,
And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha, choose,
Wilt thou along with them or me?

MYRRHA.
My lord——

SARDANAPALUS.
My lord, my life! why answerest thou so coldly?
It is the curse of kings to be so answered.
Rule thy own hours, thou rulest mine—say, wouldst thou
Accompany our guests, or charm away
The moments from me?

MYRRHA.
The king's choice is mine.

SARDANAPALUS.
I pray thee say not so: my chiefest joy
Is to contribute to thine every wish.
I do not dare to breathe my own desire,
Lest it should clash with thine; for thou art still
Too prompt to sacrifice thy thoughts for others.

MYRRHA.
I would remain: I have no happiness
Save in beholding thine; yet——

SARDANAPALUS.
Yet! what YET?
Thy own sweet will shall be the only barrier
Which ever rises betwixt thee and me.

MYRRHA.
I think the present is the wonted hour
Of council; it were better I retire.

SALEMENES (*comes forward and says*).
The Ionian slave says well; let her retire.

SARDANAPALUS.
Who answers? How now, brother?

SALEMENES.
The *queen's* brother,
And your most faithful vassal, royal lord.

SARDANAPALUS (*addressing his train*).
As I have said, let all dispose their hours
Till midnight, when again we pray your presence.
[*The court retiring.*
(*To* MYRRHA, *who is going.*)
Myrrha! I thought *thou* wouldst remain.

MYRRHA
Great king,
Thou didst not say so.

SARDANAPALUS.
But *thou* lookedst it;
I know each glance of those Ionic eyes,
Which said thou wouldst not leave me.

MYRRHA.
Sire! your brother——

SALEMENES.
His *consort's* brother, minion of Ionia!
How darest *thou* name *me* and not blush?

SARDANAPALUS.
Not blush?
Thou hast no more eyes than heart to make her crimson
Like to the dying day on Caucasus,
Where sunset tints the snow with rosy shadows,
And then reproach her with thine own cold blindness,
Which will not see it. What, in tears, my Myrrha?

SALEMENES.
Let them flow on; she weeps for more than one,
And is herself the cause of bitterer tears.

SARDANAPALUS.
Cursed be he who caused those tears to flow!

SALEMENES.
Curse not thyself—millions do that already.

SARDANAPALUS.
Thou dost forget thee: make me not remember
I am a monarch.

SALEMENES.
Would thou couldst!

MYRRHA.
My sovereign,
I pray, and thou too, prince, permit my absence.

SARDANAPALUS.
Since it must be so, and this churl has check'd
Thy gentle spirit, go; but recollect
That we must forthwith meet: I had rather lose
An empire than thy presence. [*Exit* MYRRHA.

SALEMENES.
It may be,
Thou wilt lose both, and both for ever!

SARDANAPALUS.
Brother,
I can at least command myself, who listen
To language such as this; yet urge me not
Beyond my easy nature.

SALEMENES.
'T is beyond
That easy, far too easy, idle nature,
Which I would urge thee. Oh that I could rouse thee!
Though 't were against myself.

SARDANAPALUS.
By the god Baal!
The man would make me tyrant.

SALEMENES.
So thou art.
Think'st thou there is no tyranny but that
Of blood and chains? The despotism of vice—
The weakness and the wickedness of luxury—
The negligence—the apathy—the evils
Of sensual sloth—produce ten thousand tyrants,
Whose delegated cruelty surpasses
The worst acts of one energetic master,
However harsh and hard in his own bearing.
The false and fond examples of thy lusts
Corrupt no less than they oppress, and sap
In the same moment all thy pageant power,
And those who should sustain it; so that whether
A foreign foe invade, or civil broil
Distract within, both will alike prove fatal:
The first thy subjects have no heart to conquer;
The last they rather would assist than vanquish.

SARDANAPALUS.

Why what makes thee the mouth-piece of the people?

SALEMENES.

Forgiveness of the queen, my sister's wrongs;
A natural love unto my infant nephews;
Faith to the king, a faith he may need shortly,
In more than words; respect for Nimrod's line;
Also, another thing thou knowest not,

SARDANAPALUS.

What 's that?

SALEMENES.

To thee an unknown word.

SARDANAPALUS.

Yet speak it,
I love to learn.

SALEMENES.

Virtue.

SARDANAPALUS.

Not know the word!
Never was word yet rung so in my ears—
Worse than the rabble's shout, or splitting trumpet;
I' ve heard thy sister talk of nothing else.

SALEMENES.

To change the irksome theme, then, hear of vice.

SARDANAPALUS.

From whom?

SALEMENES.

Even from the winds, if thou couldst listen
Unto the echoes of the nation's voice.

SARDANAPALUS.

Come, I' m indulgent as thou knowest, patient
As thou hast often proved—speak out, what moves thee?

SALEMENES.

Thy peril.

SARDANAPALUS.

Say on.

SALEMENES.

Thus, then: all the nations,
For they are many, whom thy father left
In heritage, are loud in wrath against thee.

SARDANAPALUS.

'Gainst *me!* What would the slaves?

SALEMENES.

A king.

SARDANAPALUS.

And what
Am I then?

SALEMENES.

In their eyes a nothing; but
In mine a man who might be something still.

SARDANAPALUS.

The railing drunkards! why, what would they have?
Have they not peace and plenty?

SALEMENES.

Of the first,
More than is glorious; of the last far less
Than the king recks of.

SARDANAPALUS.

Whose then is the crime,
But the false satraps, who provide no better?

SALEMENES.

And somewhat in the monarch who ne'er looks
Beyond his palace walls, or if he stirs
Beyond them, 't is but to some mountain palace,
Till summer heats wear down. O glorious Baal!
Who built up this vast empire, and wert made
A god, or at the least shinest like a god
Through the long centuries of thy renown,
This, thy presumed descendant, ne'er beheld
As king the kingdoms thou didst leave as hero,
Won with thy blood, and toil, and time, and peril!
For what? to furnish imposts for a revel,
Or multiplied extortions for a minion.

SARDANAPALUS.

I understand thee—thou wouldst have me go
Forth as a conqueror. By all the stars
Which the Chaldeans read! the restless slaves
Deserve that I should curse them with their wishes,
And lead them forth to glory.

SALEMENES.

Wherefore not?
Semiramis—a woman only—led
These our Assyrians to the solar shores
Of Ganges.

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is most true. And *how* return'd?

SALEMENES.

Why, like a *man*—a hero; baffled, but
Not vanquish'd. With but twenty guards, she made
Good her retreat to Bactria.

SARDANAPALUS.

And how many
Left she behind in India to the vultures?

SALEMENES.

Our annals say not.

SARDANAPALUS.

Then I will say for them—
That she had better woven within her palace
Some twenty garments, than with twenty guards
Have fled to Bactria, leaving to the ravens,
And wolves, and men—the fiercer of the three,
Her myriads of fond subjects. Is *this* glory?
Then let me live in ignominy ever.

SALEMENES.

All warlike spirits have not the same fate.
Semiramis, the glorious parent of
A hundred kings, although she fail'd in India,
Brought Persia, Media, Bactria, to the realm
Which she once sway'd—and thou *mightst* sway.

SARDANAPALUS.

I *sway* them—
She but subdued them.

SALEMENES.

It may be ere long
That they will need her sword more than your sceptre.

SARDANAPALUS.

There was a certain Bacchus, was there not?
I' ve heard my Greek girls speak of such—they say
He was a god, that is, a Grecian god,
An idol foreign to Assyria's worship,
Who conquer'd this same golden realm of Ind
Thou pratest of, where Semiramis was vanquish'd.

SALEMENES.

I have heard of such a man: and thou perceivest
That he is deem'd a god for what he did.

SARDANAPALUS.

And in his godship I will honour him—
Not much as man. What, ho! my cupbearer!

SALEMENES.

What means the king?

SARDANAPALUS.

To worship your new god
And ancient conqueror. Some wine, I say.

Enter Cupbearer.

SARDANAPALUS (*addressing the Cupbearer*).

Bring me the golden goblet thick with gems,
Which bears the name of Nimrod's chalice. Hence,
Fill full, and bear it quickly. [*Exit Cupbearer.*

SALEMENES.

Is this moment
A fitting one for the resumption of
Thy yet unslept-off revels?

Re-enter Cupbearer, with wine.

SARDANAPALUS (*taking the cup from him*).

Noble kinsman,
If these barbarian Greeks of the far shores
And skirts of these our realms lie not, this Bacchus
Conquer'd the whole of India, did he not?

SALEMENES.

He did, and thence was deem'd a deity.

SARDANAPALUS.

Not so:—of all his conquests a few columns,
Which may be his, and might be mine, if I
Thought them worth purchase and conveyance, are
The landmarks of the seas of gore he shed,
The realms he wasted, and the hearts he broke.
But here, here in this goblet is his title
To immortality—the immortal grape
From which he first express'd the soul, and gave
To gladden that of man, as some atonement
For the victorious mischiefs he had done.
Had it not been for this, he would have been
A mortal still in name as in his grave;
And, like my ancestor Semiramis,
A sort of semi-glorious human monster.
Here 's that which deified him—let it now
Humanize thee; my surly, chiding brother,
Pledge me to the Greek god!

SALEMENES.

For all thy realms
I would not so blaspheme our country's creed.

SARDANAPALUS.

That is to say, thou thinkest him a hero,
That he shed blood by oceans; and no god,
Because he turn'd a fruit to an enchantment,
Which cheers the sad, revives the old, inspires
The young, makes Weariness forget his toil,
And Fear her danger; opens a new world
When this, the present, palls. Well, then *I* pledge thee
And *him* as a true man, who did his utmost
In good or evil to surprise mankind. [*Drinks.*

SALEMENES,

Wilt thou resume a revel at this hour?

SARDANAPALUS.

And if I did, 't were better than a trophy,
Being bought without a tear. But that is not
My present purpose: since thou wilt not pledge me,
Continue what thou pleasest.
(*To the Cupbearer*) Boy, retire.
Exit Cupbearer.

SALEMENES.

I would but have recall'd thee from thy dream:
Better by me awaken'd than rebellion.

SARDANAPALUS.

Who should rebel? or why? what cause? pretext?
I am the lawful king, descended from
A race of kings who knew no predecessors.
What have I done to thee, or to the people,
That thou shouldst rail, or they rise up against me?

SALEMENES.

Of what thou hast done to me, I speak not.

SARDANAPALUS.

But
Thou think'st that I have wrong'd the queen: is't not so?

SALEMENES.

Think! Thou hast wrong'd her!

SARDANAPALUS.

Patience, prince, and hear me.
She has all power and splendour of her station,
Respect, the tutelage of Assyria's heirs,
The homage and the appanage of sovereignty.
I married her as monarchs wed—for state,
And loved her as most husbands love their wives.
If she or thou supposedst I could link me
Like a Chaldean peasant to his mate,
Ye knew nor me, nor monarchs, nor mankind.

SALEMENES.

I pray thee, change the theme; my blood disdains
Complaint, and Salemenes' sister seeks not
Reluctant love even from Assyria's lord!
Nor would she deign to accept divided passion
With foreign strumpets and Ionian slaves.
The queen is silent.

SARDANAPALUS.

And why not her brother?

SALEMENES.

I only echo thee the voice of empires,
Which he who long neglects not long will govern.

SARDANAPALUS.

The ungrateful and ungracious slaves! they murmur
Because I have not shed their blood, nor led them
To dry into the desert's dust by myriads,
Or whiten with their bones the banks of Ganges;
Nor decimated them with savage laws,
Nor sweated them to build up pyramids,
Or Babylonian walls.

SALEMENES.

Yet these are trophies
More worthy of a people and their prince
Than songs, and lutes, and feasts, and concubines,
And lavish'd treasures, and contemned virtues.

SARDANAPALUS.

Or for my trophies I have founded cities:
There 's Tarsus and Anchialus, both built
In one day—what could that blood-loving beldame,
My martial grandam, chaste Semiramis,
Do more, except destroy them?

SALEMENES.

'T is most true;
I own thy merit in those founded cities,
Built for a whim, recorded with a verse
Which shames both them and thee to coming ages.

SARDANAPALUS.

Shame me! By Baal, the cities, though well built,
Are not more goodly than the verse! Say what
Thou wilt 'gainst me, my mode of life or rule,
But nothing 'gainst the truth of that brief record.
Why, those few lines contain the history

Of all things human; hear—«Sardanapalus
The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,
In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.
Eat, drink, and love; the rest 's not worth a fillip.»

SALEMENES.

A worthy moral, and a wise inscription,
For a king to put up before his subjects!

SARDANAPALUS.

Oh, thou wouldst have me doubtless set up edicts—
« Obey the king—contribute to his treasure—
Recruit his phalanx—spill your blood at bidding—
Fall down and worship, or get up and toil.»
Or thus—« Sardanapalus on this spot
Slew fifty thousand of his enemies.
These are their sepulchres, and this his trophy.»
I leave such things to conquerors; enough.
For me, if I can make my subjects feel
The weight of human misery less, and glide
Ungroaning to the tomb, I take no licence
Which I deny to them. We all are men.

SALEMENES.

Thy sires have been revered as gods—

SARDANAPALUS.

In dust
And death, where they are neither gods nor men.
Talk not of such to me! the worms are gods;
At least they banqueted upon your gods,
And died for lack of farther nutriment.
Those gods were merely men; look to their issue—
I feel a thousand mortal things about me,
But nothing godlike, unless it may be
The thing which you condemn, a disposition
To love and to be merciful, to pardon
The follies of my species, and (that 's human)
To be indulgent to my own.

SALEMENES.

Alas!
The doom of Nineveh is seal'd.—Woe—woe
To the unrivall'd city!

SARDANAPALUS.

What dost dread?

SALEMENES.

Thou art guarded by thy foes: in a few hours
The tempest may break out which overwhelms thee,
And thine and mine; and in another day
What *is* shall be the past of Belus' race.

SARDANAPALUS.

What must we dread?

SALEMENES.

Ambitious treachery,
Which has environ'd thee with snares; but yet
There is resource: empower me with thy signet
To quell the machinations, and I lay
The heads of thy chief foes before thy feet.

SARDANAPALUS.

The heads—how many?

SALEMENES.

Must I stay to number
When even thine own 's in peril? Let me go;
Give me thy signet—trust me with the rest.

SARDANAPALUS.

I will trust no man with unlimited lives.
When we take those from others, we nor know
What we have taken, nor the thing we give.

SALEMENES.

Wouldst thou not take their lives who seek for thine?

SARDANAPALUS.

That 's a hard question.—But, I answer Yes.
Cannot the thing be done without? Who are they
Whom thou suspectest?—Let them be arrested.

SALEMENES.

I would thou wouldst not ask me; the next moment
Will send my answer through thy babbling troop
Of paramours, and thence fly o'er the palace,
Even to the city, and so baffle all.—
Trust me.

SARDANAPALUS.

Thou knowest I have done so ever;
Take thou the signet. [*Gives the Signet.*

SALEMENES.

I have one more request.—

SARDANAPALUS.

Name it.

SALEMENES.

That thou this night forbear the banquet
In the pavilion over the Euphrates.

SARDANAPALUS.

Forbear the banquet! Not for all the plotters
That ever shook a kingdom! Let them come,
And do their worst: I shall not blench for them;
Nor rise the sooner; nor forbear the goblet;
Nor crown me with a single rose the less;
Nor lose one joyous hour.—I fear them not.

SALEMENES.

But thou wouldst arm thee, wouldst thou not, if needful?

SARDANAPALUS.

Perhaps. I have the goodliest armour, and
A sword of such a temper; and a bow
And javelin, which might furnish Nimrod forth:
A little heavy, but yet not unwieldy.
And now I think on 't, 't is long since I 've used them,
Even in the chase. Hast ever seen them, brother?

SALEMENES.

Is this a time for such fantastic trifling?—
If need be, wilt thou wear them?

SARDANAPALUS.

Will I not?—
Oh! if it must be so, and these rash slaves
Will not be ruled with less, I 'll use the sword
Till they shall wish it turn'd into a distaff.

SALEMENES.

They say, thy sceptre 's turn'd to that already.

SARDANAPALUS.

That 's false! but let them say so: the old Greeks,
Of whom our captives often sing, related
The same of their chief hero, Hercules,
Because he loved a Lydian queen: thou seest
The populace of all the nations seize
Each calumny they can to sink their sovereigns.

SALEMENES.

They did not speak thus of thy fathers.

SARDANAPALUS.

No;
They dared not. They were kept to toil and combat,
And never changed their chains but for their armour:
Now they have peace and pastime, and the licence
To revel and to rail; it irks me not.
I would not give the smile of one fair girl
For all the popular breath that e'er divided
A name from nothing. What are the rank tongues
Of this vile herd grown insolent with feeding,

That I should prize their noisy praise, or dread
Their noisome clamour?

SALEMENES.

You have said they are men;
As such their hearts are something.

SARDANAPALUS.

So my dogs' are;
And better, as more faithful:—but, proceed;
Thou hast my signet:—since they are tumultuous,
Let them be temper'd; yet not roughly, till
Necessity enforce it. I hate all pain,
Given or received; we have enough within us,
The meanest vassal as the loftiest monarch,
Not to add to each other's natural burthen
Of mortal misery, but rather lessen,
By mild reciprocal alleviation,
The fatal penalties imposed on life;
But this they know not, or they will not know.
I have, by Baal! done all I could to soothe them:
I made no wars, I added no new imposts,
I interfered not with their civic lives,
I let them pass their days as best might suit them,
Passing my own as suited me.

SALEMENES.

Thou stopp'st
Short of the duties of a king; and therefore
They say thou art unfit to be a monarch.

SARDANAPALUS.

They lie.—Unhappily, I am unfit
To be aught save a monarch; else for me,
The meanest Mede might be the king instead.

SALEMENES.

There is one Mede, at least, who seeks to be so.

SARDANAPALUS.

What mean'st thou?—'t is thy secret; thou desirest
Few questions, and I 'm not of curious nature.
Take the fit steps, and since necessity
Requires, I sanction and support thee. Ne'er
Was man who more desired to rule in peace
The peaceful only; if they rouse me, better
They had conjured up stern Nimrod from his ashes,
« The mighty hunter. » I will turn these realms
To one wide desert chase of brutes, who *were*,
But *would* no more, by their own choice, be human.
What they have found me, they belie; *that which*
They yet may find me—shall defy their wish
To speak it worse; and let them thank themselves.

SALEMENES.

Then thou at last canst feel?

SARDANAPALUS.

Feel! who feels not
Ingratitude?

SALEMENES.

I will not pause to answer
With words, but deeds. Keep thou awake that energy
Which sleeps at times, but is not dead within thee,
And thou mayst yet be glorious in thy reign,
As powerful in thy realm. Farewell!

[*Exit* SALEMENES.

SARDANAPALUS (*solus*).

Farewell!
He 's gone; and on his finger bears my signet,
Which is to him a sceptre. He is stern
As I am heedless; and the slaves deserve
To feel a master. What may be the danger,
I know not:—he hath found it, let him quell it.
Must I consume my life—this little life—
In guarding against all may make it less?
It is not worth so much! It were to die
Before my hour, to live in dread of death,
Tracing revolt: suspecting all about me,
Because they are near; and all who are remote,
Because they are far. But if it should be so—
If they should sweep me off from earth and empire,
Why, what is earth or empire of the earth?
I have loved, and lived, and multiplied my image;
To die is no less natural than those—
Acts of this clay! 'T is true I have not shed
Blood, as I might have done, in oceans, till
My name became the synonyme of death—
A terror and a trophy. But for this
I feel no penitence; my life is love:
If I must shed blood, it shall be by force.
Till now no drop from an Assyrian vein
Hath flow'd for me, nor hath the smallest coin
Of Nineveh's vast treasures e'er been lavish'd
On objects which could cost her sons a tear:
If then they hate me, 't is because I hate not;
If they rebel, it is because I oppress not.
Oh, men! ye must be ruled with scythes, not sceptres,
And mow'd down like the grass, else all we reap
Is rank abundance, and a rotten harvest
Of discontents infecting the fair soil,
Making a desert of fertility.—
I 'll think no more.——Within there, ho!

Enter an ATTENDANT.

SARDANAPALUS.

Slave, tell
The Ionian Myrrha we would crave her presence.

ATTENDANT.

King, she is here.

MYRRHA *enters*.

SARDANAPALUS (*apart to attendant*).

Away!
(*Addressing* MYRRHA.) Beautiful being!
Thou dost almost anticipate my heart;
It throbb'd for thee, and here thou comest: let me
Deem that some unknown influence, some sweet oracle,
Communicates between us, though unseen,
In absence, and attracts us to each other.

MYRRHA.

There doth.

SARDANAPALUS.

I know there doth, but not its name;
What is it?

MYRRHA.

In my native land a god,
And in my heart a feeling like a god's,
Exalted; yet I own 't is only mortal,
For what I feel is humble, and yet happy—
That is, it would be happy; but——

[MYRRHA *pauses*.

SARDANAPALUS.

There comes
For ever something between us and what
We deem our happiness: let me remove
The barrier which that hesitating accent
Proclaims to thine, and mine is seal'd.

MYRRHA.

My lord!—

SARDANAPALUS.

My lord—my king—sire—sovereign! thus it is—

For ever thus, address'd with awe. I ne'er
Can see a smile, unless in some broad banquet's
Intoxicating glare, when the buffoons
Have gorged themselves up to equality,
Or I have quaff'd me down to their abasement.
Myrrha, I can hear all these things, these names,
Lord—king—sire—monarch—nay, time was I prized them,
That is, I suffer'd them—from slaves and nobles;
But when they falter from the lips I love,
The lips which have been press'd to mine, a chill
Comes o'er my heart, a cold sense of the falsehood
Of this my station, which represses feeling
In those for whom I have felt most, and makes me
Wish that I could lay down the dull tiara,
And share a cottage on the Caucasus
With thee, and wear no crowns but those of flowers.

MYRRHA.

Would that we could!

SARDANAPALUS.

And dost *thou* feel this?—Why?

MYRRHA.

Then thou wouldst know what thou canst never know.

SARDANAPALUS.

And that is—

MYRRHA.

The true value of a heart;
At least a woman's.

SARDANAPALUS.

I have proved a thousand—
A thousand, and a thousand.

MYRRHA.

Hearts?

SARDANAPALUS.

I think so.

MYRRHA.

Not one! the time may come thou may'st.

SARDANAPALUS.

It will.
Hear, Myrrha; Salemenes has declared—
Or why or how he hath divined it, Belus,
Who founded our great realm, knows more than I—
But Salemenes hath declared my throne
In peril.

MYRRHA.

He did well.

SARDANAPALUS.

And say'st *thou* so?
Thou whom he spurn'd so harshly, and now dared
Drive from our presence with his savage jeers,
And made thee weep and blush?

MYRRHA.

I should do both
More frequently, and he did well to call me
Back to my duty. But thou speakst of peril—
Peril to thee——

SARDANAPALUS.

Ay, from dark plots and snares
From Medes—and discontented troops and nations.
I know not what—a labyrinth of things—
A maze of mutter'd threats and mysteries:
Thou know'st the man—it is his usual custom.
But he is honest. Come, we 'll think no more on 't—
But of the midnight festival.

MYRRHA.

'T is time
To think of aught save festivals. Thou hast not
Spurn'd his sage cautions?

SARDANAPALUS.

What!—and dost thou fear?

MYRRHA.

Fear!—I 'm a Greek, and how should I fear death?
A slave, and wherefore should I dread my freedom?

SARDANAPALUS.

Then wherefore dost thou turn so pale?

MYRRHA.

I love.

SARDANAPALUS.

And do not I? I love thee far—far more
Than either the brief life or the wide realm,
Which, it may be, are menaced;—yet I blench not.

MYRRHA.

That means thou lovest nor thyself nor me;
For he who loves another loves himself,
Even for that other's sake. This is too rash:
Kingdoms and lives are not to be so lost.

SARDANAPALUS.

Lost!—why, who is the aspiring chief who dared
Assume to win them?

MYRRHA.

Who is he should dread
To try so much? When he who is their ruler
Forgets himself, will they remember him?

SARDANAPALUS.

Myrrha!

MYRRHA.

Frown not upon me: you have smiled
Too often on me not to make those frowns
Bitterer to bear than any punishment
Which they may augur.—King, I am your subject!
Master, I am your slave! Man, I have loved you!—
Loved you, I know not by what fatal weakness,
Although a Greek, and born a foe to monarchs—
A slave, and hating fetters—an Ionian,
And, therefore, when I love, a stranger, more
Degraded by that passion than by chains!
Still I have loved you. If that love were strong
Enough to overcome all former nature,
Shall it not claim the privilege to save you?

SARDANAPALUS.

Save me, my beauty! Thou art very fair,
And what I seek of thee is love—not safety.

MYRRHA.

And without love where dwells security?

SARDANAPALUS.

I speak of woman's love.

MYRRHA.

The very first
Of human life must spring from woman's breast,
Your first small words are taught you from her lips,
Your first tears quench'd by her, and your last sighs
Too often breathed out in a woman's hearing,
When men have shrunk from the ignoble care
Of watching the last hour of him who led them.

SARDANAPALUS.

My eloquent Ionian! thou speak'st music,
The very chorus of the tragic song
I have heard thee talk of as the favourite pastime
Of thy far father-land. Nay, weep not—calm thee.

MYRRHA.

I weep not.—But I pray thee, do not speak
About my fathers or their land.

SARDANAPALUS.

Yet oft
Thou speakest of them.

MYRRHA.

True—true: constant thought
Will overflow in words unconsciously;
But when another speaks of Greece, it wounds me.

SARDANAPALUS.

Well, then, how wouldst thou *save* me, as thou saidst?

MYRRHA.

By teaching thee to save thyself, and not
Thyself alone, but these vast realms, from all
The rage of the worst war—the war of brethren.

SARDANAPALUS.

Why, child, I loathe all war, and warriors;
I live in peace and pleasure: what can man
Do more?

MYRRHA.

Alas! my lord, with common men
There needs too oft the show of war to keep
The substance of sweet peace; and for a king,
'T is sometimes better to be fear'd than loved.

SARDANAPALUS.

And I have never sought but for the last.

MYRRHA.

And now art neither.

SARDANAPALUS.

Dost *thou* say so, Myrrha?

MYRRHA.

I speak of civic popular love, *self* love,
Which means that men are kept in awe and law,
Yet not oppress'd—at least they must not think so;
Or if they think so, deem it necessary,
To ward off worse oppression, their own passions.
A king of feasts, and flowers, and wine, and revel,
And love, and mirth, was never king of glory.

SARDANAPALUS.

Glory! what 's that?

MYRRHA.

Ask of the gods thy fathers.

SARDANAPALUS.

They cannot answer; when the priests speak for them,
'T is for some small addition to the temple.

MYRRHA.

Look to the annals of thine empire's founders.

SARDANAPALUS.

They are so blotted o'er with blood, I cannot.
But what wouldst have? the empire *has been* founded.
I cannot go on multiplying empires.

MYRRHA.

Preserve thine own.

SARDANAPALUS.

At least I will enjoy it.
Come, Myrrha, let us on to the Euphrates;
The hour invites, the galley is prepared,
And the pavilion, deck'd for our return,
In fit adornment for the evening banquet,
Shall blaze with beauty and with light, until
It seems unto the stars which are above us
Itself an opposite star; and we will sit
Crown'd with fresh flowers like——

MYRRHA

Victims.

SARDANAPALUS.

No, like sovereigns,
The shepherd kings of patriarchal times,
Who knew no brighter gems than summer wreaths,
And none but tearless triumphs. Let us on.

Enter PANIA.

PANIA.

May the king live for ever!

SARDANAPALUS.

Not an hour
Longer than he can love. How my soul hates
This language, which makes life itself a lie,
Flattering dust with eternity. Well, Pania!
Be brief.

PANIA.

I am charged by Salemenes to
Reiterate his prayer unto the king,
That for this day, at least, he will not quit
The palace: when the general returns,
He will adduce such reasons as will warrant
His daring, and perhaps obtain the pardon
Of his presumption.

SARDANAPALUS.

What! am I then coop'd?
Already captive? can I not even breathe
The breath of heaven? Tell prince Salemenes,
Were all Assyria raging round the walls
In mutinous myriads, I would still go forth.

PANIA.

I must obey, and yet——

MYRRHA.

Oh, monarch, listen.—
How many a day and moon thou hast reclined
Within these palace walls in silken dalliance,
And never shown thee to thy people's longing;
Leaving thy subjects' eyes ungratified,
The satraps uncontroll'd, the gods unworshipp'd,
And all things in the anarchy of sloth,
Till all, save evil, slumber'd through the realm!
And wilt thou not now tarry for a day,
A day which may redeem thee? Wilt thou not
Yield to the few still faithful a few hours,
For them, for thee, for thy past fathers' race,
And for thy sons' inheritance?

PANIA.

'T is true!
From the deep urgency with which the prince
Dispatch'd me to your sacred presence, I
Must dare to add my feeble voice to that
Which now has spoken.

SARDANAPALUS.

No, it must not be.

MYRRHA.

For the sake of thy realm!

SARDANAPALUS.

Away!

PANIA.

For that
Of all thy faithful subjects, who will rally
Round thee and thine.

SARDANAPALUS.

These are mere phantasies;
There is no peril:—'t is a sullen scheme
Of Salemenes, to approve his zeal,
And show himself more necessary to us.

MYRRHA.

By all that 's good and glorious, take this counsel.

SARDANAPALUS.

Business to-morrow.

MYRRHA.

Ay, or death to-night.

SARDANAPALUS.

Why, let it come, then, unexpectedly,
'Midst joy and gentleness, and mirth and love;
So let me fall like the pluck'd rose!—far better
Thus than be wither'd.

MYRRHA.

Then thou wilt not yield,
Even for the sake of all that ever stirr'd
A monarch into action, to forego
A trifling revel.

SARDANAPALUS.

No.

MYRRHA.

Then yield for *mine;*
For my sake!

SARDANAPALUS.

Thine, my Myrrha?

MYRRHA.

'Tis the first
Boon which I e'er ask'd Assyria's king.

SARDANAPALUS.

That's true; and, wer't my kingdom, must be granted.
Well, for thy sake, I yield me. Pania, hence!
Thou hear'st me.

PANIA.

And obey. [*Exit* PANIA.

SARDANAPALUS.

I marvel at thee.
What is thy motive, Myrrha, thus to urge me?

MYRRHA.

Thy safety; and the certainty that nought
Could urge the prince, thy kinsman, to require
Thus much from thee, but some impending danger.

SARDANAPALUS.

And if I do not dread it, why shouldst thou?

MYRRHA.

Because *thou* dost not fear, I fear for *thee.*

SARDANAPALUS.

To-morrow thou wilt smile at these vain fancies.

MYRRHA.

If the worst come, I shall be where none weep,
And that is better than the power to smile.
And thou?

SARDANAPALUS.

I shall be king, as heretofore.

MYRRHA.

Where?

SARDANAPALUS.

With Baal, Nimrod, and Semiramis,
Sole in Assyria, or with them elsewhere.
Fate made me what I am—may make me nothing—
But either that or nothing must I be:
I will not live degraded.

MYRRHA.

Hadst thou felt
Thus always, none would ever dare degrade thee.

SARDANAPALUS.

And who will do so now?

MYRRHA.

Dost thou suspect none?

SARDANAPALUS.

Suspect!—that's a spy's office. Oh! we lose
Ten thousand precious moments in vain words,
And vainer fears. Within there!—Ye slaves, deck
The hall of Nimrod for the evening revel:
If I must make a prison of our palace,
At least we 'll wear our fetters jocundly;
If the Euphrates be forbid us, and
The summer dwelling on its beauteous border,
Here we are still unmenaced. Ho! within there!

[*Exit* SARDANAPALUS.

MYRRHA (*solus*).

Why do I love this man? My country's daughters
Love none but heroes. But I have no country!
The slave hath lost all save her bonds. I love him;
And that 's the heaviest link of the long chain—
To love whom we esteem not. Be it so:
The hour is coming when he 'll need all love,
And find none. To fall from him now were baser
Than to have stabb'd him on his throne when highest
Would have been noble in my country's creed;
I was not made for either. Could I save him,
I should not love *him* better, but myself;
And I have need of the last, for I have fallen
In my own thoughts, by loving this soft stranger:
And yet methinks I love him more, perceiving
That he is hated of his own barbarians,
The natural foes of all the blood of Greece.
Could I but wake a single thought like those
Which even the Phrygians felt, when battling long
'Twixt Ilion and the sea, within his heart,
He would tread down the barbarous crowds, and triumph.
He loves me, and I love him; the slave loves
Her master, and would free him from his vices.
If not, I have a means of freedom still,
And if I cannot teach him how to reign,
May show him how alone a king can leave
His throne. I must not lose him from my sight.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Portal of the same Hall of the Palace.

BELESES (*solus*).

The sun goes down; methinks he sets more slowly,
Taking his last look of Assyria's empire.
How red he glares amongst those deepening clouds,
Like the blood he predicts. If not in vain,
Thou sun that sinkest, and ye stars which rise,
I have outwatch'd ye, reading ray by ray
The edicts of your orbs, which make Time tremble
For what he brings the nations, 't is the furthest
Hour of Assyria's years. And yet how calm!
An earthquake should announce so great a fall—
A summer's sun discloses it. Yon disk,
To the star-read Chaldean, bears upon
Its everlasting page the end of what
Seem'd everlasting; but oh! thou true sun!
The burning oracle of all that live,
As fountain of all life, and symbol of
Him who bestows it, wherefore dost thou limit
Thy lore unto calamity? Why not
Unfold the rise of days more worthy thine
All-glorious burst from ocean? why not dart
A beam of hope athwart the future's years,

As of wrath to its days? Hear me! oh! hear me!
I am thy worshipper, thy priest, thy servant—
I have gazed on thee at thy rise and fall,
And bow'd my head beneath thy mid-day beams,
When my eye dared not meet thee. I have watch'd
For thee, and after thee, and pray'd to thee,
And sacrificed to thee, and read, and fear'd thee,
And asked of thee, and thou hast answer'd—but
Only to thus much: while I speak, he sinks—
Is gone—and leaves his beauty, not his knowledge,
To the delighted west, which revels in
Its hues of dying glory. Yet what is
Death, so it be but glorious? 'T is a sunset;
And mortals may be happy to resemble
The gods but in decay.

Enter ARBACES, *by an inner door.*

ARBACES.

Beleses, why
So wrapt in thy devotions? Dost thou stand
Gazing to trace thy disappearing god
Into some realm of undiscover'd day?
Our business is with night—'t is come.

BELESES.

But not
Gone.

ARBACES.

Let it roll on—we are ready.

BELESES.

Yes.
Would it were over!

ARBACES.

Does the prophet doubt,
To whom the very stars shine victory?

BELESES.

I do not doubt of victory—but the victor.

ARBACES.

Well, let thy science settle that. Meantime,
I have prepared as many glittering spears
As will out-sparkle our allies—your planets.
There is no more to thwart us. The she-king,
That less than woman, is even now upon
The waters with his female mates. The order
Is issued for the feast in the pavilion.
The first cup which he drains will be the last
Quaff'd by the line of Nimrod.

BELESES.

'T was a brave one.

ARBACES.

And is a weak one—'t is worn out—we 'll mend it.

BELESES.

Art sure of that?

ARBACES.

Its founder was a hunter—
I am a soldier—what is there to fear?

BELESES.

The soldier.

ARBACES.

And the priest, it may be; but
If you thought thus, or think, why not retain
Your king of concubines? why stir me up?
Why spur me to this enterprise? your own
No less than mine?

BELESES.

Look to the sky!

ARBACES.

I look.

BELESES.

What seest thou?

ARBACES.

A fair summer's twilight, and
The gathering of the stars.

BELESES.

And midst them, mark
Yon earliest, and the brightest, which so quivers,
As it would quit its place in the blue ether.

ARBACES.

Well!

BELESES.

'T is thy natal ruler—thy birth planet.

ARBACES (*touching his scabbard*).

My star is in this scabbard: when it shines,
It shall out-dazzle comets. Let us think
Of what is to be done to justify
Thy planets and their portents. When we conquer,
They shall have temples—ay, and priests—and thou
Shalt be the pontiff of—what gods thou wilt;
For I observe that they are ever just,
And own the bravest for the most devout.

BELESES.

Ay, and the most devout for brave—thou hast not
Seen me turn back from battle.

ARBACES.

No; I own thee
As firm in fight as Babylonia's captain,
As skilful in Chaldea's worship; now,
Will it but please thee to forget the priest,
And be the warrior?

BELESES.

Why not both?

ARBACES.

The better;
And yet it almost shames me, we shall have
So little to effect. This woman's warfare
Degrades the very conqueror. To have pluck'd
A bold and bloody despot from his throne,
And grappled with him, clashing steel with steel,
That were heroic or to win or fall;
But to upraise my sword against this silkworm,
And hear him whine, it may be——

BELESES.

Do not deem it:
He has that in him which may make you strife yet;
And, were he all you think, his guards are hardy,
And headed by the cool, stern Salemenes.

ARBACES.

They 'll not resist.

BELESES.

Why not? they are soldiers.

ARBACES.

True,
And therefore need a soldier to command them.

BELESES.

That Salemenes is.

ARBACES.

But not their king.
Besides, he hates the effeminate thing that governs,
For the queen's sake, his sister. Mark you not
He keeps aloof from all the revels?

BELESES.

But
Not from the council—there he is ever constant.

ARBACES.

And ever thwarted; what would you have more
To make a rebel out of? A fool reigning,
His blood dishonour'd, and himself disdain'd;
Why, it is *his* revenge we work for.

BELESES.

Could
He but be brought to think so: this I doubt of.

ARBACES.

What if we sound him?

BELESES.

Yes—if the time served.

Enter BALEA.

BALEA.

Satraps! the king commands your presence at
The feast to-night.

BELESES.

To hear is to obey.
In the pavilion?

BALEA.

No; here in the palace.

ARBACES.

How! in the palace? it was not thus order'd.

BALEA.

It is so order'd now.

ARBACES.

And why?

BALEA.

I know not.
May I retire?

ARBACES.

Stay.

BELESES (*to* ARBACES *aside*).

Hush! let him go his way.
(*Alternately to* BALEA.)
Yes, Balea, thank the monarch, kiss the hem
Of his imperial robe, and say, his slaves
Will take the crumbs he deigns to scatter from
His royal table at the hour—was 't midnight?

BALEA.

It was; the place, the Hall of Nimrod. Lords,
I humble me before you and depart. [*Exit* BALEA.

ARBACES.

I like not this same sudden change of place,
There is some mystery; wherefore should he change it?

BELESES.

Doth he not change a thousand times a day?
Sloth is of all things the most fanciful—
And moves more parasangs in its intents
Than generals in their marches, when they seek
To leave their foe at fault.—Why dost thou muse?

ARBACES.

He loved that gay pavilion—it was ever
His summer dotage.

BELESES.

And he loved his queen—
And thrice a thousand harlotry besides—
And he has loved all things by turns, except
Wisdom and glory.

ARBACES.

Still—I like it not.
If he has changed—why so must we! the attack
Were easy in the isolated bower,
Beset with drowsy guards and drunken courtiers;
But in the Hall of Nimrod——

BELESES.

Is it so?
Methought the haughty soldier fear'd to mount
A throne too easily: does it disappoint thee
To find there is a slipperier step or two
Than what was counted on?

ARBACES.

When the hour comes,
Thou shalt perceive how far I fear or no.
Thou hast seen my life at stake—and gaily play'd for:
But here is more upon the die—a kingdom.

BELESES.

I have foretold already—thou wilt win it:
Then on, and prosper.

ARBACES.

Now, were I a soothsayer,
I would have boded so much to myself.
But be the stars obey'd—I cannot quarrel
With them, nor their interpreter. Who 's here?

Enter SALEMENES.

SALEMENES.

Satraps!

BELESES.

My prince!

SALEMENES.

Well met—I sought ye both,
But elsewhere than the palace.

ARBACES.

Wherefore so?

SALEMENES.

'T is not the hour.

ARBACES.

The hour—what hour?

SALEMENES.

Of midnight.

BELESES.

Midnight, my lord!

SALEMENES.

What, are you not invited?

BELESES.

Oh! yes—we had forgotten.

SALEMENES.

Is it usual
Thus to forget a sovereign's invitation?

ARBACES.

Why—we but now received it.

SALEMENES.

Then why here?

ARBACES.

On duty.

SALEMENES.

On what duty?

BELESES.

On the state's.
We have the privilege to approach the presence,
But found the monarch absent.

SALEMENES.

And I too
Am upon duty.

ARBACES.

May we crave its purport?

SALEMENES.

To arrest two traitors. Guards! within there!

Enter Guards.

SALEMENES (*continuing*).

Satraps,
Your swords.

BELESES (*delivering his*).
My lord, behold my scimitar.
ARBACES (*drawing his sword*).
Take mine.
SALEMENES (*advancing*).
I will.
ARBACES.
But in your heart the blade—
The hilt quits not this hand.
SALEMENES (*drawing*).
How! dost thou brave me?
'T is well—this saves a trial and false mercy.
Soldiers, hew down the rebel!
ARBACES.
Soldiers! Ay—
Alone you dare not.
SALEMENES.
Alone! foolish slave—
What is there in thee that a prince should shrink from
Of open force? We dread thy treason, not
Thy strength: thy tooth is nought without its venom—
The serpent's not the lion's. Cut him down.
BELESES (*interposing*).
Arbaces! are you mad? Have I not render'd
My sword? Then trust like me our sovereign's justice.
ARBACES.
No—I will sooner trust the stars thou prat'st of
And this slight arm, and die a king at least
Of my own breath and body—so far that
None else shall chain them.
SALEMENES (*To the Guards*).
You hear *him*, and *me*.
Take him not—kill.
[*The Guards attack* ARBACES, *who defends himself valiantly and dexterously till they waver.*
SALEMENES.
Is it even so; and must
I do the hangman's office? Recreants! see
How you should fell a traitor.
[SALEMENES *attacks* ARBACES.
Enter SARDANAPALUS *and Train.*
SARDANAPALUS.
Hold your hands—
Upon your lives, I say. What, deaf or drunken?
My sword! Oh fool, I wear no sword: here, fellow,
Give me thy weapon. [*To a Guard.*
[SARDANAPALUS *snatches a sword from one of the soldiers, and makes between the combatants—they separate.*
SARDANAPALUS.
In my very palace!
What hinders me from cleaving you in twain,
Audacious brawlers?
BELESES.
Sire, your justice.
SALEMENES.
Or—
Your weakness.
SARDANAPALUS (*raising the sword*).
How?
SALEMENES.
Strike! so the blow 's repeated
Upon yon traitor—whom you spare a moment,
I trust, for torture—I 'm content.
SARDANAPALUS.
What—him!
Who dares assail Arbaces?
SALEMENES.
I!
SARDANAPALUS.
Indeed!
Prince, you forget yourself. Upon what warrant?
SALEMENES (*showing the signet*).
Thine.
ARBACES (*confused*).
The king's!
SALEMENES.
Yes! and let the king confirm it.
SARDANAPALUS.
I parted not from this for such a purpose.
SALEMENES.
You parted with it for your safety—I
Employ'd it for the best. Pronounce in person.
Here I am but your slave—a moment past
I was your representative.
SARDANAPALUS.
Then sheathe
Your swords.
[ARBACES *and* SALEMENES *return their swords to the scabbards.*
SALEMENES.
Mine 's sheathed: I pray you sheathe *not* yours;
'T is the sole sceptre left you now with safety.
SARDANAPALUS.
A heavy one; the hilt, too, hurts my hand.
(*To a Guard*) Here, fellow, take thy weapon back. Well, sirs,
What doth this mean?
BELESES.
The prince must answer that.
SALEMENES.
Truth upon my part, treason upon theirs.
SARDANAPALUS.
Treason—Arbaces! treachery and Beleses!
That were an union I will not believe.
BELESES.
Where is the proof?
SALEMENES.
I 'll answer that, if once
The king demands your fellow traitor's sword.
ARBACES (*to* SALEMENES).
A sword which hath been drawn as oft as thine
Against his foes.
SALEMENES.
And now against his brother,
And in an hour or so against himself.
SARDANAPALUS.
That is not possible: he dared not; no—
No—I' ll not hear of such things. These vain bickerings
Are spawn'd in courts by base intrigues and baser
Hirelings, who live by lies on good men's lives.
You must have been deceived, my brother.
SALEMENES.
First
Let him deliver up his weapon, and
Proclaim himself your subject by that duty.
And I will answer all.
SARDANAPALUS.
Why, if I thought so—
But no, it cannot be; the Mede Arbaces—
The trusty, rough, true soldier—the best captain
Of all who discipline our nations——No,
I 'll not insult him thus, to bid him render

The scimitar to me he never yielded
Unto our enemies. Chief, keep your weapon.

SALEMENES (*delivering back the signet*).

Monarch, take back your signet.

SARDANAPALUS.

No, retain it;
But use it with more moderation.

SALEMENES.

Sire,
I used it for your honour, and restore it
Because I cannot keep it with my own.
Bestow it on Arbaces.

SARDANAPALUS.

So I should:
He never ask'd it.

SALEMENES.

Doubt not, he will have it
Without that hollow semblance of respect.

BELESES.

I know not what hath prejudiced the prince
So strongly 'gainst two subjects, than whom none
Have been more zealous for Assyria's weal.

SALEMENES.

Peace, factious priest and faithless soldier! thou
Unit'st in thy own person the worst vices
Of the most dangerous orders of mankind.
Keep thy smooth words and juggling homilies
For those who know thee not. Thy fellow's sin
Is, at the least, a bold one, and not temper'd
By the tricks taught thee in Chaldea.

BELESES.

Hear him,
My liege—the son of Belus! he blasphemes
The worship of the land which bows the knee
Before your fathers.

SARDANAPALUS.

Oh! for that I pray you
Let him have absolution. I dispense with
The worship of dead men; feeling that I
Am mortal, and believing that the race
From whence I sprung are—what I see them—ashes.

BELESES.

King! Do not deem so: they are with the stars,
And——

SARDANAPALUS.

You shall join them there ere they will rise,
If you preach farther.—Why, *this* is rank treason.

SALEMENES.

My lord!

SARDANAPALUS.

To school me in the worship of
Assyria's idols! Let him be released—
Give him his sword.

SALEMENES.

My lord, and king, and brother,
I pray ye, pause.

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes, and be sermonized,
And dinn'd, and deafen'd with dead men and Baal,
And all Chaldea's starry mysteries.

BELESES.

Monarch! respect them.

SARDANAPALUS.

Oh! for that—I love them;
I love to watch them in the deep blue vault,
And to compare them with my Myrrha's eyes;
I love to see their rays redoubled in
The tremulous silver of Euphrates' wave,
As the light breeze of midnight crisps the broad
And rolling water, sighing through the sedges
Which fringe his banks: but whether they may be
Gods, as some say, or the abodes of gods,
As others hold, or simply lamps of night,
Worlds or the lights of worlds, I know nor care not,
There's something sweet in my uncertainty
I would not change for your Chaldean lore;
Besides, I know of these all clay can know
Of aught above it or below it—nothing.
I see their brilliancy and feel their beauty—
When they shine on my grave I shall know neither.

BELESES.

For *neither*, sire, say *better*.

SARDANAPALUS.

I will wait,
If it so please you, pontiff, for that knowledge.
In the mean time receive your sword, and know
That I prefer your service militant
Unto your ministry—not loving either.

SALEMENES (*aside*).

His lusts have made him mad. Then must I save him
Spite of himself.

SARDANAPALUS.

Please you to hear me, Satraps!
And chiefly thou, my priest, because I doubt thee
More than the soldier, and would doubt thee all
Were thou not half a warrior: let us part
In peace—I'll not say pardon—which must be
Earn'd by the guilty; this I'll not pronounce ye,
Although upon this breath of mine depends
Your own; and, deadlier for ye, on my fears.
But fear not—for that I am soft, not fearful—
And so live on. Were I the thing some think me,
Your heads would now be dripping the last drops
Of their attainted gore from the high gates
Of this our palace into the dry dust,
Their only portion of the coveted kingdom
They would be crown'd to reign o'er—let that pass.
As I have said, I will not *deem* ye guilty,
Nor *doom* ye guiltless. Albeit, better men
Than ye or I stand ready to arraign you;
And should I leave your fate to sterner judges,
And proofs of all kinds, I might sacrifice
Two men, who, whatsoe'er they now are, were
Once honest. Ye are free, sirs.

ARBACES.

Sire, this clemency——

BELESES (*interrupting him*).

Is worthy of yourself; and although innocent,
We thank——

SARDANAPALUS.

Priest! keep your thanksgivings for Belus;
His offspring needs none.

BELESES.

But, being innocent—

SARDANAPALUS.

Be silent—Guilt is loud. If ye are loyal,
Ye are injured men, and should be sad, not grateful.

BELESES.

So we should be, were justice always done
By earthly power omnipotent; but innocence
Must oft receive her right as a mere favour.

SARDANAPALUS.

That 's a good sentence for a homily,
Though not for this occasion. Prithee keep it
To plead thy sovereign's cause before his people.

BELESES.

I trust there is no cause.

SARDANAPALUS.

No *cause*, perhaps;
But many causers:—if ye meet with such
In the exercise of your inquisitive function
On earth, or should you read of it in heaven
In some mysterious twinkle of the stars,
Which are your chronicles, I pray you note,
That there are worse things betwixt earth and heaven
Than him who ruleth many and slays none;
And, hating not himself, yet loves his fellows
Enough to spare even those who would not spare him,
Were they once masters—but that 's doubtful. Satraps!
Your swords and persons are at liberty
To use them as ye will—but from this hour
I have no call for either. Salemenes!
Follow me.

[*Exeunt* SARDANAPALUS, SALEMENES, *and the Train, etc. leaving* ARBACES *and* BELESES.

ARBACES.

Beleses!

BELESES.

Now, what think you?

ARBACES.

That we are lost.

BELESES.

That we have won the kingdom.

ARBACES.

What! thus suspected—with the sword slung o'er us
But by a single hair, and that still wavering
To be blown down by his imperious breath,
Which spared us—why, I know not.

BELESES.

Seek not why;
But let us profit by the interval.
The hour is still our own—our power the same—
The night the same we destined. He hath changed
Nothing, except our ignorance of all
Suspicion into such a certainty
As must make madness of delay.

ARBACES.

And yet——

BELESES.

What, doubting still?

ARBACES.

He spared our lives—nay, more,
Saved them from Salemenes.

BELESES.

And how long
Will he so spare? till the first drunken minute.

ARBACES.

Or sober, rather. Yet he did it nobly;
Gave royally what we had forfeited
Basely——

BELESES.

Say. bravely.

ARBACES.

Somewhat of both, perhaps.
But it has touch'd me, and, whate'er betide,
I will no further on.

BELESES.

And lose the world!

ARBACES.

Lose any thing, except my own esteem.

BELESES.

I blush that we should owe our lives to such
A king of distaffs!

ARBACES.

But no less we owe them;
And I should blush far more to take the granter's!

BELESES.

Thou may'st endure whate'er thou wilt, the stars
Have written otherwise.

ARBACES.

Though they came down,
And marshall'd me the way in all their brightness,
I would not follow.

BELESES.

This is weakness—worse
Than a scared beldam's dreaming of the dead.
And waking in the dark.—Go to—go to.

ARBACES.

Methought he look'd like Nimrod as he spoke,
Even as the proud imperial statue stands
Looking the monarch of the kings around it,
And sways, while they but ornament, the temple.

BELESES.

I told you that you had too much despised him,
And that there was some royalty within him.
What then? he is the nobler foe.

ARBACES.

But we
The meaner:—Would he had not spared us!

BELESES.

So—
Wouldst thou be sacrificed thus readily?

ARBACES.

No—but it had been better to have died
Than live ungrateful.

BELESES.

Oh, the souls of some men!
Thou wouldst digest what some call treason, and
Fools treachery—and, behold, upon the sudden,
Because, for something or for nothing, this
Rash reveller steps, ostentatiously,
'Twixt thee and Salemenes, thou art turn'd
Into—what shall I say?—Sardanapalus!
I know no name more ignominious.

ARBACES.

But
An hour ago, who dared to term me such
Had held his life but lightly—as it is,
I must forgive you, even as he forgave us—
Semiramis herself would not have done it.

BELESES.

No—the queen liked no sharers of the kingdom,
Not even a husband.

ARBACES.

I must serve him truly——

BELESES.

And humbly?

ARBACES.

No, sir, proudly—being honest.
I shall be nearer thrones than you to heaven;
And if not quite so haughty, yet more lofty.

You may do your own deeming—you have codes,
And mysteries, and corollaries of
Right and wrong, which I lack for my direction,
And must pursue but what a plain heart teaches.
And now you know me.

BELESES.

Have you finish'd?

ARBACES.

Yes—
With you.

BELESES.

And would, perhaps, betray as well
As quit me?

ARBACES.

That 's a sacerdotal thought,
And not a soldier's.

BELESES.

Be it what you will—
Truce with these wranglings, and but hear me.

ARBACES.

No—
There is more peril in your subtle spirit
Than in a phalanx.

BELESES.

If it must be so—
I 'll on alone.

ARBACES.

Alone!

BELESES.

Thrones hold but one.

ARBACES.

But this is fill'd.

BELESES.

With worse than vacancy—
A despised monarch. Look to it, Arbaces:
I have still aided, cherish'd, loved, and urged you;
Was willing even to serve you, in the hope
To serve and save Assyria. Heaven itself
Seem'd to consent, and all events were friendly,
Even to the last, till that your spirit shrunk
Into a shallow softness; but now, rather
Than see my country languish, I will be
Her saviour or the victim of her tyrant,
Or one or both, for sometimes both are one:
And if I win, Arbaces is my servant.

ARBACES.

Your servant!

BELESES.

Why not? better than be slave,
The *pardon'd* slave of *she* Sardanapalus.

Enter PANIA.

PANIA.

My lords, I bear an order from the king.

ARBACES.

It is obey'd ere spoken.

BELESES.

Notwithstanding,
Let 's hear it.

PANIA.

Forthwith, on this very night,
Repair to your respective satrapies
Of Babylon and Media.

BELESES.

With our troops?

PANIA.

My order is unto the satraps and
Their household train.

ARBACES.

But——

BELESES.

It must be obey'd;
Say, we depart.

PANIA.

My order is to see you
Depart, and not to hear your answer.

BELESES (*aside*).

Ay!
Well, sir, we will accompany you hence.

PANIA.

I will retire to marshal forth the guard
Of honour which befits your rank, and wait
Your leisure, so that it the hour exceeds not.

[*Exit* PANIA.

BELESES.

Now then obey!

ARBACES.

Doubtless.

BELESES.

Yes, to the gates
That grate the palace, which is now our prison,
No further.

ARBACES.

Thou hast harp'd the truth indeed!
The realm itself, in all its wide extension,
Yawns dungeons at each step for thee and me.

BELESES.

Graves!

ARBACES.

If I thought so, this good sword should dig
One more than mine.

BELESES.

It shall have work enough:
Let me hope better than thou augurest:
At present let us hence as best we may.
Thou dost agree with me in understanding
This order as a sentence?

ARBACES.

Why, what other
Interpretation should it bear? it is
The very policy of orient monarchs—
Pardon and poison—favours and a sword—
A distant voyage, and an eternal sleep.
How many satraps in his father's time—
For he I own is, or at least *was*, bloodless—

BELESES.

But *will* not, *can* not be so now.

ARBACES.

I doubt it.
How many satraps have I seen set out
In his sire's day for mighty vice-royalties,
Whose tombs are on their path! I know not how,
But they all sicken'd by the way, it was
So long and heavy.

BELESES.

Let us but regain
The free air of the city, and we 'll shorten
The journey.

ARBACES.

'T will be shorten'd at the gates,
It may be.

BELESES.

No; they hardly will risk that.
They mean us to die privately, but not
Within the palace or the city walls,
Where we are known and may have partisans:
If they had meant to slay us here, we were
No longer with the living. Let us hence.

ARBACES.

If I but thought he did not mean my life——

BELESES.

Fool! hence—what else should despotism alarm'd
Mean? Let us but rejoin our troops, and march.

ARBACES.

Towards our provinces?

BELESES.

No; towards your kingdom.
There 's time, there 's heart and hope, and power, and means
Which their half measures leave us in full scope.—
Away!

ARBACES.

And I, even yet repenting, must
Relapse to guilt!

BELESES.

Self-defence is a virtue,
Sole bulwark of all right. Away! I say!
Let 's leave this place, the air grows thick and choking,
And the walls have a scent of night-shade—hence!
Let us not leave them time for further council.
Our quick departure proves our civic zeal;
Our quick departure hinders our good escort,
The worthy Pania, from anticipating
The orders of some parasangs from hence;
Nay, there 's no other choice but——hence, I say.

[*Exit with* ARBACES, *who follows reluctantly.*

Enter SARDANAPALUS *and* SALEMENES.

SARDANAPALUS.

Well, all is remedied, and without bloodshed,
That worst of mockeries of a remedy;
We are now secure by these men's exile.

SALEMENES.

Yes,
As he who treads on flowers is from the adder
Twined round their roots.

SARDANAPALUS.

Why, what wouldst have me do?

SALEMENES.

Undo what you have done.

SARDANAPALUS.

Revoke my pardon?

SALEMENES.

Replace the crown, now tottering on your temples.

SARDANAPALUS.

That were tyrannical.

SALEMENES.

But sure.

SARDANAPALUS.

We are so.
What danger can they work upon the frontier?

SALEMENES.

They are not there yet—never should they be so,
Were I well listen'd to.

SARDANAPALUS.

Nay, I *have* listen'd
Impartially to thee—why not to them?

SALEMENES.

You may know that hereafter; as it is,
I take my leave, to order forth the guard.

SARDANAPALUS.

And you will join us at the banquet?

SALEMENES.

Sire,
Dispense with me—I am no wassailer:
Command me in all service save the Bacchant's.

SARDANAPALUS.

Nay, but 't is fit to revel now and then.

SALEMENES.

And fit that some should watch for those who revel
Too oft. Am I permitted to depart?

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes——Stay a moment, my good Salemenes,
My brother, my best subject, better prince
Than I am king. You should have been the monarch,
And I—I know not what, and care not; but
Think not I am insensible to all
Thine honest wisdom, and thy rough, yet kind,
Though oft reproving, sufferance of my follies.
If I have spared these men against thy counsel.
That is, their lives—it is not that I doubt
The advice was sound; but, let them live: we will not
Cavil about their lives—so let them mend them.
Their banishment will leave me still sound sleep,
Which their death had not left me.

SALEMENES.

Thus you run
The risk to sleep for ever, to save traitors—
A moment's pang now changed for years of crime.
Still let them be made quiet.

SARDANAPALUS.

Tempt me not:
My word is past.

SALEMENES.

But it may be recall'd.

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is royal.

SALEMENES.

And should therefore be decisive.
This half indulgence of an exile serves
But to provoke—a pardon should be full,
Or it is none.

SARDANAPALUS.

And who persuaded me
After I had repeal'd them, or at least
Only dismiss'd them from our presence, who
Urged me to send them to their satrapies?

SALEMENES.

True; that I had forgotten; that is, sire,
If they e'er reach their satrapies—why, then,
Reprove me more for my advice.

SARDANAPALUS.

And if
They do not reach them—look to it!—in safety,
In safety, mark me—and security—
Look to thine own.

SALEMENES.

Permit me to depart;
Their *safety* shall be cared for.

SARDANAPALUS.

Get thee hence, then;
And, prithee, think more gently of thy brother.

SALEMENES.

Sire, I shall ever duly serve my sovereign.

[*Exit* SALEMENES.

SARDANAPALUS (*solus*).

That man is of a temper too severe:
Hard but as lofty as the rock, and free
From all the taints of common earth—while I
Am softer clay, impregnated with flowers.
But as our mould is, must the produce be.
If I have err'd this time, 't is on the side
Where error sits most lightly on that sense,
I know not what to call it; but it reckons
With me ofttimes for pain, and sometimes pleasure;
A spirit which seems placed about my heart
To court its throbs, not quicken them, and ask
Questions which mortal never dared to ask me,
Nor Baal, though an oracular deity—
Albeit his marble face majestical
Frowns as the shadows of the evening dim
His brows to changed expression, till at times
I think the statue looks in act to speak.
Away with these vain thoughts, I will be joyous—
And here comes Joy's true herald.

Enter MYRRHA.

MYRRHA.

King! the sky
Is overcast, and musters muttering thunder,
In clouds that seem approaching fast, and show
In forked flashes a commanding tempest.
Will you then quit the palace?

SARDANAPALUS.

Tempest, say'st thou!

MYRRHA.

Ay, my good lord.

SARDANAPALUS.

For my own part, I should be
Not ill content to vary the smooth scene,
And watch the warring elements; but this
Would little suit the silken garments and
Smooth faces of our festive friends. Say, Myrrha,
Art thou of those who dread the roar of clouds?

MYRRHA.

In my own country we respect their voices
As auguries of Jove.

SARDANAPALUS.

Jove—ay, your Baal—
Ours also has a property in thunder,
And ever and anon some falling bolt
Proves his divinity, and yet sometimes
Strikes his own altars.

MYRRHA.

That were a dread omen.

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes—for the priests. Well, we will not go forth
Beyond the palace walls to-night, but make
Our feast within.

MYRRHA.

Now, Jove be praised! that he
Hath heard the prayer thou wouldst not hear. The gods
Are kinder to thee than thou to thyself,
And flash this storm between thee and thy foes,
To shield thee from them.

SARDANAPALUS.

Child, if there be peril,
Methinks it is the same within these walls
As on the river's brink.

MYRRHA.

Not so, these walls
Are high and strong, and guarded. Treason has
To penetrate through many a winding way,
And massy portal! but in the pavilion
There is no bulwark.

SARDANAPALUS.

No, nor in the palace,
Nor in the fortress, nor upon the top
Of cloud-fenced Caucasus, where the eagle sits
Nested in pathless clefts, if treachery be:
Even as the arrow finds the airy king,
The steel will reach the earthly. But be calm:
The men, or innocent or guilty, are
Banish'd, and far upon their way.

MYRRHA.

They live, then?

SARDANAPALUS.

So sanguinary? *Thou!*

MYRRHA.

I would not shrink
From just infliction of due punishment
On those who seek your life: were't otherwise,
I should not merit mine. Besides, you heard
The princely Salemenes.

SARDANAPALUS.

This is strange;
The gentle and the austere are both against me,
And urge me to revenge.

MYRRHA.

'T is a Greek virtue.

SARDANAPALUS.

But not a kingly one—I 'll none on 't; or,
If ever I indulge in 't, it shall be
With kings—my equals.

MYRRHA.

These men sought to be so.

SARDANAPALUS.

Myrrha, this is too feminine, and springs
From fear——

MYRRHA.

For you.

SARDANAPALUS.

No matter—still 't is fear.
I have observed your sex, once roused to wrath,
Are timidly vindictive to a pitch
Of perseverance, which I would not copy.
I thought you were exempt from this, as from
The childish helplessness of Asian women.

MYRRHA.

My lord, I am no boaster of my love,
Nor of my attributes; I have shared your splendour,
And will partake your fortunes. You may live
To find one slave more true than subject myriads;
But this the gods avert! I am content
To be beloved on trust for what I feel,
Rather than prove it to you in your griefs,
Which might not yield to any cares of mine.

SARDANAPALUS.

Griefs cannot come where perfect love exists,
Except to heighten it, and vanish from
That which it could not scare away. Let 's in—
The hour approaches, and we must prepare
To meet the invited guests, who grace our feast.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Hall of the Palace illuminated.—SARDANAPALUS *and his Guests at Table.*—*A Storm without, and Thunder occasionally heard during the Banquet.*

SARDANAPALUS.

Fill full! Why this is as it should be: here
Is my true realm, amidst bright eyes and faces
Happy as fair! Here sorrow cannot reach.

ZAMES.

Nor elsewhere—where the king is, pleasure sparkles.

SARDANAPALUS.

Is not this better now than Nimrod's huntings,
Or my wild grandam's chase in search of kingdoms
She could not keep when conquer'd?

ALTADA.

Mighty though
They were, as all thy royal line have been,
Yet none of those who went before have reach'd
The acme of Sardanapalus, who
Has placed his joy in peace—the sole true glory.

SARDANAPALUS.

And pleasure, good Altada, to which glory
Is but the path. What is it that we seek?
Enjoyment! We have cut the way short to it,
And not gone tracking it through human ashes,
Making a grave with every footstep.

ZAMES.

No;
All hearts are happy, and all voices bless
The king of peace, who holds a world in jubilee.

SARDANAPALUS.

Art sure of that? I have heard otherwise;
Some say that there be traitors.

ZAMES.

Traitors they
Who dare to say so!—'T is impossible.
What cause?

SARDANAPALUS.

What cause? true,—fill the goblet up;
We will not think of them: there are none such,
Or if there be, they are gone.

ALTADA.

Guests, to my pledge!
Down on your knees, and drink a measure to
The safety of the king—the monarch, say I?
The god Sardanapalus!

[ZAMES *and the Guests kneel, and exclaim*—

Mightier than
His father Baal, the god Sardanapalus!

[*It thunders as they kneel; some start up in confusion.*

ZAMES.

Why do ye rise, my friends? In that strong peal
His father gods consented.

MYRRHA.

Menaced, rather.
King, wilt thou bear this mad impiety.

SARDANAPALUS.

Impiety!—nay, if the sires who reign'd
Before me can be gods, I 'll not disgrace
Their lineage. But arise, my pious friends,
Hoard your devotion for the thunderer there:
I seek but to be loved, not worshipp'd.

ALTADA.

Both—
Both you must ever be by all true subjects.

SARDANAPALUS.

Methinks the thunders still increase: it is
An awful night.

MYRRHA.

Oh yes, for those who have
No palace to protect their worshippers.

SARDANAPALUS.

That 's true, my Myrrha; and could I convert
My realm to one wide shelter for the wretched,
I'd do it.

MYRRHA.

Thou 'rt no god, then, not to be
Able to work a will so good and general,
As thy wish would imply.

SARDANAPALUS.

And your gods, then,
Who can, and do not?

MYRRHA.

Do not speak of that,
Lest we provoke them.

SARDANAPALUS.

True, they love not censure
Better than mortals. Friends, a thought has struck me:
Were there no temples, would there, think ye, be
Air worshippers—that is, when it is angry,
And pelting as even now?

MYRRHA.

The Persian prays
Upon his mountain.

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes, when the sun shines.

MYRRHA.

And I would ask if this your palace were
Unroof'd and desolate, how many flatterers
Would lick the dust in which the king lay low?

ALTADA.

The fair Ionian is too sarcastic
Upon a nation whom she knows not well;
The Assyrians know no pleasure but their king's,
And homage is their pride.

SARDANAPALUS.

Nay, pardon, guests,
The fair Greek's readiness of speech.

ALTADA.

Pardon! sire:
We honour her of all things next to thee.
Hark! what was that?

ZAMES.

That! nothing but the jar
Of distant portals shaken by the wind.

ALTADA.

It sounded like the clash of—hark again!

ZAMES.

The big rain pattering on the roof.

SARDANAPALUS.

No more.
Myrrha, my love, hast thou thy shell in order?
Sing me a song of Sappho, her, thou know'st,
Who in thy country threw——

Enter PANIA, *with his Sword and Garments bloody, and disordered. The Guests rise in confusion.*

PANIA (*to the guards*).

Look to the portals;
And with your best speed to the wall without.
Your arms! To arms! The king 's in danger. Monarch!
Excuse this haste,—'tis faith.

SARDANAPALUS.

Speak on.

PANIA.

It is
As Salemenes fear'd: the faithless satraps——

SARDANAPALUS.

You are wounded—give some wine. Take breath, good Pania.

PANIA.

'T is nothing—a mere flesh wound. I am worn
More with my speed to warn my sovereign,
Than hurt in his defence.

MYRRHA.

Well, sir, the rebels.

PANIA.

Soon as Arbaces and Beleses reach'd
Their stations in the city, they refused
To march: and on my attempt to use the power
Which I was delegated with, they call'd
Upon their troops, who rose in fierce defiance.

MYRRHA.

All?

PANIA.

Too many.

SARDANAPALUS.

Spare not of thy free speech
To spare mine ears the truth.

PANIA.

My own slight guard
Were faithful—and what 's left of it is still so.

MYRRHA.

And are these all the force still faithful?

PANIA.

No—
The Bactrians, now led on by Salemenes,
Who even then was on his way, still urged
By strong suspicion of the Median chiefs,
Are numerous, and make strong head against
The rebels, fighting inch by inch, and forming
An orb around the palace, where they mean
To centre all their force, and save the king.
(*He hesitates.*) I am charged to——

MYRRHA.

'T is no time for hesitation.

PANIA.

Prince Salemenes doth implore the king
To arm himself, although but for a moment,
And show himself unto the soldiers: his
Sole presence in this instant might do more
Than hosts can do in his behalf.

SARDANAPALUS.

What, ho!
My armour there.

MYRRHA.

And wilt thou?

SARDANAPALUS.

Will I not?
Ho, there!—But seek not for the buckler; 't is
Too heavy:—a light cuirass and my sword.
Where are the rebels?

PANIA.

Scarce a furlong's length
From the outward wall, the fiercest conflict rages.

SARDANAPALUS.

Then I may charge on horseback. Sfero, ho!
Order my horse out—There is space enough
Even in our courts, and by the outer gate,
To marshall half the horsemen of Arabia.

[*Exit* SFERO *for the armour.*

MYRRHA.

How I do love thee!

SARDANAPALUS.

I ne'er doubted it.

MYRRHA.

But now I know thee.

SARDANAPALUS (*to his attendant*).

Bring down my spear, too.—
Where 's Salemenes?

PANIA.

Where a soldier should be,
In the thick of the fight.

SARDANAPALUS.

Then hasten to him——Is
The path still open, and communication
Left 'twixt the palace and the phalanx?

PANIA.

'T was
When I late left him, and I have no fear:
Our troops were steady, and the phalanx form'd.

SARDANAPALUS.

Tell him to spare his person for the present,
And that I will not spare my own—and say,
I come.

PANIA.

There 's victory in the very word.

[*Exit* PANIA.

SARDANAPALUS.

Altada—Zames—forth and arm ye! There
Is all in readiness in the armoury.
See that the women are bestow'd in safety
In the remote apartments: let a guard
Be set before them, with strict charge to quit
The post but with their lives—command it, Zames.
Altada, arm yourself, and return here;
Your post is near our person.

[*Exeunt* ZAMES, ALTADA, *and all save* MYRRHA.

Enter SFERO *and others with the King's Arms, etc.*

SFERO.

King! your armour.

SARDANAPALUS (*arming himself*).

Give me the cuirass—so: my baldric; now
My sword: I had forgot the helm, where is it?
That 's well—no, 't is too heavy: you mistake, too—
It was not this I meant, but that which bears
A diadem around it.

SFERO.

Sire, I deem'd
That too conspicuous from the precious stones
To risk your sacred brow beneath—and, trust me,
This is of better metal, though less rich.

SARDANAPALUS.

You deem'd! Are you too turn'd a rebel? Fellow!
Your part is to obey: return, and—no—
It is too late—I will go forth without it.

SFERO.

At least wear this.

SARDANAPALUS.

Wear Caucasus! why, 't is
A mountain on my temples.

SFERO.

Sire, the meanest
Soldier goes not forth thus exposed to battle.
All men will recognize you—for the storm
Has ceased, and the moon breaks forth in her brightness.

SARDANAPALUS.

I go forth to be recognized, and thus
Shall be so sooner. Now—my spear! I 'm arm'd.
[*In going stops short, and turns to* SFERO.
Sfero—I had forgotten—bring the mirror.*

SFERO.

The mirror, sire?

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes, sir, of polish'd brass,
Brought from the spoils of India—but be speedy.
[*Exit* SFERO.
Myrrha, retire unto a place of safety.
Why went you not forth with the other damsels?

MYRRHA.

Because my place is here.

SARDANAPALUS.

And when I am gone——

MYRRHA.

I follow.

SARDANAPALUS.

You! to battle?

MYRRHA.

If it were so,
T were not the first Greek girl had trod the path.
I will await here your *return*.

SARDANAPALUS.

The place
Is spacious, and the first to be sought out,
If they prevail; and, if it should be so,
And I return not——

MYRRHA.

Still, we meet again.

SARDANAPALUS.

How?

MYRRHA.

In the spot where all must meet at last—
In Hades! if there be, as I believe,
A shore beyond the Styx; and if there be not,
In ashes.

SARDANAPALUS.

Dar'st thou so much?

MYRRHA.

I dare all things,
Except survive what I have loved, to be
A rebel's booty: forth, and do your bravest.

Re-enter SFERO *with the mirror.*

SARDANAPALUS (*looking at himself*).

This cuirass fits me well, the baldric better,
And the helm not at all. Methinks, I seem
[*Flings away the helmet after trying it again.*
Passing well in these toys; and now to prove them.
Altada! Where's Altada?

* Such the *mirror* Otho held
In the Illyrian field.—See *Juvenal.*

SFERO.

Waiting, sire,
Without: he has your shield in readiness.

SARDANAPALUS.

True: I forgot he is my shield-bearer
By right of blood, derived from age to age.
Myrrha, embrace me; yet once more—once more—
Love me, whate'er betide. My chiefest glory
Shall be to make me worthier of your love.

MYRRHA.

Go forth, and conquer!

[*Exit* SARDANAPALUS *and* SFERO.

Now, I am alone.
All are gone forth, and of that all how few
Perhaps return. Let him but vanquish, and
Me perish! If he vanquish not, I perish;
For I will not outlive him. He has wound
About my heart, I know not how nor why.
Not for that he is king; for now his kingdom
Rocks underneath his throne, and the earth yawns
To yield him no more of it than a grave;
And yet I love him more. Oh, mighty Jove!
Forgive this monstrous love for a barbarian,
Who knows not of Olympus: yes, I love him
Now, now, far more than——Hark—to the war shout!
Methinks it nears me. If it should be so,
[*She draws forth a small vial.*
This cunning Colchian poison, which my father
Learn'd to compound on Euxine shores, and taught me
How to preserve, shall free me! It had freed me
Long ere this hour, but that I loved, until
I half forgot I was a slave:—where all
Are slaves save one, and proud of servitude,
So they are served in turn by something lower
In the degree of bondage, we forget
That shackles worn like ornaments no less
Are chains. Again that shout! and now the clash
Of arms—and now—and now—

Enter ALTADA.

ALTADA.

Ho, Sfero, ho!

MYRRHA.

He is not here; what wouldst thou with him? How
Goes on the conflict?

ALTADA.

Dubiously and fiercely.

MYRRHA.

And the king?

ALTADA.

Like a king. I must find Sfero,
And bring him a new spear and his own helmet,
He fights till now bare-headed, and by far
Too much exposed. The soldiers knew his face,
And the foe too; and in the moon's broad light,
His silk tiara and his flowing hair
Make him a mark too royal. Every arrow
Is pointed at the fair hair and fair features,
And the broad fillet which crowns both.

MYRRHA.

Ye gods,
Who fulmine o'er my fathers' land, protect him!
Were you sent by the king?

ALTADA.

By Salemenes,
Who sent me privily upon this charge,

Without the knowledge of the careless sovereign.
The king! the king fights as he revels! ho!
What, Sfero! I will seek the armoury,
He must be there. [*Exit* ALTADA.

MYRRHA.

'Tis no dishonour—no—
'Tis no dishonour to have loved this man.
I almost wish now, what I never wish'd
Before, that he were Grecian. If Alcides
Were shamed in wearing Lydian Omphale's
She-garb, and wielding her vile distaff; surely
He, who springs up a Hercules at once,
Nursed in effeminate arts from youth to manhood,
And rushes from the banquet to the battle,
As though it were a bed of love, deserves
That a Greek girl should be his paramour,
And a Greek bard his minstrel, a Greek tomb
His monument. How goes the strife, sir?

Enter an OFFICER.

OFFICER.

Lost,
Lost almost past recovery. Zames! Where
Is Zames?

MYRRHA.

Posted with the guard appointed
To watch before the apartment of the women.

[*Exit* OFFICER.

MYRRHA (*solus*).

He 's gone; and told no more than that all 's lost!
What need have I to know more? In those words,
Those little words, a kingdom and a king,
A line of thirteen ages, and the lives
Of thousands, and the fortune of all left
With life, are merged: and I, too, with the great,
Like a small bubble breaking with the wave
Which bore it, shall be nothing. At the least
My fate is in my keeping: no proud victor
Shall count me with his spoils.

Enter PANIA.

PANIA.

Away with me,
Myrrha, without delay; we must not lose
A moment—all that 's left us now.

MYRRHA.

The king?

PANIA.

Sent me here to conduct you hence, beyond
The river, by a secret passage.

MYRRHA.

Then
He lives——

PANIA.

And charged me to secure your life,
And beg you to live on for his sake, till
He can rejoin you.

MYRRHA.

Will he then give way?

PANIA.

Not till the last. Still, still he does whate'er
Despair can do; and step by step disputes
The very palace.

MYRRHA.

They are here, then:—ay,
Their shouts come ringing through the ancient halls,
Never profaned by rebel echoes till
This fatal night. Farewell, Assyria's line!
Farewell to all of Nimrod! Even the name
Is now no more.

PANIA.

Away with me—away!

MYRRHA.

No; I'll die here!—Away, and tell your king
I loved him to the last.

[*Enter* SARDANAPALUS *and* SALEMENES *with Soldiers.* PANIA *quits* MYRRHA, *and ranges himself with them.*

SARDANAPALUS.

Since it is thus,
We 'll die where we were born—in our own halls.
Serry your ranks—stand firm. I have dispatch'd
A trusty satrap for the guard of Zames,
All fresh and faithful; they'll be here anon.
All is not over.—Pania, look to Myrrha.

[PANIA *returns towards* MYRRHA.

SALEMENES.

We have breathing time: yet one more charge, my friends—
One for Assyria!

SARDANAPALUS.

Rather say, for Bactria!
My faithful Bactrians, I will henceforth be
King of your nation, and we 'll hold together
This realm as province.

SALEMENES.

Hark! they come—they come.

Enter BELESES *and* ARBACES *with the Rebels.*

ARBACES.

Set on, we have them in the toil. Charge! Charge!

BELESES.

On! on!—Heaven fights for us and with us.—On!

[*They charge the King and* SALEMENES *with their Troops, who defend themselves till the Arrival of* ZAMES *with the Guard before mentioned. The Rebels are then driven off, and pursued by* SALEMENES, *etc. As the King is going to join the pursuit,* BELESES *crosses him.*

BELESES.

Ho! tyrant—*I* will end this war.

SARDANAPALUS.

Even so,
My warlike priest, and precious prophet, and
Grateful and trusty subject:—yield, I pray thee.
I would reserve thee for a fitter doom,
Rather than dip my hands in holy blood.

BELESES.

Thine hour is come.

SARDANAPALUS.

No, thine.—I've lately read,
Though but a young astrologer, the stars;
And ranging round the zodiac, found thy fate
In the sign of the Scorpion, which proclaims
That thou wilt now be crush'd.

BELESES.

But not by thee.

[*They fight;* BELESES *is wounded and disarmed.*

SARDANAPALUS (*raising his sword to dispatch him, exclaims—*)
Now call upon thy planets; will they shoot
From the sky to preserve their seer and credit?
[*A party of Rebels enter and rescue* BELESES. *They assail the King, who, in turn, is rescued by a party of his Soldiers, who drive the Rebels off.*
The villain was a prophet after all.
Upon them—ho! there—victory is ours.
[*Exit in pursuit.*

MYRRHA (*to* PANIA).
Pursue! Why stand'st thou here, and leavest the ranks
Of fellow-soldiers conquering without thee?

PANIA.
The king's command was not to quit thee.

MYRRHA.
Me!
Think not of me—a single soldier's arm
Must not be wanting now. I ask no guard,
I need no guard: what, with a world at stake,
Keep watch upon a woman? Hence, I say,
Or thou art shamed! Nay, then, *I* will go forth,
A feeble female, 'midst their desperate strife,
And bid thee guard me *there*—where thou shouldst shield
Thy sovereign. [*Exit* MYRRHA.

PANIA.
Yet stay, damsel! She is gone.
If aught of ill betide her, better I
Had lost my life. Sardanapalus holds her
Far dearer than his kingdom, yet he fights
For that too; and can I do less than him,
Who never flesh'd a scimitar till now?
Myrrha, return, and I obey you, though
In disobedience to the monarch. [*Exit* PANIA.

Enter ALTADA, *and* SFERO *by an opposite door.*

ALTADA.
Myrrha!
What, gone? yet she was here when the fight raged,
And Pania also. Can aught have befallen them?

SFERO.
I saw both safe, when late the rebels fled:
They probably are but retired to make
Their way back to the harem.

ALTADA.
If the king
Prove victor, as it seems even now he must,
And miss his own Ionian, we are doom'd
To worse than captive rebels.

SFERO.
Let us trace them;
She cannot be fled far; and, found, she makes
A richer prize to our soft sovereign
Than his recover'd kingdom.

ALTADA.
Baal himself
Ne'er fought more fiercely to win empire, than
His silken son to save it: he defies
All augury of foes or friends; and like
The close and sultry summer's day, which bodes
A twilight tempest, bursts forth in such thunder
As sweeps the air and deluges the earth.
The man's inscrutable.

SFERO.
Not more than others.
All are the sons of circumstance: away—
Let 's seek the slave out, or prepare to be
Tortured for his infatuation, and
Condemn'd without a crime. [*Exeunt.*

Enter SALEMENES *and Soldiers, etc.*

SALEMENES.
The triumph is
Flattering: they are beaten backward from the palace,
And we have open'd regular access
To the troops station'd on the other side
Euphrates, who may still be true; nay, must be,
When they hear of our victory. But where
Is the chief victor? where's the king?

Enter SARDANAPALUS, *cum suis, etc. and* MYRRHA.

SARDANAPALUS.
Here, brother.

SALEMENES.
Unhurt, I hope.

SARDANAPALUS.
Not quite; but let it pass.
We've clear'd the palace——

SALEMENES.
And, I trust, the city.
Our numbers gather; and I have order'd onward
A cloud of Parthians, hitherto reserved,
All fresh and fiery, to be pour'd upon them
In their retreat, which soon will be a flight.

SARDANAPALUS.
It is already, or at least they march'd
Faster than I could follow with my Bactrians,
Who spared no speed. I am spent; give me a seat.

SALEMENES.
There stands the throne, sire.

SARDANAPALUS.
'T is no place to rest on,
For mind nor body: let me have a couch,
[*They place a seat.*
A peasant's stool, I care not what: so—now
I breathe more freely.

SALEMENES.
This great hour has proved
The brightest and most glorious of your life.

SARDANAPALUS.
And the most tiresome. Where 's my cup-bearer?
Bring me some water.

SALEMENES (*smiling*).
'T is the first time he
Ever had such an order: even I,
Your most austere of counsellors, would now
Suggest a purpler beverage.

SARDANAPALUS.
Blood—doubtless.
But there 's enough of that shed; as for wine,
I have learn'd to-night the price of the pure element:
Thrice have I drank of it, and thrice renew'd,
With greater strength than the grape ever gave me,
My charge upon the rebels. Where's the soldier
Who gave me water in his helmet?

ONE OF THE GUARDS.
Slain, sire!
An arrow pierced his brain, while, scattering
The last drops from his helm, he stood in act
To place it on his brows.

SARDANAPALUS.

Slain! unrewarded!
And slain to serve my thirst: that 's hard, poor slave!
Had he but lived, I would have gorged him with
Gold: all the gold of earth could ne'er repay
The pleasure of that draught; for I was parch'd
As I am now. [*They bring water—he drinks.*
I live again—from henceforth
The goblet I reserve for hours of love,
But war on water.

SALEMENES.

And that bandage, sire,
Which girds your arm?

SARDANAPALUS.

A scratch from brave Beleses.

MYRRHA.

Oh! he is wounded!

SARDANAPALUS.

Not too much of that;
And yet it feels a little stiff and painful,
Now I am cooler.

MYRRHA.

You have bound it with——

SARDANAPALUS.

The fillet of my diadem: the first time
That ornament was ever aught to me
Save an incumbrance.

MYRRHA (*to the attendants*).

Summon speedily
A leech of the most skilful: pray, retire;
I will unbind your wound and tend it.

SARDANAPALUS.

Do so,
For now it throbs sufficiently: but what
Know'st thou of wounds? yet wherefore do I ask.
Know'st thou, my brother, where I lighted on
This minion?

SALEMENES.

Herding with the other females,
Like frighten'd antelopes.

SARDANAPALUS.

No: like the dam
Of the young lion, femininely raging
(And femininely meaneth furiously,
Because all passions in excess are female),
Against the hunter flying with her cub,
She urged on with her voice and gesture, and
Her floating hair and flashing eyes, the soldiers
In the pursuit.

SALEMENES.

Indeed!

SARDANAPALUS.

You see, this night
Made warriors of more than me. I paused
To look upon her, and her kindled cheek;
Her large black eyes, that flash'd through her long hair
As it stream'd o'er her; her blue veins that rose
Along her most transparent brow; her nostril
Dilated from its symmetry; her lips
Apart; her voice that clove through all the din,
As a lute's pierceth through the cymbal's clash,
Jarr'd but not drown'd by the loud brattling; her
Waved arms, more dazzling with their own born whiteness
Than the steel her hand held, which she caught up
From a dead soldier's grasp; all these things made
Her seem unto the troops a prophetess
Of victory, or Victory herself,
Come down to hail us hers.

SALEMENES (*aside*).

This is too much;
Again the love-fit 's on him, and all 's lost,
Unless we turn his thoughts.
(*Aloud.*) But pray thee, sire,
Think of your wound—you said even now 't was painful.

SARDANAPALUS.

That 's true, too; but I must not think of it.

SALEMENES.

I have look'd to all things needful, and will now
Receive reports of progress made in such
Orders as I had given, and then return
To hear your further pleasure.

SARDANAPALUS.

Be it so.

SALEMENES (*in retiring*).

Myrrha!

MYRRHA.

Prince.

SALEMENES.

You have shown a soul to-night,
Which, were he not my sister's lord——But now
I have no time: thou lov'st the king?

MYRRHA.

I love
Sardanapalus.

SALEMENES.

But wouldst have him king still?

MYRRHA.

I would not have him less than what he should be.

SALEMENES.

Well, then, to have him king, and yours, and all
He should, or should not be; to have him *live*,
Let him not sink back into luxury.
You have more power upon his spirit than
Wisdom within these walls, or fierce rebellion
Raging without: look well that he relapse not.

MYRRHA.

There needed not the voice of Salemenes
To urge me on to this; I will not fail.
All what a woman's weakness can——

SALEMENES.

Is power
Omnipotent o'er such a heart as his;
Exert it wisely. [*Exit* SALEMENES.

SARDANAPALUS.

Myrrha! what, at whispers
With my stern brother? I shall soon be jealous.

MYRRHA (*smiling*).

You have cause, sire; for on the earth there breathes not
A man more worthy of a woman's love—
A soldier's trust—a subject's reverence—
A king's esteem—the whole world's admiration!

SARDANAPALUS.

Praise him, but not so warmly. I must not
Hear those sweet lips grow eloquent in aught
That throws me into shade; yet you speak truth.

MYRRHA.

And now retire, to have your wound look'd to.
Pray lean on me.

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes, love! but not from pain.
[*Exeunt omnes.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

SARDANAPALUS *discovered sleeping upon a couch, and occasionally disturbed in his slumbers, with* MYRRHA *watching.*

MYRRHA (*sola, gazing*).

I have stolen upon his rest, if rest it be,
Which thus convulses slumber: shall I wake him?
No, he seems calmer. Oh, thou God of Quiet!
Whose reign is o'er seal'd eyelids and soft dreams,
Or deep, deep sleep, so as to be unfathom'd,
Look like thy brother, death—so still—so stirless—
For then we are happiest, as it may be, we
Are happiest of all within the realm
Of thy stern, silent, and unwakening twin.
Again he moves—again the play of pain
Shoots o'er his features, as the sudden gust
Crisps the reluctant lake that lay so calm
Beneath the mountain shadow; or the blast
Ruffles the autumn leaves, that drooping cling
Faintly and motionless to their loved boughs.
I must awake him—yet not yet: who knows
From what I rouse him? It seems pain; but if
I quicken him to heavier pain? The fever
Of this tumultuous night, the grief too of
His wound, though slight, may cause all this, and shake
Me more to see than him to suffer. No:
Let nature use her own maternal means,—
And I await to second not disturb her.

SARDANAPALUS (*awakening*).

Not so—although ye multiplied the stars,
And gave them to me as a realm to share
From you and with you! I would not so purchase
The empire of eternity.—Hence—hence—
Old hunter of the earliest brutes! and ye,
Who hunted fellow-creatures as if brutes;
Once bloody mortals—and now bloodier idols,
If your priests lie not! And thou, ghastly beldame!
Dripping with dusky gore, and trampling on
The carcasses of Inde—away! away!
Where am I? Where the spectres? Where——No—that
Is no false phantom: I should know it 'midst
All that the dead dare gloomily raise up
From their black gulf to daunt the living. Myrrha!

MYRRHA.

Alas! thou art pale, and on thy brow the drops
Gather like night dew. My beloved, hush—
Calm thee. Thy speech seems of another world,
And thou art loved of this. Be of good cheer;
All will go well.

SARDANAPALUS.

Thy *hand*—so—'t is thy hand;
'T is flesh; grasp—clasp—yet closer, till I feel
Myself that which I was.

MYRRHA.

At least know me
For what I am, and ever must be—thine.

SARDANAPALUS.

I know it now. I know this life again.
Ah, Myrrha! I have been where we shall be.

MYRRHA.

My lord!

SARDANAPALUS.

I 've been i' the grave—where worms are lords,
And kings are——But I did not deem it so;
I thought 't was nothing.

MYRRHA.

So it is; except
Unto the timid, who anticipate
That which may never be.

SARDANAPALUS.

Oh, Myrrha! if
Sleep shows such things, what may not death disclose?

MYRRHA.

I know no evil death can show, which life
Has not already shown to those who live
Embodied longest. If there be indeed
A shore, where mind survives, 't will be as mind,
All unincorporate: or if there flits
A shadow of this cumbrous clog of clay,
Which stalks, methinks, between our souls and heaven,
And fetters us to earth—at least the phantom,
Whate'er it have to fear, will not fear death.

SARDANAPALUS.

I fear it not; but I have felt—have seen—
A legion of the dead.

MYRRHA.

And so have I.
The dust we tread upon was once alive,
And wretched. But proceed: what hast thou seen?
Speak it, 't will lighten thy dimm'd mind.

SARDANAPALUS.

Methought——

MYRRHA.

Yet pause, thou art tired—in pain—exhausted; all
Which can impair both strength and spirit: seek
Rather to sleep again.

SARDANAPALUS.

Not now—I would not
Dream; though I know it now to be a dream
What I have dreamt:—and canst thou bear to hear it?

MYRRHA.

I can bear all things, dreams of life or death,
Which I participate with you, in semblance
Or full reality.

SARDANAPALUS.

And this look'd real,
I tell you: after that these eyes were open,
I saw them in their flight—for then they fled.

MYRRHA.

Say on.

SARDANAPALUS.

I saw, that is, I dream'd myself
Here—here—even where we are, guests as we were,
Myself a host that deem'd himself but guest,
Willing to equal all in social freedom;
But, on my right hand and my left, instead
Of thee and Zames, and our custom'd meeting,
Was ranged on my left hand a haughty, dark,
And deadly face—I could not recognize it,
Yet I had seen it, though I knew not where;
The features were a giant's, and the eye
Was still, yet lighted; his long locks curl'd down
On his vast bust, whence a huge quiver rose
With shaft-heads feather'd from the eagle's wing,
That peep'd up bristling through his serpent hair.
I invited him to fill the cup which stood
Between us, but he answer'd not:—I fill'd it—
He took it not, but stared upon me, till
I trembled at the fix'd glare of his eye:

I frown'd upon him as a king should frown—
He frown'd not in his turn, but look'd upon me
With the same aspect, which appall'd me more,
Because it changed not, and I turn'd for refuge
To milder guests, and sought them on the right,
Where thou were wont to be. But——

[*He pauses.*

MYRRHA.

What instead?

SARDANAPALUS.

In thy own chair—thy own place in the banquet—
I sought thy sweet face in the circle—but
Instead—a gray-hair'd, wither'd, bloody-eyed,
And bloody-handed, ghastly, ghostly thing,
Female in garb, and crown'd upon the brow,
Furrow'd with years, yet sneering with the passion
Of vengeance, leering too with that of lust,
Sate;—my veins curdled.

MYRRHA.

Is this all?

SARDANAPALUS.

Upon
Her right hand—her lank, bird-like right hand—stood
A goblet, bubbling o'er with blood; and on
Her left, another, fill'd with—what I saw not,
But turn'd from it and her. But all along
The table sate a range of crowned wretches,
Of various aspects, but of one expression.

MYRRHA.

And felt you not this a mere vision?

SARDANAPALUS.

No;
It was so palpable, I could have touch'd them.
I turn'd from one face to another, in
The hope to find at last one which I knew
Ere I saw theirs: but no—all turn'd upon me,
And stared, but neither ate nor drank, but stared,
Till I grew stone, as they seem'd half to be,
Yet breathing stone, for I felt life in them,
And life in me: there was a horrid kind
Of sympathy between us, as if they
Had lost a part of death to come to me,
And I the half of life to sit by them.
We were in an existence all apart
From heaven or earth——And rather let me see
Death all than such a being!

MYRRHA.

And the end?

SARDANAPALUS.

At last I sate marble as they, when rose
The hunter and the crew; and smiling on me—
Yes, the enlarged but noble aspect of
The hunter smiled upon me—I should say,
His lips, for his eyes moved not—and the woman's
Thin lips relax'd to something like a smile.
Both rose, and the crown'd figures on each hand
Rose also, as if aping their chief shades—
Mere mimics even in death—but I sate still:
A desperate courage crept through every limb,
And at the last I fear'd them not, but laugh'd
Full in their phantom faces. But then—then
The hunter laid his hand on mine: I took it,
And grasp'd it—but it melted from my own.
While he too vanish'd, and left nothing but
The memory of a hero, for he look'd so.

MYRRHA.

And was; the ancestors of heroes, too,
And thine no less.

SARDANAPALUS.

Ay, Myrrha, but the woman,
The female who remain'd, she flew upon me
And burnt my lips up with her noisome kisses,
And, flinging down the goblets on each hand,
Methought their poisons flow'd around us, till
Each form'd a hideous river. Still she clung;
The other phantoms, like a row of statues,
Stood dull as in our temples, but she still
Embraced me, while I shrunk from her, as if,
In lieu of her remote descendant, I
Had been the son who slew her for her incest.
Then—then—a chaos of all loathsome things
Throng'd thick and shapeless: I was dead, yet feeling—
Buried, and raised again—consumed by worms,
Purged by the flames, and wither'd in the air!
I can fix nothing further of my thoughts,
Save that I long'd for thee, and sought for thee,
In all these agonies, and woke and found thee.

MYRRHA.

So shalt thou find me ever at thy side,
Here and hereafter, if the last may be.
But think not of these things—the mere creations
Of late events acting upon a frame
Unused to toil, yet over-wrought by toil
Such as might try the sternest.

SARDANAPALUS.

I am better.
Now that I see *thee once* more, *what was seen*
Seems nothing.

Enter SALEMENES.

SALEMENES.

Is the king so soon awake?

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes, brother, and I would I had not slept;
For all the predecessors of our line
Rose up, methought, to drag me down to them.
My father was amongst them, too; but he,
I know not why, kept from me, leaving me
Between the hunter-founder of our race
And her, the homicide and husband-killer,
Whom you call glorious.

SALEMENES.

So I term you also,
Now you have shown a spirit like to hers.
By day-break I propose that we set forth,
And charge once more the rebel crew, who still
Keep gathering head, repulsed, but not quite quell'd.

SARDANAPALUS.

How wears the night?

SALEMENES.

There yet remain some hours
Of darkness: use them for your further rest.

SARDANAPALUS.

No, not to-night, if 't is not gone: methought
I pass'd hours in that vision.

MYRRHA.

Scarcely one;
I watch'd by you: it was a heavy hour,
But an hour only.

SARDANAPALUS.

Let us then hold council;
To-morrow we set forth.

SALEMENES.

But ere that time,
I had a grace to seek.

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is granted.

SALEMENES.

Hear it
Ere you reply too readily; and 't is
For *your* ear only.

MYRRHA.

Prince, I take my leave.

[*Exit* MYRRHA.

SALEMENES.

That slave deserves her freedom.

SARDANAPALUS.

Freedom only?
That slave deserves to share a throne.

SALEMENES.

Your patience—
'T is not yet vacant, and 't is of its partner
I come to speak with you.

SARDANAPALUS.

How! of the queen?

SALEMENES.

Even so. I judged it fitting for their safety,
That, ere the dawn, she sets forth with her children
For Paphlagonia, where our kinsman Cotta
Governs; and there at all events secure
My nephews and your sons their lives, and with them
Their just pretensions to the crown, in case——

SARDANAPALUS.

I perish—as is probable: well thought—
Let them set forth with a sure escort.

SALEMENES.

That
Is all provided, and the galley ready
To drop down the Euphrates; but ere they
Depart, will you not see——

SARDANAPALUS.

My sons? It may
Unman my heart, and the poor boys will weep;
And what can I reply to comfort them,
Save with some hollow hopes, and ill-worn smiles?
You know I cannot feign.

SALEMENES.

But you can feel;
At least, I trust so: in a word, the queen
Requests to see you ere you part—for ever.

SARDANAPALUS.

Unto what end? what purpose? I will grant
Aught—all that she can ask—but such a meeting.

SALEMENES.

You know, or ought to know, enough of women,
Since you have studied them so steadily,
That what they ask in aught that touches on
The heart, is dearer to their feelings or
Their fancy, than the whole external world.
I think as you do of my sister's wish;
But 'twas her wish—she is my sister—you
Her husband—will you grant it?

SARDANAPALUS.

'T will be useless:
But let her come.

SALEMENES.

I go.

[*Exit* SALEMENES.

SARDANAPALUS.

We have lived asunder
Too long to meet again—and *now* to meet!
Have I not cares enow, and pangs enow,
To bear alone, that we must mingle sorrows,
Who have ceased to mingle love?

Re-enter SALEMENES *and* ZARINA.

SALEMENES.

My sister! courage:
Shame not our blood with trembling, but remember
From whence we sprung. The queen is present, sire.

ZARINA.

I pray thee, brother, leave me.

SALEMENES.

Since you ask it.

[*Exit* SALEMENES.

ZARINA.

Alone with him! How many a year has past,
Though we are still so young, since we have met,
Which I have worn in widowhood of heart.
He loved me not: yet he seems little changed—
Changed to me only—would the change were mutual!
He speaks not—scarce regards me—not a word—
Nor look—yet he *was* soft of voice and aspect,
Indifferent, not austere. My lord!

SARDANAPALUS.

Zarina!

ZARINA.

No, *not* Zarina—do not say Zarina.
That tone—that word—annihilate long years,
And things which make them longer.

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is too late
To think of these past dreams. Let 's not reproach—
That is, reproach me not—for the *last* time——

ZARINA.

And *first*. I ne'er reproach'd you.

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is most true;
And that reproof comes heavier on my heart
Than——But our hearts are not in our own power.

ZARINA.

Nor hands; but I gave both.

SARDANAPALUS.

Your brother said,
It was your will to see me, ere you went
From Nineveh with——(*He hesitates.*)

ZARINA.

Our children: it is true.
I wish'd to thank you that you have not divided
My heart from all that 's left it now to love—
Those who are yours and mine, who look like you,
And look upon me as you look'd upon me
Once——But they have not changed.

SARDANAPALUS.

Nor ever will.
I fain would have them dutiful.

ZARINA.

I cherish
Those infants, not alone from the blind love
Of a fond mother, but as a fond woman.
They are now the only tie between us.

SARDANAPALUS.

Deem not
I have not done you justice: rather make them

Resemble your own line, than their own sire.
I trust them with you—to you: fit them for
A throne, or, if that be denied——You have heard
Of this night's tumults?

ZARINA.

I had half forgotten,
And could have welcomed any grief, save yours,
Which gave me to behold your face again.

SARDANAPALUS.

The throne—I say it not in fear—but 'tis
In peril; they perhaps may never mount it:
But let them not for this lose sight of it.
I will dare all things to bequeath it them;
But if I fail, then they must win it back
Bravely—and, won, wear it wisely, not as I
Have wasted down my royalty.

ZARINA.

They ne'er
Shall know from me of aught but what may honour
Their father's memory.

SARDANAPALUS.

Rather let them hear
The truth from you than from a trampling world.
If they be in adversity, they 'll learn
Too soon the scorn of crowds for crownless princes,
And find that all their father's sins are theirs.
My boys!—I could have borne it were I childless.

ZARINA.

Oh! do not say so—do not poison all
My peace left, by unwishing that thou wert
A father. If thou conquerest, they shall reign,
And honour him who saved the realm for them,
So little cared for as his own; and if——

SARDANAPALUS.

'Tis lost, all earth will cry out, thank your father!
And they will swell the echo with a curse.

ZARINA.

That they shall never do; but rather honour
The name of him, who, dying like a king,
In his last hours did more for his own memory,
Than many monarchs in a length of days,
Which date the flight of time, but make no annals.

SARDANAPALUS.

Our annals draw perchance unto their close;
But at the least, whate'er the past, their end
Shall be like their beginning—memorable.

ZARINA.

Yet, be not rash—be careful of your life,
Live but for those who love.

SARDANAPALUS.

And who are they?
A slave, who loves from passion—I 'll not say
Ambition—she has seen thrones shake, and loves;
A few friends, who have revell'd till we are
As one, for they are nothing if I fall;
A brother I have injured—children whom
I have neglected, and a spouse——

ZARINA.

Who loves.

SARDANAPALUS.

And pardons?

ZARINA.

I have never thought of this,
And cannot pardon till I have condemn'd.

SARDANAPALUS.

My wife!

ZARINA.

Now blessings on thee for that word!
I never thought to hear it more—from thee.

SARDANAPALUS.

Oh! thou wilt hear it from my subjects. Yes—
These slaves, whom I have nurtured, pamper'd, fed,
And swoln with peace, and gorged with plenty, till
They reign themselves—all monarchs in their mansions—
Now swarm forth in rebellion, and demand
His death, who made their lives a jubilee;
While the few upon whom I have no claim
Are faithful. This is true, yet monstrous.

ZARINA.

'T is
Perhaps too natural; for benefits
Turn poison in bad minds.

SARDANAPALUS.

And good ones make
Good out of evil. Happier than the bee,
Which hives not but from wholesome flowers.

ZARINA.

Then reap
The honey, nor inquire whence 't is derived.
Be satisfied—you are not all abandon'd.

SARDANAPALUS.

My life insures me that. How long, bethink you,
Were not I yet a king, should I be mortal;
That is, where mortals *are*, not where they must be?

ZARINA.

I know not. But yet live for my—that is,
Your children's sake!

SARDANAPALUS.

My gentle, wrong'd Zarina!
I am the very slave of circumstance
And impulse—borne away with every breath!
Misplaced upon the throne—misplaced in life.
I know not what I could have been, but feel
I am not what I should be—let it end.
But take this with thee: if I was not form'd
To prize a love like thine, a mind like thine,
Nor dote even on thy beauty—as I've doted
On lesser charms, for no cause save that such
Devotion was a duty, and I hated
All that look'd like a chain for me or others
(This even rebellion must avouch); yet hear
These words, perhaps among my last—that none
Ere valued more thy virtues, though he knew not
To profit by them—as the miner lights
Upon a vein of virgin ore, discovering
That which avails him nothing; he hath found it,
But 't is not his—but some superior's, who
Placed him to dig, but not divide the wealth
Which sparkles at his feet; nor dare he lift
Nor poise it, but must grovel on upturning
The sullen earth.

ZARINA.

Oh! if thou hast at length
Discover'd that my love is worth esteem,
I ask no more—but let us hence together,
And *I*—let me say *we*—shall yet be happy.
Assyria is not all the earth—we 'll find
A world out of our own—and be more blest
Than I have ever been, or thou, with all
An empire to indulge thee.

Enter SALEMENES.

SALEMENES.

I must part ye—
The moments, which must not be lost, are passing.

ZARINA.

Inhuman brother! wilt thou thus weigh out
Instants so high and blest?

SALEMENES.

Blest!

ZARINA.

He hath been
So gentle with me that I cannot think
Of quitting.

SALEMENES.

So—this feminine farewell
Ends as such partings end, in *no* departure.
I thought as much, and yielded against all
My better bodings. But it must not be.

ZARINA.

Not be?

SALEMENES.

Remain, and perish——

ZARINA.

With my husband—

SALEMENES.

And children.

ZARINA.

Alas!

SALEMENES.

Hear me, sister, like
My sister:—all 's prepared to make your safety
Certain, and of the boys too, our last hopes.
'T is not a single question of mere feeling,
Though that were much—but 'tis a point of state:
The rebels would do more to seize upon
The offspring of their sovereign, and so crush——

ZARINA.

Ah! do not name it.

SALEMENES.

Well, then, mark me: when
They are safe beyond the Median's grasp, the rebels
Have miss'd their chief aim—the extinction of
The line of Nimrod. Though the present king
Fall, his sons live for victory and vengeance.

ZARINA.

But could not I remain, alone?

SALEMENES.

What! leave
Your children, with two parents and yet orphans—
In a strange land—so young, so distant?

ZARINA.

No—
My heart will break.

SALEMENES.

Now you know all—decide.

SARDANAPALUS.

Zarina, he hath spoken well, and we
Must yield awhile to this necessity.
Remaining here, you may lose all; departing,
You save the better part of what is left
To both of us, and to such loyal hearts
As yet beat in these kingdoms.

SALEMENES.

The time presses.

SARDANAPALUS.

Go, then. If e'er we meet again, perhaps
I may be worthier of you—and, if not,
Remember that my faults, though not atoned for,
Are *ended*. Yet, I dread thy nature will
Grieve more above the blighted name and ashes
Which once were mightiest in Assyria—than——
But I grow womanish again, and must not;
I must learn sternness now. My sins have all
Been of the softer order——*hide* thy tears—
I do not bid thee *not* to shed them—'t were
Easier to stop Euphrates at its source
Than one tear of a true and tender heart—
But let me not behold them; they unman me
Here when I had re-mann'd myself. My brother,
Lead her away.

ZARINA.

Oh, God! I never shall
Behold him more!

SALEMENES (*striving to conduct her*).

Nay, sister, I *must* be obey'd.

ZARINA.

I must remain—away! you shall not hold me.
What, shall he die alone?—*I* live alone?

SALEMENES.

He shall *not die alone;* but lonely you
Have lived for years.

ZARINA.

That 's false! I knew *he* lived,
And lived upon his image—let me go!

SALEMENES (*conducting her off the stage*).

Nay, then, I must use some fraternal force,
Which you will pardon.

ZARINA.

Never. Help me! Oh!
Sardanapalus, wilt thou thus behold me
Torn from thee?

SALEMENES.

Nay—then all is lost again,
If that this moment is not gain'd.

ZARINA.

My brain turns—
My eyes fail—where is he? [*She faints.*

SARDANAPALUS (*advancing*).

No—set her down—
She 's dead—and you have slain her.

SALEMENES.

'T is the mere
Faintness of o'er-wrought passion: in the air
She will recover. Pray, keep back.—[*Aside.*] I must
Avail myself of this sole moment to
Bear her to where her children are embark'd,
I' the royal galley on the river.

[SALEMENES *bears her off.*

SARDANAPALUS (*solus*).

This too—
And this too must I suffer—I, who never
Inflicted purposely on human hearts
A voluntary pang! But that is false—
She loved me, and I loved her. Fatal passion!
Why dost thou not expire *at once* in hearts
Which thou hast lighted up at once? Zarina!
I must pay dearly for the desolation
Now brought upon thee. Had I never loved
But thee, I should have been an unopposed
Monarch of honouring nations. To what gulphs
A single deviation from the track
Of human duties leads even those who claim

The homage of mankind as their born due,
And find it, till they forfeit it themselves!

Enter MYRRHA.

SARDANAPALUS.

You here! Who call'd you?

MYRRHA.

No one—but I heard
Far off a voice of wail and lamentation,
And thought——

SARDANAPALUS.

It forms no portion of your duties
To enter here till sought for.

MYRRHA.

Though I might,
Perhaps, recal some softer words of yours
(Although they *too were chiding*), which reproved me,
Because I ever dreaded to intrude;
Resisting my own wish and your injunction
To heed no time nor presence, but approach you
Uncall'd for: I retire.

SARDANAPALUS.

Yet, stay—being here.
I pray you pardon me: events have sour'd me
Till I wax peevish—heed it not: I shall
Soon be myself again.

MYRRHA.

I wait with patience,
What I shall see with pleasure.

SARDANAPALUS.

Scarce a moment
Before your entrance in this hall, Zarina,
Queen of Assyria, departed hence.

MYRRHA.

Ah!

SARDANAPALUS.

Wherefore do you start?

MYRRHA.

Did I do so?

SARDANAPALUS.

'T was well you enter'd by another portal,
Else you had met. That pang at least is spared her!

MYRRHA.

I know to feel for her.

SARDANAPALUS.

That is too much,
And beyond nature—'t is nor mutual,
Nor possible. You cannot pity her,
Nor she aught but——

MYRRHA.

Despise the favourite slave?
Not more than I have ever scorn'd myself.

SARDANAPALUS.

Scorn'd! what, to be the envy of your sex,
And lord it o'er the heart of the world's lord?

MYRRHA.

Were you the lord of twice ten thousand worlds—
As you are like to lose the one you sway'd—
I did abase myself as much in being
Your paramour, as though you were a peasant—
Nay, more, if that the peasant were a Greek.

SARDANAPALUS.

You talk it well——

MYRRHA.

And truly.

SARDANAPALUS.

In the hour
Of man's adversity all things grow daring
Against the falling; but as I am not
Quite fallen, nor now disposed to bear reproaches,
Perhaps because I merit them too often,
Let us then part while peace is still between us.

MYRRHA.

Part!

SARDANAPALUS.

Have not all past human beings parted,
And must not all the present one day part?

MYRRHA.

Why?

SARDANAPALUS.

For your safety, which I will have look'd to,
With a strong escort to your native land;
And such gifts, as, if you have not been all
A queen, shall make your dowry worth a kingdom.

MYRRHA.

I pray you talk not thus.

SARDANAPALUS.

The queen is gone:
You need not shame to follow. I would fall
Alone—I seek no partners but in pleasure.

MYRRHA.

And I no pleasure but in parting not.
You shall not force me from you.

SARDANAPALUS.

Think well of it—
It soon may be too late.

MYRRHA.

So let it be;
For then you cannot separate me from you.

SARDANAPALUS.

And will not; but I thought you wish'd it.

MYRRHA.

I?

SARDANAPALUS.

You spoke of your abasement.

MYRRHA.

And I feel it
Deeply—more deeply than all things but love.

SARDANAPALUS.

Then fly from it.

MYRRHA.

'T will not recal the past—
'T will not restore my honour, nor my heart.
No—here I stand or fall. If that you conquer,
I live to joy in your great triumph; should
Your lot be different, I 'll not weep, but share it.
You did not doubt me a few hours ago.

SARDANAPALUS.

Your courage never—nor your love till now;
And none could make me doubt it save yourself.
Those words——

MYRRHA.

Were words. I pray you, let the proofs
Be in the past acts you were pleased to praise
This very night, and in my further bearing,
Beside, wherever you are borne by fate.

SARDANAPALUS.

I am content; and, trusting in my cause,
Think we may yet be victors, and return
To peace—the only victory I covet.
To me war is no glory—conquest no

Renown. To be forced thus to uphold my right,
Sits heavier on my heart than all the wrongs
These men would bow me down with. Never, never
Can I forget this night, even should I live
To add it to the memory of others.
I thought to have made mine inoffensive rule
An era of sweet peace 'midst bloody annals,
A green spot amidst desert centuries,
On which the future would turn back and smile,
And cultivate, or sigh when it could not
Recal Sardanapalus' golden reign.
I thought to have made my realm a paradise,
And every moon an epoch of new pleasures.
I took the rabble's shouts for love—the breath
Of friends for truth—the lips of woman for
My only guerdon—so they are, my Myrrha:

[*He kisses her.*

Kiss me. Now let them take my realm and life!
They shall have both, but never thee!

MYRRHA.

No, never!
Man may despoil his brother man of all
That's great or glittering: kingdoms fall—hosts yield—
Friends fail—slaves fly—and all betray—and, more
Than all, the most indebted—but a heart
That loves without self-love! 'T is here—now prove it.

Enter SALEMENES.

SALEMENES.

I sought you.—How! *she* here again?

SARDANAPALUS.

Return not
Now to reproof: methinks your aspect speaks
Of higher matter than a woman's presence.

SALEMENES.

The only woman whom it much imports me
At such a moment now is safe in absence—
The queen's embark'd.

SARDANAPALUS.

And well? say that much.

SALEMENES.

Yes.
Her transient weakness has past o'er; at least,
It settled into tearless silence: her
Pale face and glittering eye, after a glance
Upon her sleeping children, were still fix'd
Upon the palace towers, as the swift galley
Stole down the hurrying stream beneath the starlight;
But she said nothing.

SARDANAPALUS.

Would I felt no more
Than she has said.

SALEMENES.

'T is now too late to feel!
Your feelings cannot cancel a sole pang:
To change them, my advices bring sure tidings
That the rebellious Medes and Chaldees, marshall'd
By their two leaders, are already up
In arms again; and, serrying their ranks,
Prepare to attack: they have apparently
Been join'd by other satraps.

SARDANAPALUS.

What! more rebels?
Let us be first, then.

SALEMENES.

That were hardly prudent
Now, though it was our first intention. If
By noon to-morrow we are join'd by those
I've sent for by sure messengers, we shall be
In strength enough to venture an attack,
Ay, and pursuit too: but, till then, my voice
Is to await the onset.

SARDANAPALUS.

I detest
That waiting; though it seems so safe to fight
Behind high walls, and hurl down foes into
Deep fosses, or behold them sprawl on spikes
Strew'd to receive them, still I like it not—
My soul seems lukewarm; but when I set on them,
Though they were piled on mountains, I would have
A pluck at them, or perish in hot blood!—
Let me then charge!

SALEMENES.

You talk like a young soldier.

SARDANAPALUS.

I am no soldier, but a man: speak not
Of soldiership, I loathe the word, and those
Who pride themselves upon it; but direct me
Where I may pour upon them.

SALEMENES.

You must spare
To expose your life too hastily; 't is not
Like mine or any other subject's breath:
The whole war turns upon it—with it; this
Alone creates it, kindles, and may quench it—
Prolong it—end it.

SARDANAPALUS.

Then let us end both!
'T were better thus, perhaps, than prolong either;
I'm sick of one, perchance of both.

[*A trumpet sounds without.*

SALEMENES.

Hark!

SARDANAPALUS.

Let us
Reply, not listen.

SALEMENES.

And your wound?

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is bound—
'T is heal'd—I had forgotten it. Away!
A leech's lancet would have scratch'd me deeper:
The slave that gave it might be well ashamed
To have struck so weakly.

SALEMENES.

Now may none this hour
Strike with a better aim!

SARDANAPALUS.

Ay, if we conquer;
But if not, they will only leave to me
A task they might have spared their king. Upon them!

[*Trumpet sounds again.*

SALEMENES.

I am with you.

SARDANAPALUS.

Ho, my arms! again, my arms!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The same Hall of the Palace.

MYRRHA *and* BALEA.

MYRRHA (*at a window*).

The day at last has broken. What a night
Hath usher'd it! How beautiful in heaven!
Though varied with a transitory storm,
More beautiful in that variety!
How hideous upon earth! where peace and hope,
And love and revel, in an hour were trampled
By human passions to a human chaos,
Not yet resolved to separate elements.—
'T is warring still! And can the sun so rise,
So bright, so rolling back the clouds into
Vapours more lovely than the unclouded sky,
With golden pinnacles, and snowy mountains,
And billows purpler than the ocean's, making
In heaven a glorious mockery of the earth,
So like, we almost deem it permanent;
So fleeting, we can scarcely call it aught
Beyond a vision, 't is so transiently
Scatter'd along the eternal vault: and yet
It dwells upon the soul, and soothes the soul,
And blends itself into the soul, until
Sunrise and sunset form the haunted epoch
Of sorrow and of love; which they who mark not
Know not the realms where those twin genii
(Who chasten and who purify our hearts,
So that we would not change their sweet rebukes
For all the boisterous joys that ever shook
The air with clamour) build the palaces
Where their fond votaries repose and breathe
Briefly;—but in that brief cool calm inhale
Enough of heaven to enable them to bear
The rest of common, heavy, human hours,
And dream them through in placid sufferance;
Though seemingly employ'd like all the rest
Of toiling breathers in allotted tasks
Of pain or pleasure, *two* names for *one* feeling,
Which our internal, restless agony
Would vary in the sound, although the sense
Escapes our highest efforts to be happy.

BALEA.

You muse right calmly: and can you so watch
The sunrise which may be our last?

MYRRHA.

It is
Therefore that I so watch it, and reproach
Those eyes, which never may behold it more,
For having look'd upon it oft, too oft,
Without the reverence and the rapture due
To that which keeps all earth from being as fragile
As I am in this form. Come, look upon it,
The Chaldee's god, which, when I gaze upon,
I grow almost a convert to your Baal.

BALEA.

As now he reigns in heaven, so once on earth
He sway'd.

MYRRHA.

He sways it now far more, then; never
Had earthly monarch half the peace and glory
Which centres in a single ray of his.

BALEA.

Surely he is a god!

MYRRHA.

So we Greeks deem too;
And yet I sometimes think that gorgeous orb
Must rather be the abode of gods than one
Of the immortal sovereigns. Now he breaks
Through all the clouds, and fills my eyes with light
That shuts the world out. I can look no more.

BALEA.

Hark! heard you not a sound?

MYRRHA.

No, 't was mere fancy;
They battle it beyond the wall, and not
As in late midnight conflict in the very
Chambers: the palace has become a fortress
Since that insidious hour; and here within
The very centre, girded by vast courts
And regal halls of pyramid proportions,
Which must be carried one by one before
They penetrate to where they then arrived,
We are as much shut in even from the sound
Of peril as from glory.

BALEA.

But they reach'd
Thus far before.

MYRRHA.

Yes, by surprise, and were
Beat back by valour; now at once we have
Courage and vigilance to guard us.

BALEA.

May they
Prosper!

MYRRHA.

That is the prayer of many, and
The dread of more: it is an anxious hour;
I strive to keep it from my thoughts. Alas!
How vainly!

BALEA.

It is said the king's demeanour
In the late action scarcely more appall'd
The rebels than astonish'd his true subjects.

MYRRHA.

'T is easy to astonish or appal
The vulgar mass which moulds a horde of slaves:
But he did bravely.

BALEA.

Slew he not Beleses?
I heard the soldiers say he struck him down.

MYRRHA.

The wretch was overthrown, but rescued to
Triumph, perhaps, o'er one who vanquish'd him
In fight, as he had spared him in his peril,
And by that heedless pity risk'd a crown.

BALEA.

Hark!

MYRRHA.

You are right; some steps approach, but slowly.

Enter Soldiers, bearing in SALEMENES *wounded, with a broken Javelin in his Side: they seat him upon one of the Couches which furnish the Apartment.*

MYRRHA.

Oh, Jove!

BALEA.

Then all is over.

SALEMENES.

That is false.
Hew down the slave who says so, if a soldier.

MYRRHA.

Spare him—he 's none: a mere court butterfly,
That flutters in the pageant of a monarch.

SALEMENES.

Let him live on, then.

MYRRHA.

So wilt thou, I trust.

SALEMENES.

I fain would live this hour out, and the event,
But doubt it. Wherefore did ye bear me here?

SOLDIER.

By the king's order. When the javelin struck you,
You fell and fainted; 't was his strict command
To bear you to this hall.

SALEMENES.

'T was not ill done:
For, seeming slain in that cold dizzy trance,
The sight might shake our soldiers—but—'t is vain.
I feel it ebbing!

MYRRHA.

Let me see the wound;
I am not quite skilless: in my native land
'T is part of our instruction. War being constant,
We are nerved to look on such things.

SOLDIER.

Best extract
The javelin.

MYRRHA.

Hold! no, no, it cannot be.

SALEMENES.

I am sped, then!

MYRRHA.

With the blood that fast must follow
The extracted weapon, I do fear thy life.

SALEMENES.

And I *not* death. Where was the king when you
Convey'd me from the spot where I was stricken?

SOLDIER.

Upon the same ground, and encouraging
With voice and gesture the dispirited troops
Who had seen you fall, and falter'd back.

SALEMENES.

Whom heard ye
Named next to the command?

SOLDIER.

I did not hear.

SALEMENES.

Fly, then, and tell him, 't was my last request
That Zames take my post until the junction,
So hoped for, yet delay'd, of Ofratanes,
Satrap of Susa. Leave me here: our troops
Are not so numerous as to spare your absence.

SOLDIER.

But, prince——

SALEMENES.

Hence, I say! Here 's a courtier and
A woman, the best chamber company.
As you would not permit me to expire
Upon the field, I 'll have no idle soldiers
About my sick couch. Hence! and do my bidding!

[*Exeunt the Soldiers.*

MYRRHA.

Gallant and glorious spirit! must the earth
So soon resign thee?

SALEMENES.

Gentle Myrrha, 't is
The end I would have chosen, had I saved
The monarch or the monarchy by this;
As 't is, I have not outlived them.

MYRRHA.

You wax paler.

SALEMENES.

Your hand; this broken weapon but prolongs
My pangs, without sustaining life enough
To make me useful: I would draw it forth,
And my life with it, could I but hear how
The fight goes.

Enter SARDANAPALUS *and Soldiers.*

SARDANAPALUS.

My best brother!

SALEMENES.

And the battle
Is lost?

SARDANAPALUS (*despondingly*).

You see *me here.*

SALEMENES.

I 'd rather see you *thus!*

[*He draws out the weapon from the wound, and dies.*

SARDANAPALUS.

And *thus* I will be seen; unless the succour,
The last frail reed of our beleaguer'd hopes,
Arrive with Ofratanes.

MYRRHA.

Did you not
Receive a token from your dying brother,
Appointing Zames chief?

SARDANAPALUS.

I did.

MYRRHA.

Where 's Zames?

SARDANAPALUS.

Dead.

MYRRHA.

And Altada?

SARDANAPALUS.

Dying.

MYRRHA.

Pania? Sfero?

SARDANAPALUS.

Pania yet lives; but Sfero 's fled, or captive.
I am alone.

MYRRHA.

And is all lost?

SARDANAPALUS.

Our walls,
Though thinly mann'd, may still hold out against
Their present force, or aught save treachery:
But i' the field——

MYRRHA.

I thought 't was the intent
Of Salamenes not to risk a sally
'Till ye were strengthen'd by the expected succours.

SARDANAPALUS.

I over-ruled him.

MYRRHA.

Well, the fault 's a brave one.

SARDANAPALUS.

But fatal. Oh, my brother! I would give

These realms, of which thou wert the ornament,
The sword and shield, the sole, redeeming honour,
To call back——But I will not weep for thee;
Thou shalt be mourn'd for as thou wouldst be mourn'd.
It grieves me most that thou couldst quit this life
Believing that I could survive what thou
Hast died for—our long royalty of race.
If I redeem it, I will give thee blood
Of thousands, tears of millions, for atonement
(The tears of all the good are thine already).
If not, we meet again soon, if the spirit
Within us lives beyond:—thou readest mine,
And dost me justice now. Let me once clasp
That yet warm hand, and fold that throbless heart
[*Embraces the body.*
To this which beats so bitterly. Now, bear
The body hence.

SOLDIER.

Where?

SARDANAPALUS.

To my proper chamber.
Place it beneath my canopy, as though
The king lay there: when this is done, we will
Speak further of the rites due to such ashes.

[*Exeunt Soldiers with the body of* SALEMENES.

Enter PANIA.

SARDANAPALUS.

Well, Pania! have you placed the guards, and issued
The orders fix'd on?

PANIA.

Sire, I have obey'd.

SARDANAPALUS.

And do the soldiers keep their hearts up?

PANIA.

Sire?

SARDANAPALUS.

I 'm answer'd! When a king asks twice, and has
A question as an answer to *his* question,
It is a portent. What, they are dishearten'd?

PANIA.

The death of Salemenes, and the shouts
Of the exulting rebels on his fall,
Have made them——

SARDANAPALUS.

Rage—not droop—it should have been.
We 'll find the means to rouse them.

PANIA.

Such a loss
Might sadden even a victory.

SARDANAPALUS.

Alas!
Who can so feel it as I feel? but yet,
Though coop'd within these walls, they are strong, and we
Have those without will break their way through hosts,
To make their sovereign's dwelling what it was—
A palace—not a prison nor a fortress.

Enter an Officer, hastily.

SARDANAPALUS.

Thy face seems ominous. Speak!

OFFICER.

I dare not.

SARDANAPALUS.

Dare not?
While millions dare revolt with sword in hand!
That 's strange. I pray thee break that loyal silence
Which loathes to shock its sovereign; we can hear
Worse than thou hast to tell.

PANIA.

Proceed, thou hearest.

OFFICER.

The wall which skirted near the river's brink
Is thrown down by the sudden inundation
Of the Euphrates, which now rolling, swoln
From the enormous mountains where it rises,
By the late rains of that tempestuous region,
O'erfloods its banks, and hath destroy'd the bulwark.

PANIA.

That 's a black augury! it has been said
For ages, « That the city ne'er should yield
To man, until the river grew its foe.»

SARDANAPALUS.

I can forgive the omen, not the ravage.
How much is swept down of the wall?

OFFICER.

About
Some twenty stadii.

SARDANAPALUS.

And all this is left
Pervious to the assailants?

OFFICER.

For the present
The river's fury must impede the assault;
But when he shrinks into his wonted channel,
And may be cross'd by the accustom'd barks,
The palace is their own.

SARDANAPALUS.

That shall be never.
Though men, and gods, and elements, and omens,
Have risen up 'gainst one who ne'er provoked them,
My fathers' house shall never be a cave
For wolves to horde and howl in.

PANIA.

With your sanction
I will proceed to the spot, and take such measures
For the assurance of the vacant space
As time and means permit.

SARDANAPALUS.

About it straight,
And bring me back, as speedily as full
And fair investigation may permit,
Report of the true state of this irruption
Of waters.

[*Exeunt* PANIA *and the Officer.*

MYRRHA.

Thus the very waves rise up
Against you.

SARDANAPALUS.

They are not my subjects, girl,
And may be pardon'd, since they can't be punish'd.

MYRRHA.

I joy to see this portent shakes you not.

SARDANAPALUS.

I am past the fear of portents: they can tell me
Nothing I have not told myself since midnight:
Despair anticipates such things.

MYRRHA.

Despair!

SARDANAPALUS.

No, not despair precisely. When we know
All that can come, and how to meet it, our
Resolves, if firm, may merit a more noble

Word than this is to give it utterance.
But what are words to us? we have well nigh done
With them and all things.

MYRRHA.

Save *one deed*—the last
And greatest to all mortals; crowning act
Of all that was—or is—or is to be—
The only thing common to all mankind,
So different in their births, tongues, sexes, natures,
Hues, features, climes, times, feelings, intellects,
Without one point of union, save in this,
To which we tend, for which we're born, and thread
The labyrinth of mystery call'd life.

SARDANAPALUS.

Our clew being well nigh wound out, let's be cheerful.
They who have nothing more to fear may well
Indulge a smile at that which once appall'd;
As children at discover'd bugbears.

Re-enter PANIA.

PANIA.

'T is
As was reported: I have order'd there
A double guard, withdrawing from the wall
Where it was strongest the required addition
To watch the breach occasion'd by the waters.

SARDANAPALUS.

You have done your duty faithfully, and as
My worthy Pania! further ties between us
Draw near a close. I pray you take this key:
[*Gives a key.*
It opens to a secret chamber, placed
Behind the couch in my own chamber. (Now
Press'd by a nobler weight than e'er it bore—
Though a long line of sovereigns have lain down
Along its golden frame—as bearing for
A time what late was Salamenes.) Search
The secret covert to which this will lead you;
'T is full of treasure; take it for yourself
And your companions: there's enough to load ye,
Though ye be many. Let the slaves be freed, too;
And all the inmates of the palace, of
Whatever sex, now quit it in an hour.
Thence launch the regal barks, once form'd for pleasure,
And now to serve for safety, and embark.
The river's broad and swoln, and uncommanded
(More potent than a king) by these besiegers.
Fly! and be happy!

PANIA.

Under your protection!
So you accompany your faithful guard.

SARDANAPALUS.

No, Pania! that must not be; get thee hence,
And leave me to my fate.

PANIA.

'T is the first time
I ever disobey'd: but now——

SARDANAPALUS.

So all men
Dare beard me now, and Insolence within
Apes Treason from without. Question no further;
'T is my command, my last command. Wilt *thou*
Oppose it? *thou!*

PANIA.

But yet—not yet.

SARDANAPALUS.

Well, then,
Swear that you will obey when I shall give
The signal.

PANIA.

With a heavy but true heart,
I promise.

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is enough. Now order here
Faggots, pine-nuts, and wither'd leaves, and such
Things as catch fire and blaze with one sole spark;
Bring cedar, too, and precious drugs, and spices,
And mighty planks, to nourish a tall pile;
Bring frankincense and myrrh, too, for it is
For a great sacrifice I build the pyre;
And heap them round yon throne.

PANIA.

My lord!

SARDANAPALUS.

I have said it,
And *you* have *sworn*.

PANIA.

And could keep my faith
Without a vow. [*Exit* PANIA.

MYRRHA.

What mean you?

SARDANAPALUS.

You shall know
Anon—what the whole earth shall ne'er forget.

PANIA, *returning with a Herald.*

PANIA.

My king, in going forth upon my duty,
This herald has been brought before me, craving
An audience.

SARDANAPALUS.

Let him speak.

HERALD.

The *King* Arbaces——

SARDANAPALUS.

What, crown'd already?—But, proceed.

HERALD.

Beleses,
The anointed high-priest——

SARDANAPALUS.

Of what god, or demon?
With new kings rise new altars. But, proceed;
You are sent to prate your master's will, and not
Reply to mine.

HERALD.

And Satrap Ofratanes——

SARDANAPALUS.

Why, *he* is *ours*.

HERALD (*showing a ring*).

Be sure that he is now
In the camp of the conquerors; behold
His signet ring.

SARDANAPALUS.

'T is his. A worthy triad!
Poor Salemenes! thou hast died in time
To see one treachery the less: this man
Was thy true friend and my most trusted subject.
Proceed.

HERALD.

They offer thee thy life, and freedom
Of choice to single out a residence

In any of the further provinces,
Guarded and watch'd, but not confined in person,
Where thou shalt pass thy days in peace; but on
Condition that the three young princes are
Given up as hostages.

SARDANAPALUS (*ironically*).

The generous victors!

HERALD.

I wait the answer.

SARDANAPALUS.

Answer, slave! How long
Have slaves decided on the doom of kings?

HERALD.

Since they were free.

SARDANAPALUS.

Mouthpiece of mutiny!
Thou at the least shalt learn the penalty
Of treason, though its proxy only. Pania!
Let his head be thrown from our walls within
The rebels' lines, his carcass down the river.
Away with him!

[PANIA *and the Guards seizing him.*

PANIA.

I never yet obey'd
Your orders with more pleasure than the present.
Hence with him, soldiers! do not soil this hall
Of royalty with treasonable gore;
Put him to rest without.

HERALD.

A single word:
My office, king, is sacred.

SARDANAPALUS.

And what 's *mine?*
That thou shouldst come and dare to ask of me
To lay it down?

HERALD.

I but obey'd my orders,
At the same peril if refused, as now
Incurr'd by my obedience.

SARDANAPALUS.

So, there are
New monarchs of an hour's growth as despotic
As sovereigns swathed in purple, and enthroned
From birth to manhood!

HERALD.

My life waits your breath.
Yours (I speak humbly)—but it may be—yours
May also be in danger scarce less imminent:
Would it then suit the last hours of a line
Such as is that of Nimrod, to destroy
A peaceful herald, unarm'd, in his office;
And violate not only all that man
Holds sacred between man and man—but that
More holy tie which links us with the gods?

SARDANAPALUS.

He 's right.—Let him go free.—My life's last act
Shall not be one of wrath. Here, fellow, take
[*Gives him a golden cup from a table near.*
This golden goblet, let it hold your wine,
And think of *me;* or melt it into ingots,
And think of nothing but their weight and value.

HERALD.

I thank you doubly for my life, and this
Most gorgeous gift, which renders it more precious.
But must I bear no answer?

SARDANAPALUS.

Yes,—I ask
An hour's truce to consider.

HERALD.

But an hour's?

SARDANAPALUS.

An hour's: if at the expiration of
That time your masters hear no further from me,
They are to deem that I reject their terms,
And act befittingly.

HERALD.

I shall not fail
To be a faithful legate of your pleasure.

SARDANAPALUS.

And, hark! a word more.

HERALD.

I shall not forget it,
Whate'er it be.

SARDANAPALUS.

Commend me to Beleses;
And tell him, ere a year expire, I summon
Him hence to meet me.

HERALD.

Where?

SARDANAPALUS.

At Babylon.
At least from thence he will depart to meet me.

HERALD.

I shall obey you to the letter. [*Exit Herald*

SARDANAPALUS.

Pania!—
Now, my good Pania!—quick! with what I order'd.

PANIA.

My lord,—the soldiers are already charged.
And, see! they enter.

[*Soldiers enter, and form a Pile about the Throne, etc.*

SARDANAPALUS.

Higher, my good soldiers,
And thicker yet; and see that the foundation
Be such as will not speedily exhaust
Its own too subtle flame; nor yet be quench'd
With aught officious aid would bring to quell it.
Let the throne form the *core* of it; I would not
Leave that, save fraught with fire unquenchable,
To the new comers. Frame the whole as if
'T were to enkindle the strong tower of our
Inveterate enemies. Now it bears an aspect!
How say you, Pania, will this pile suffice
For a king's obsequies?

PANIA.

Ay, for a kingdom's.
I understand you now.

SARDANAPALUS.

And blame me?

PANIA.

No—
Let me but fire the pile and share it with you.

MYRRHA.

That duty 's mine.

PANIA.

A woman's!

MYRRHA.

'T is the soldier's
Part to die *for* his sovereign, and why not
The woman's with her lover?

PANIA.

'T is most strange!

MYRRHA.

But not so rare, my Pania, as thou think'st it.
In the mean time, live thou.—Farewell! the pile
Is ready.

PANIA.

I should shame to leave my sovereign
With but a single female to partake
His death.

SARDANAPALUS.

Too many far have heralded
Me to the dust already. Get thee hence;
Enrich thee.

PANIA.

And live wretched!

SARDANAPALUS.

Think upon
Thy vow;—'tis sacred and irrevocable.

PANIA.

Since it is so, farewell.

SARDANAPALUS.

Search well my chamber,
Feel no remorse at bearing off the gold;
Remember, what you leave you leave the slaves
Who slew me: and when you have borne away
All safe off to your boats, blow one long blast
Upon the trumpet as you quit the palace.
The river's brink is too remote, its stream
Too loud at present to permit the echo
To reach distinctly from its banks. Then fly,—
And as you sail turn back; but still keep on
Your way along the Euphrates: if you reach
The land of Paphlagonia, where the queen
Is safe with my three sons in Cotta 's court,
Say what you *saw* at parting, and request
That she remember what I *said* at one
Parting more mournful still.

PANIA.

That royal hand!
Let me then once more press it to my lips;
And these poor soldiers who throng round you, and
Would fain die with you!

[*The Soldiers and* PANIA *throng round him, kissing his hand and the hem of his robe.*

SARDANAPALUS.

My best! my last friends!
Let 's not unman each other—part at once:
All farewells should be sudden, when for ever,
Else they make an eternity of moments,
And clog the last sad sands of life with tears.
Hence, and be happy: trust me, I am not
Now to be pitied, or far more for what
Is past than present;—for the future, 't is
In the hands of the deities, if such
There be: I shall know soon. Farewell—farewell.

[*Exeunt* PANIA *and the Soldiers.*

MYRRHA.

These men were honest: it is comfort still
That our last looks shall be on loving faces.

SARDANAPALUS.

And *lovely* ones, my beautiful!—but hear me!
If at this moment, for we now are on
The brink, thou feel'st an inward shrinking from
This leap through flame into the future, say it:
I shall not love thee less; nay, perhaps more,
For yielding to thy nature: and there 's time
Yet for thee to escape hence.

MYRRHA.

Shall I light
One of the torches which lie heap'd beneath
The ever-burning lamp that burns without,
Before Baal's shrine, in the adjoining hall?

SARDANAPALUS.

Do so. Is that thy answer?

MYRRHA.

Thou shalt see.

[*Exit* MYRRHA.

SARDANAPALUS (*solus*).

She 's firm. My fathers! whom I will rejoin,
It may be, purified by death from some
Of the gross stains of too material being,
I would not leave your ancient first abode
To the defilement of usurping bondmen;
If I have not kept your inheritance
As ye bequeath'd it, this bright part of it,
Your treasure, your abode, your sacred relics
Of arms, and records, monuments, and spoils,
In which *they* would have revell'd, I bear with me
To you in that absorbing element,
Which most personifies the soul, as leaving
The least of matter unconsumed before
Its fiery working:—and the light of this
Most royal of funereal pyres shall be
Not a mere pillar form'd of cloud and flame,
A beacon in the horizon for a day,
And then a mount of ashes, but a light
To lesson ages, rebel nations, and
Voluptuous princes. Time shall quench full many
A people's records, and a hero's acts;
Sweep empire after empire, like this first
Of empires, into nothing; but even then
Shall spare this deed of mine, and hold it up
A problem few dare imitate, and none
Despise—but, it may be, avoid the life
Which led to such a consummation.

MYRRHA *returns with a lighted Torch in her Hand, and a Cup in the other.*

MYRRHA.

Lo!
I 've lit the lamp which lights us to the stars.

SARDANAPALUS.

And the cup?

MYRRHA.

'T is my country's custom to
Make a libation to the gods.

SARDANAPALUS.

And mine
To make libations amongst men. I 've not
Forgot the custom; and although alone,
Will drain one draught in memory of many
A joyous banquet past.

[SARDANAPALUS *takes the cup, and after drinking and tinkling the reversed cup, as a drop falls, exclaims—*

And this libation
Is for the excellent Beleses.

MYRRHA.

Why
Dwells thy mind rather upon that man's name
Than on his mate's in villany?

SARDANAPALUS.

The one
Is a mere soldier, a mere tool, a kind
Of human sword in a friend's hand; the other
Is master-mover of his warlike puppet:
But I dismiss them from my mind.—Yet pause,
My Myrrha! dost thou truly follow me,
Freely and fearlessly?

MYRRHA.

And dost thou think
A Greek girl dare not do for love that which
An Indian widow braves for custom?

SARDANAPALUS.

Then
We but await the signal.

MYRRHA.

It is long
In sounding.

SARDANAPALUS.

Now, farewell; one last embrace.

MYRRHA.

Embrace, but *not* the last; there is one more.

SARDANAPALUS.

True, the commingling fire will mix our ashes.

MYRRHA.

And pure as is my love to thee, shall they,
Purged from the dross of earth, and earthly passion,
Mix pale with thine. A single thought yet irks me.

SARDANAPALUS.

Say it.

MYRRHA.

It is that no kind hand will gather
The dust of both into one urn.

SARDANAPALUS.

The better!
Rather let them be borne abroad upon
The winds of heaven, and scatter'd into air,
Than be polluted more by human hands
Of slaves and traitors; in this blazing palace,
And its enormous walls of reeking ruin.
We leave a nobler monument than Egypt
Hath piled in her brick mountains, o'er dead kings,
Or *kine*, for none know whether those proud piles
Be for their monarch, or their ox-god Apis:
So much for monuments that have forgotten
Their very record!

MYRRHA.

Then farewell, thou earth!
And loveliest spot of earth! farewell Ionia?
Be thou still free and beautiful, and far
Aloof from desolation! My last prayer
Was for thee, my last thoughts, save *one*, were of thee!

SARDANAPALUS.

And that?

MYRRHA.

Is yours.

[*The trumpet of* PANIA *sounds without.*

SARDANAPALUS.

Hark!

MYRRHA.

Now!

SARDANAPALUS.

Adieu, Assyria!
I loved thee well, my own, my fathers' land,
And better as my country than my kingdom.
I satiated thee with peace and joys; and this
Is my reward! and now I owe thee nothing,
Not even a grave. [*He mounts the pile.*
Now, Myrrha!

MYRRHA.

Art thou ready?

SARDANAPALUS.

As the torch in thy grasp.

[MYRRHA *fires the pile.*

MYRRHA.

'T is fired! I come.

[*As* MYRRHA *springs forward to throw herself into the flames, the Curtain falls.*

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 291, line 19.

And thou, my own Ionian Myrrha.

«The Ionian name had been still more comprehensive, having included the Achaians and the Bœotians, who, together with those to whom it was afterwards confined, would make nearly the whole of the Greek nation, and among the orientals it was always the general name for the Greeks.»—*Mitford's Greece*, vol. i. p. 199.

Note 2. Page 294, line 1.

————« Sardanapalus,
The king, and son of Anacyndaraxes,
In one day built Anchialus and Tarsus.
Eat, drink, and love; the rest's not worth a fillip.»

«For this expedition he took not only a small chosen body of the phalanx, but all his light troops. In the first day's march he reached Anchialus, a town said to have been founded by the king of Assyria, Sardanapalus. The fortifications, in their magnitude and extent, still in Arrian's time, bore the character of greatness, which the Assyrians appear singularly to have affected in works of the kind. A monument representing Sardanapalus was found there, warranted by an inscription in Assyrian characters, of course in the old Assyrian language, which the Greeks, whether well or ill, interpreted thus: «Sardanapalus, son of Anacyndaraxes, in one day founded Anchialus and Tarsus. Eat, drink, play: all other human joys are not worth a fillip.» Supposing this version nearly exact (for Arrian says it was not quite so), whether the purpose has not been to invite to civil order a people disposed to turbulence, rather than to recommend immoderate luxury, may perhaps reasonably be questioned. What, indeed, could be the object of a king of Assyria in founding such towns in a country so distant from his capital, and so divided from it by an immense extent of sandy deserts and lofty mountains, and, still more, how the inhabitants could be at once in circumstances to abandon themselves to the intemperate joys which their prince has been supposed to have recommended, is not obvious; but it may deserve observation that, in that line of coast, the southern of Lesser Asia, ruins of cities, evidently of an age after Alexander, yet barely named in history, at this day astonish the adventurous traveller by their magnificence and elegance. Amid the desolation which, under a singularly barbarian government, has for so many centuries been daily spreading in the finest countries of the globe, whether

more from soil and climate, or from opportunities for commerce, extraordinary means must have been found for communities to flourish there, whence it may seem that the measures of Sardanapalus were directed by juster views than have been commonly ascribed to him; but that monarch having been the last of a dynasty, ended by a revolution, obloquy on his memory would follow of course from the policy of his successors and their partisans.

«The inconsistency of traditions concerning Sardanapalus is striking in Diodorus's account of him.»—*Mitford's Greece*, vol. ix. pp. 311, 312, and 313.

The Two Foscari,

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

The *father* softens, but the *governor's* resolved.
CRITIC.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

FRANCIS FOSCARI, *Doge of Venice.*
JACOPO FOSCARI, *Son of the Doge.*
JAMES LOREDANO, *a Patrician.*
MARCO MEMMO, *a Chief of the Forty.*
BARBARIGO, *a Senator.*
Other Senators, the council of Ten, Guards, Attendants, etc. etc.

WOMAN.

MARINA, *Wife of young* FOSCARI.

Scene—The Ducal Palace, Venice.

THE TWO FOSCARI.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Ducal Palace.

Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO, *meeting.*

LOREDANO.

Where is the prisoner?

BARBARIGO.

Reposing from
The Question.

LOREDANO.

The hour's past—fix'd yesterday
For the resumption of his trial.—Let us
Rejoin our colleagues in the council, and
Urge his recal.

BARBARIGO.

Nay, let him profit by
A few brief minutes for his tortured limbs;
He was o'erwrought by the Question yesterday,
And may die under it if now repeated.

LOREDANO.

Well?

BARBARIGO.

I yield not to you in love of justice,
Or hate of the ambitious Foscari,
Father and son, and all their noxious race;
But the poor wretch has suffer'd beyond nature's
Most stoical endurance.

LOREDANO.

Without owning
His crime.

BARBARIGO.

Perhaps without committing any.
But he avow'd the letter to the Duke
Of Milan, and his sufferings half atone for
Such weakness.

LOREDANO.

We shall see.

BARBARIGO.

You, Loredano,
Pursue hereditary hate too far.

LOREDANO.

How far?

BARBARIGO.

To extermination.

LOREDANO.

When they are
Extinct, you may say this.—Let 's in to council.

BARBARIGO.

Yet pause—the number of our colleagues is not
Complete yet; two are wanting ere we can
Proceed.

LOREDANO.

And the chief judge, the Doge?

BARBARIGO.

No—he
With more than Roman fortitude is ever
First at the board in this unhappy process
Against his last and only son.

LOREDANO.

True—true—
His *last.*

BARBARIGO.

Will nothing move you?

LOREDANO.

Feels he, think you

BARBARIGO.

He shows it not.

LOREDANO.

I have mark'd *that*—the wretch!

BARBARIGO.

But yesterday, I hear, on his return

To the ducal chambers, as he pass'd the threshold,
The old man fainted.

LOREDANO.

It begins to work, then.

BARBARIGO.

The work is half your own.

LOREDANO.

And should be *all* mine—
My father and my uncle are no more.

BARBARIGO.

I have read their epitaph, which says they died
By poison.

LOREDANO.

When the Doge declared that he
Should never deem himself a sovereign till
The death of Peter Loredano, both
The brothers sicken'd shortly:—he *is* sovereign.

BARBARIGO.

A wretched one.

LOREDANO.

What should they be who make
Orphans?

BARBARIGO.

But *did* the Doge make you so?

LOREDANO.

Yes.

BARBARIGO.

What solid proofs?

LOREDANO.

When princes set themselves
To work in secret, proofs and process are
Alike made difficult; but I have such
Of the first, as shall make the second needless.

BARBARIGO.

But you will move by law?

LOREDANO.

By all the laws
Which he would leave us.

BARBARIGO

They are such in this
Our state as render retribution easier
Than 'mongst remoter nations. Is it true
That you have written in your books of commerce
(The wealthy practice of our highest nobles),
«Doge Foscari, my debtor for the deaths
Of Marco and Pietro Loredano,
My sire and uncle?»

LOREDANO.

It is written thus.

BARBARIGO.

And will you leave it unerased?

LOREDANO.

Till balanced.

BARBARIGO.

And how?
(*Two Senators pass over the stage, as in their way to «the Hall of the Council of Ten.»*

LOREDANO.

You see the number is complete.
Follow me. [*Exit* LOREDANO.

BARBARIGO (*solus*).

Follow *thee!* I have follow'd long
Thy path of desolation, as the wave
Sweeps after that before it, alike whelming
The wreck that creaks to the wild winds, and wretch
Who shrieks within its riven ribs, as gush
The waters through them; but this son and sire
Might move the elements to pause, and yet
Must I on hardily like them—Oh! would
I could as blindly and remorselessly!—
Lo, where he comes!—Be still, my heart! they are
Thy foes, must be thy victims: wilt thou beat
For those who almost broke thee?

Enter Guards, with young FOSCARI *as prisoner, etc.*

GUARD.

Let him rest.
Signor, take time.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I thank thee, friend, I'm feeble;
But thou may'st stand reproved.

GUARD.

I'll stand the hazard.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

That 's kind:—I meet some pity, but no mercy;
This is the first.

GUARD.

And might be last, did they
Who rule behold us.

BARBARIGO (*advancing to the guard*).

There is one who does:
Yet fear not; I will neither be thy judge
Nor thy accuser; though the hour is past,
Wait their last summons—I am of «the Ten,»
And waiting for that summons sanction you
Even by my presence: when the last call sounds,
We 'll in together.—Look well to the prisoner!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

What voice is that?—'tis Barbarigo's! Ah!
Our house's foe, and one of my few judges.

BARBARIGO.

To balance such a foe, if such there be,
Thy father sits amongst thy judges.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

True,
He judges.

BARBARIGO.

Then deem not the laws too harsh
Which yield so much indulgence to a sire
As to allow his voice in such high matter
As the state's safety——

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And his son's. I'm faint;
Let me approach, I pray you, for a breath
Of air, yon window which o'erlooks the waters.

Enter an Officer, who whispers BARBARIGO.

BARBARIGO (*to the Guard*).

Let him approach. I must not speak with him
Further than thus; I have transgress'd my duty
In this brief parley, and must now redeem it
Within the Council Chamber.

[*Exit* BARBARIGO.

[*Guard conducting* JACOPO FOSCARI *to the window.*

GUARD.

There, sir, 'tis
Open—How feel you?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Like a boy—Oh Venice!

GUARD.

And your limbs?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Limbs! how often have they borne me
Bounding o'er yon blue tide, as I have skimm'd
The gondola along in childish race,
And, masqued as a young gondolier, amidst
My gay competitors, noble as I,
Raced for our pleasure in the pride of strength,
While the fair populace of crowding beauties,
Plebeian as patrician, cheer'd us on
With dazzling smiles, and wishes audible,
And waving kerchiefs, and applauding hands,
Even to the goal!—How many a time have I
Cloven with arm still lustier, breast more daring,
The wave all roughen'd; with a swimmer's stroke
Flinging the billows back from my drench'd hair,
And laughing from my lip the audacious brine,
Which kiss'd it like a wine-cup, rising o'er
The waves as they arose, and prouder still
The loftier they uplifted me; and oft,
In wantonness of spirit, plunging down
Into their green and glassy gulfs, and making
My way to shells and sea-weed, all unseen
By those above, till they wax'd fearful; then
Returning with my grasp full of such tokens
As show'd that I had search'd the deep; exulting,
With a far-dashing stroke, and drawing deep
The long-suspended breath, again I spurn'd
The foam which broke around me, and pursued
My track like a sea-bird.—I was a boy then.

GUARD.

Be a man now: there never was more need
Of manhood's strength.

JACOPO FOSCARI (*looking from the lattice*).

My beautiful, my own,
My only Venice—*this is breath!* Thy breeze,
Thine Adrian sea-breeze, how it fans my face!
Thy very winds feel native to my veins,
And cool them into calmness! How unlike
The hot gales of the horrid Cyclades,
Which howl'd about my Candiote dungeon, and
Made my heart sick.

GUARD.

I see the colour comes
Back to your cheek: Heaven send you strength to bear
What more may be imposed!—I dread to think on't.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

They will not banish me again?—No—no,
Let them wring on; I am strong yet.

GUARD.

Confess,
And the rack will be spared you.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I confess'd
Once—twice before: both times they exiled me.

GUARD.

And the third time will slay you.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Let them do so,
So I be buried in my birth-place; better
Be ashes here than aught that lives elsewhere.

GUARD.

And can you so much love the soil which hates you?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

The soil!—Oh no, it is the seed of the soil
Which persecutes me; but my native earth
Will take me as a mother to her arms.
I ask no more than a Venetian grave.
A dungeon, what they will, so it be here.

Enter an Officer.

OFFICER.

Bring in the prisoner!

GUARD.

Signor, you hear the order.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Ay, I am used to such a summons; 'tis
The third time they have tortured me:—then lend me
Thine arm. [*To the Guard.*

OFFICER.

Take mine, sir; 'tis my duty to
Be nearest to your person.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

You!—you are he
Who yesterday presided o'er my pangs—
Away!—I 'll walk alone.

OFFICER.

As you please, signor;
The sentence was not of my signing, but
I dared not disobey the Council when
They——

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Bade thee stretch me on their horrid engine.
I pray thee touch me not—that is, just now;
The time will come they will renew that order,
But keep off from me till 'tis issued. As
I look upon thy hands my curdling limbs
Quiver with the anticipated wrenching,
And the cold drops strain through my brow as if——
But onward—I have borne it—I can bear it.—
How looks my father?

OFFICER.

With his wonted aspect.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

So does the earth, and sky, the blue of ocean,
The brightness of our city, and her domes,
The mirth of her Piazza, even now
Its merry hum of nations pierces here,
Even here, into these chambers of the unknown
Who govern, and the unknown and the unnumber'd
Judged and destroy'd in silence,—all things wear
The self-same aspect, to my very sire!
Nothing can sympathize with Foscari,
Not even a Foscari.—Sir, I attend you.
[*Exeunt* JACOPO FOSCARI, *Officer*, *etc.*

Enter MEMMO *and another Senator.*

MEMMO.

He 's gone—we are too late:—think you «the Ten»
Will sit for any length of time to-day?

SENATOR.

They say the prisoner is most obdurate,
Persisting in his first avowal; but
More I know not.

MEMMO.

And that is much; the secrets
Of yon terrific chamber are as hidden
From us, the premier nobles of the state,
As from the people.

SENATOR.

Save the wonted rumours,
Which (like the tales of spectres that are rife
Near ruin'd buildings) never have been proved,

Nor wholly disbelieved: men know as little
Of the state's real acts as of the grave's
Unfathom'd mysteries.

MEMMO.

But with length of time
We gain a step in knowledge, and I look
Forward to be one day of the decemvirs.

SENATOR.

Or Doge?

MEMMO.

Why, no, not if I can avoid it.

SENATOR.

'T is the first station of the state, and may
Be lawfully desired, and lawfully
Attain'd by noble aspirants.

MEMMO.

To such
I leave it; though born noble, my ambition
Is limited: I'd rather be an unit
Of an united and imperial «Ten,»
Than shine a lonely, though a gilded cipher.—
Whom have we here? the wife of Foscari?

Enter MARINA, *with a female attendant.*

MARINA.

What, no one?—I am wrong, there still are two;
But they are senators.

MEMMO.

Most noble lady,
Command us.

MARINA.

I command! Alas! my life
Has been one long entreaty, and a vain one.

MEMMO.

I understand thee, but I must not answer.

MARINA (*fiercely*).

True—none dare answer here save on the rack,
Or question save those——

MEMMO (*interrupting her*).

High-born dame! bethink thee
Where thou now art.

MARINA.

Where I now am!—It was
My husband's father's palace.

MEMMO.

The Duke's palace.

MARINA.

And his son's prison;—true, I have not forgot it;
And if there were no other nearer, bitterer
Remembrances, would thank the illustrious Memmo
For pointing out the pleasures of the place.

MEMMO.

Be calm!

MARINA (*looking up towards heaven*).

I am; but oh, thou eternal God!
Canst *thou* continue so, with such a world?

MEMMO.

Thy husband yet may be absolved.

MARINA.

He is,
In heaven. I pray you, signor senator,
Speak not of that; you are a man of office,
So is the Doge; he has a son at stake,
Now, at this moment, and I have a husband,
Or had: they are there within, or were at least
An hour since, face to face, as judge and culprit:
Will *he* condemn *him*?

MEMMO.

I trust not.

MARINA.

But if
He does not, there are those will sentence both.

MEMMO.

They can.

MARINA.

And with them power and will are one
In wickedness;—my husband's lost!

MEMMO.

Not so;
Justice is judge in Venice.

MARINA.

If it were so
There now would be no Venice. But let it
Live on, so the good die not, till the hour
Of nature's summons; but «the Ten's» is quicker,
And we must wait on't. Ah! a voice of wail!

[*A faint cry within.*

SENATOR.

Hark!

MEMMO.

'T was a cry of—

MARINA.

No, no; not my husband's—
Not Foscari's.

MEMMO.

The voice was—

MARINA.

Not his; no.
He shriek! No; that should be his father's part.
Not his—not his—he 'll die in silence.

[*A faint groan again within.*

MEMMO.

What!
Again?

MARINA.

His voice! it seem'd so: I will not
Believe it. Should he shrink, I cannot cease
To love; but—no—no—no—it must have been
A fearful pang which wrung a groan from him.

SENATOR.

And feeling for thy husband's wrongs, wouldst thou
Have him bear more than mortal pain, in silence?

MARINA.

We all must bear our tortures. I have not
Left barren the great house of Foscari,
Though they sweep both the Doge and son from life;
I have endured as much in giving life
To those who will succeed them, as they can
In leaving it: but mine were joyful pangs;
And yet they wrung me till I *could* have shriek'd,
But did not, for my hope was to bring forth
Heroes, and would not welcome them with tears.

MEMMO.

All 's silent now.

MARINA.

Perhaps all 's over; but
I will not deem it: he hath nerved himself,
And now defies them.

Enter an Officer hastily.

MEMMO.

How now, friend, what seek you?

OFFICER.

A leech. The prisoner has fainted.

[*Exit Officer.*

MEMMO.

Lady,
T were better to retire.

SENATOR (*offering to assist her*).

I pray thee do so.

MARINA.

Off! *I* will tend him.

MEMMO.

You! Remember, lady!
Ingress is given to none within those chambers,
Except « the Ten,» and their familiars.

MARINA.

Well,
I know that none who enter there return
As they have enter'd—many never; but
They shall not balk my entrance.

MEMMO.

Alas! this
Is but to expose yourself to harsh repulse,
And worse suspense.

MARINA.

Who shall oppose me?

MEMMO.

They
Whose duty 't is to do so.

MARINA.

T is *their* duty
To trample on all human feelings, all
Ties which bind man to man, to emulate
The fiends, who will one day requite them in
Variety of torturing! Yet I 'll pass.

MEMMO.

It is impossible.

MARINA.

That shall be tried.
Despair defies even despotism: there is
That in my heart would make its way through hosts
With levell'd spears; and think you a few jailors
Shall put me from my path? Give me, then, way;
This is the Doge's palace; I am wife
Of the Duke's son, the *innocent* Duke's son,
And they shall hear this!

MEMMO.

It will only serve
More to exasperate his judges.

MARINA.

What
Are *judges* who give way to anger? they
Who do so are assassins. Give me way.

[*Exit* MARINA.

SENATOR.

Poor lady!

MEMMO.

T is mere desperation; she
Will not be admitted o'er the threshold.

SENATOR.

And
Even if she be so, cannot save her husband.
But, see, the officer returns.

[*The officer passes over the stage with another person.*

MEMMO.

I hardly
Thought that the Ten had even this touch of pity,
Or would permit assistance to this sufferer.

SENATOR.

Pity! Is 't pity to recal to feeling
The wretch too happy to escape to death
By the compassionate trance, poor nature's last
Resource against the tyranny of pain?

MEMMO.

I marvel they condemn him not at once.

SENATOR.

That 's not their policy: they 'd have him live,
Because he fears not death; and banish him,
Because all earth, except his native land,
To him is one wide prison, and each breath
Of foreign air he draws seems a slow poison,
Consuming but not killing.

MEMMO.

Circumstance
Confirms his crimes, but he avows them not.

SENATOR.

None, save the letter, which he says was written,
Address'd to Milan's duke, in the full knowledge
That it would fall into the senate's hands,
And thus he should be re-convey'd to Venice.

MEMMO.

But as a culprit.

SENATOR.

Yes, but to his country:
And that was all he sought, so he avouches.

MEMMO.

The accusation of the bribes was proved.

SENATOR.

Not clearly, and the charge of homicide
Has been annull'd by the death-bed confession
Of Nicolas Erizzo, who slew the late
Chief of « the Ten.»

MEMMO.

Then why not clear him?

SENATOR.

That
They ought to answer; for it is well known
That Almoro Donato, as I said,
Was slain by Erizzo for private vengeance.

MEMMO.

There must be more in this strange process than
The apparent crimes of the accused disclose—
But here come two of « the Ten;» let us retire.

[*Exeunt* MEMMO *and Senator.*

Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

BARBARIGO (*addressing* LOREDANO).

That were too much: believe me, t' was not meet
The trial should go further at this moment.

LOREDANO.

And so the Council must break up, and Justice
Pause in her full career, because a woman
Breaks in on our deliberations?

BARBARIGO.

No,
That 's not the cause; you saw the prisoner's state.

LOREDANO.

And had he not recover'd?

BARBARIGO.

To relapse
Upon the least renewal.

LOREDANO.

'T was not tried.

BARBARIGO.

'T is vain to murmur; the majority
In council were against you.

LOREDANO.

Thanks to you, sir,
And the old ducal dotard, who combined
The worthy voices which o'erruled my own.

BARBARIGO.

I am a judge; but must confess that part
Of our stern duty, which prescribes the Question,
And bids us sit and see its sharp infliction,
Makes me wish——

LOREDANO.

What?

BARBARIGO.

That *you would sometimes* feel,
As I do always.

LOREDANO.

Go to, you 're a child,
Infirm of feeling as of purpose, blown
About by every breath, shook by a sigh,
And melted by a tear—a precious judge
For Venice! and a worthy statesman to
Be partner in my policy!

BARBARIGO.

He shed
No tears.

LOREDANO.

He cried out twice.

BARBARIGO.

A saint had done so,
Even with the crown of glory in his eye,
At such inhuman artifice of pain
As was forced on him: but he did not cry
For pity; not a word nor groan escaped him,
And those two shrieks were not in supplication,
But wrung from pangs, and follow'd by no prayers.

LOREDANO.

He mutter'd many times between his teeth,
But inarticulately.

BARBARIGO.

That I heard not;
You stood more near him.

LOREDANO.

I did so.

BARBARIGO.

Methought,
To my surprise too, you were touch'd with mercy,
And were the first to call out for assistance
When he was failing.

LOREDANO.

I believed that swoon
His last.

BARBARIGO.

And have I not oft heard thee name
His and his father's death your nearest wish?

LOREDANO.

If he dies innocent, that is to say,
With his guilt unavow'd, he'll be lamented.

BARBARIGO.

What, wouldst thou slay his memory?

LOREDANO.

Wouldst thou have
His state descend to his children, as it must,
If he die unattainted?

BARBARIGO.

War with *them* too?

LOREDANO.

With all their house, till theirs or mine are nothing.

BARBARIGO.

And the deep agony of his pale wife,
And the repress'd convulsion of the high
And princely brow of his old father, which
Broke forth in a slight shuddering, though rarely,
Or in some clammy drops, soon wiped away
In stern serenity; these moved you not?

[*Exit* LOREDANO.

He 's silent in his hate, as Foscari
Was in his suffering; and the poor wretch moved me
More by his silence than a thousand outcries
Could have effected. 'T was a dreadful sight
When his distracted wife broke through into
The hall of our tribunal, and beheld
What we could scarcely look upon, long used
To such sights. I must think no more of this,
Lest I forget in this compassion for
Our foes their former injuries, and lose
The hold of vengeance Loredano plans
For him and me; but mine would be content
With lesser retribution than he thirsts for,
And I would mitigate his deeper hatred
To milder thoughts; but, for the present, Foscari
Has a short hourly respite, granted at
The instance of the elders of the Council,
Moved doubtless by his wife's appearance in
The hall, and his own sufferings.—Lo! they come:
How feeble and forlorn! I cannot bear
To look on them again in this extremity:
I'll hence, and try to soften Loredano.

[*Exit* BARBARIGO.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the DOGE'S *Palace.*

The DOGE *and a* SENATOR.

SENATOR.

Is it your pleasure to sign the report
Now, or postpone it till to-morrow?

DOGE.

Now;
I overlook'd it yesterday: it wants
Merely the signature. Give me the pen—

[*The* DOGE *sits down and signs the paper.*

There, signor.

SENATOR (*looking at the paper*).

You have forgot; it is not sign'd.

DOGE.

Not sign'd? Ah, I perceive my eyes begin
To wax more weak with age. I did not see
That I had dipp'd the pen without effect.

SENATOR (*dipping the pen into the ink, and placing the paper before the* DOGE).

Your hand, too, shakes, my lord; allow me, thus—

DOGE.

'T is done, I thank you.

SENATOR.

Thus the act confirm'd
By you and by « the Ten,» gives peace to Venice.

DOGE.

'T is long since she enjoy'd it: may it be
As long ere she resume her arms!

SENATOR.

'T is almost
Thirty-four years of nearly ceaseless warfare
With the Turk, or the powers of Italy;
The state had need of some repose.

DOGE.

No doubt:
I found her queen of ocean, and I leave her
Lady of Lombardy: it is a comfort
That I have added to her diadem
The gems of Brescia and Ravenna; Crema
And Bergamo no less are hers; her realm
By land has grown by thus much in my reign,
While her sea-sway has not shrunk.

SENATOR.

'T is most true,
And merits all our country's gratitude.

DOGE.

Perhaps so.

SENATOR.

Which should be made manifest.

DOGE.

I have not complain'd, sir.

SENATOR.

My good lord, forgive me.

DOGE.

For what?

SENATOR.

My heart bleeds for you.

DOGE.

For me, signor?

SENATOR.

And for your—

DOGE.

Stop!

SENATOR.

It must have way, my lord:
I have too many duties towards you
And all your house, for past and present kindness,
Not to feel deeply for your son.

DOGE.

Was this
In your commission?

SENATOR.

What, my lord?

DOGE.

This prattle
Of things you know not: but the treaty's sign'd;
Return with it to them who sent you.

SENATOR.

I
Obey. I had in charge, too, from the Council
That you would fix an hour for their re-union.

DOGE.

Say, when they will—now, even at this moment,
If it so please them: I am the state's servant.

SENATOR.

They would accord some time for your repose.

DOGE.

I have no repose, that is, none which shall cause
The loss of an hour's time unto the state.
Let them meet when they will, I shall be found
Where I should be, and *what* I have been ever.

[*Exit* SENATOR.

[*The* DOGE *remains in silence.*

Enter an attendant.

ATTENDANT.

Prince!

DOGE.

Say on.

ATTENDANT.

The illustrious lady Foscari
Requests an audience.

DOGE.

Bid her enter. Poor
Marina! [*Exit Attendant.*

[*The* DOGE *remains in silence as before.*

Enter MARINA.

MARINA.

I have ventured, father, on
Your privacy.

DOGE.

I have none from you, my child.
Command my time, when not commanded by
The state.

MARINA.

I wish'd to speak to you of *him*.

DOGE.

Your husband?

MARINA.

And your son.

DOGE.

Proceed, my daughter!

MARINA.

I had obtain'd permission from « the Ten»
To attend my husband for a limited number
Of hours.

DOGE.

You had so.

MARINA.

'T is revoked.

DOGE.

by whom?

MARINA.

« The Ten.»—When we had reach'd « the Bridge of Sighs,»
Which I prepared to pass with Foscari,
The gloomy guardian of that passage first
Demurr'd: a messenger was sent back to
« The Ten;» but as the court no longer sate,
And no permission had been given in writing,
I was thrust back, with the assurance that
Until that high tribunal re-assembled
The dungeon walls must still divide us.

DOGE.

True,
The form has been omitted in the haste
With which the court adjourn'd, and till it meets
'T is dubious.

MARINA.

Till it meets! and when it meets,
They 'll torture him again; and he and I
Must purchase by renewal of the rack
The interview of husband and of wife,

The holiest tie beneath the heavens?—Oh God!
Dost thou see this?

DOGE.

Child—child———

MARINA (*abruptly*).

Call *me* not «child!»
You soon will have no children—you deserve none—
You, who can talk thus calmly of a son
In circumstances which would call forth tears
Of blood from Spartans! Though these did not weep
Their boys who died in battle, is it written
That they beheld them perish piecemeal, nor
Stretch'd forth a hand to save them?

DOGE.

You behold me:
I cannot weep—I would I could; but if
Each white hair on this head were a young life,
This ducal cap the diadem of earth,
This ducal ring with which I wed the waves
A talisman to still them—I 'd give all
For him.

MARINA.

With less he surely might be saved.

DOGE.

That answer only shows you know not Venice.
Alas! how should you? she knows not herself,
In all her mystery. Hear me—they who aim
At Foscari, aim no less at his father;
The sire's destruction would not save the son;
They work by different means to the same end,
And that is———but they have not conquer'd yet.

MARINA.

But they have crush'd.

DOGE.

Nor crush'd as yet—I live.

MARINA.

And your son,—how long will he live?

DOGE.

I trust,
For all that yet is past, as many years
And happier than his father. The rash boy,
With womanish impatience to return,
Hath ruin'd all by that detected letter;
A high crime, which I neither can deny
Nor palliate, as parent or as duke:
Had he but borne a little, little longer
His Candiote exile, I had hopes———he has quench'd them—
He must return.

MARINA.

To exile?

DOGE.

I have said it.

MARINA.

And can I not go with him?

DOGE.

You well know
This prayer of yours was twice denied before
By the assembled «Ten,» and hardly now
Will be accorded to a third request,
Since aggravated errors on the part
Of your lord renders them still more austere.

MARINA.

Austere? Atrocious! The old human fiends,
With one foot in the grave, with dim eyes, strange
To tears save drops of dotage, with long white
And scanty hairs, and shaking hands, and heads
As palsied as their hearts are hard, they council,
Cabal, and put men's lives out, as if life
Were no more than the feelings long extinguish'd
In their accursed bosoms.

DOGE.

You know not——

MARINA.

I do—I do—and so should you, methinks—
That these are demons: could it be else that
Men, who have been of women born and suckled—
Who have loved, or talk'd at least of love—have given
Their hands in sacred vows—have danced their babes
Upon their knees, perhaps have mourn'd above them
In pain, in peril, or in death—who are,
Or were at least in seeming human, could
Do as they have done by yours, and you yourself,
You, who abet them?

DOGE.

I forgive this, for
You know not what you say.

MARINA.

You know it well,
And feel it nothing.

DOGE.

I have borne so much,
That words have ceased to shake me.

MARINA.

Oh, no doubt!
You have seen your son's blood flow, and your flesh shook not;
And, after that, what are a woman's words?
No more than woman's tears, that they should shake you.

DOGE.

Woman, this clamorous grief of thine, I tell thee,
Is no more in the balance weigh'd with that
Which———but I pity thee, my poor Marina!

MARINA.

Pity my husband, or I cast it from me;
Pity thy son! *Thou* pity!—'t is a word
Strange to thy heart—how came it on thy lips?

DOGE.

I must bear these reproaches, though they wrong me.
Couldst thou but read———

MARINA.

'T is not upon thy brow
Nor in thine eyes, nor in thine acts,—where then
Should I behold this sympathy? or shall?

DOGE (*pointing downwards*).

There?

MARINA.

In the earth?

DOGE.

To which I am tending: when
It lies upon this heart, far lightlier, though
Loaded with marble, than the thoughts which press it
Now, you will know me better.

MARINA.

Are you, then,
Indeed, thus to be pitied?

DOGE.

Pitied! None
Shall ever use that base word, with which men
Cloke their soul's hoarded triumph, as a fit one
To mingle with my name; that name shall be,

As far as *I* have borne it, what it was
When I received it.

MARINA.

But for the poor children
Of him thou canst not, or thou wilt not save:
You were the last to bear it.

DOGE.

Would it were so!
Better for him he never had been born,
Better for me.—I have seen our house dishonour'd.

MARINA.

That 's false! A truer, nobler, trustier heart,
More loving, or more loyal, never beat
Within a human breast. I would not change
My exiled, persecuted, mangled husband,
Oppress'd but not disgraced, crush'd, overwhelm'd,
Alive, or dead, for prince or paladin
In story or in fable, with a world
To back his suit. Dishonour'd!—*he* dishonour'd!
I tell thee, Doge, 't is Venice is dishonour'd;
His name shall be her foulest, worst reproach,
For what he suffers, not for what he did.
'T is ye who are all traitors, tyrant!—ye!
Did you but love your country like this victim,
Who totters back in chains to tortures, and
Submits to all things rather than to exile,
You 'd fling yourselves before him, and implore
His grace for your enormous guilt.

DOGE.

He was
Indeed all you have said. I better bore
The deaths of the two sons Heaven took from me
Than Jacopo's disgrace.

MARINA.

That word again?

DOGE.

Has he not been condemn'd?

MARINA.

Is none but guilt so?

DOGE.

Time may restore his memory—I would hope so.
He was my pride, my——but 't is useless now—
I am not given to tears, but wept for joy
When he was born: those drops were ominous.

MARINA.

I say he 's innocent: and, were he not so,
Is our own blood and kin to shrink from us
In fatal moments?

DOGE.

I shrank not from him:
But I have other duties than a father's;
The state would not dispense me from those duties;
Twice I demanded it, but was refused;
They must then be fulfill'd.

Enter an Attendant.

ATTENDANT.

A message from
«The Ten.»

DOGE.

Who bears it?

ATTENDANT.

Noble Loredano.

DOGE.

He!—but admit him. [*Exit Attendant.*

MARINA.

Must I then retire?

DOGE.

Perhaps it is not requisite, if this
Concerns your husband, and if not——Well, signor,
Your pleasure! [*To* LOREDANO *entering.*

LOREDANO.

I bear that of «the Ten.»

DOGE.

They
Have chosen well their envoy.

LOREDANO.

'T is *their* choice
Which leads me here.

DOGE.

It does their wisdom honour,
And no less to their courtesy.—Proceed.

LOREDANO.

We have decided.

DOGE.

We?

LOREDANO.

«The Ten» in council.

DOGE.

What! have they met again, and met without
Apprizing me?

LOREDANO.

They wish'd to spare your feelings,
No less than age.

DOGE.

That 's new—when spared they either?
I thank them, notwithstanding.

LOREDANO.

You know well
That they have power to act at their discretion,
With or without the presence of the Doge.

DOGE.

'T is some years since I learn'd this, long before
I became Doge, or dream'd of such advancement.
You need not school me, signor: I sate in
That council when you were a young patrician.

LOREDANO.

True, in my father's time; I have heard him and
The admiral, his brother, say as much.
Your highness may remember them: they both
Died suddenly.

DOGE.

And if they did so, better
So die than live on lingeringly in pain.

LOREDANO.

No doubt! yet most men like to live their days out.

DOGE.

And did not they?

LOREDANO.

The grave knows best: they died,
As I said, suddenly.

DOGE.

Is that so strange
That you repeat the word emphatically?

LOREDANO.

So far from strange, that never was there death
In my mind half so natural as theirs.
Think *you* not so?

DOGE.

What should I think of mortals?

LOREDANO.

That they have mortal foes.

DOGE.

I understand you;
Your sires were mine, and you are heir in all things.

LOREDANO.

You best know if I should be so.

DOGE.

I do.
Your fathers were my foes, and I have heard
Foul rumours were abroad; I have also read
Their epitaph, attributing their deaths
To poison. 'T is perhaps as true as most
Inscriptions upon tombs, and yet no less
A fable.

LOREDANO.

Who dares say so?

DOGE.

I!—'T is true
Your fathers were mine enemies, as bitter
As their son e'er can be, and I no less
Was theirs; but I was *openly* their foe:
I never work'd by plot in council, nor
Cabal in commonwealth, nor secret means
Of practice against life by steel or drug.
The proof is, your existence.

LOREDANO.

I fear not.

DOGE.

You have no cause, being what I am; but were I
That you would have me thought, you long ere now
Were past the sense of fear. Hate on; I care not.

LOREDANO.

I never yet knew that a noble's life
In Venice had to dread a Doge's frown,
That is, by open means.

DOGE.

But I, good signor,
Am, or at least *was*, more than a mere duke,
In blood, in mind, in means; and that they know
Who dreaded to elect me, and have since
Striven all they dare to weigh me down: be sure,
Before or since that period, had I held you
At so much price as to require your absence,
A word of mine had set such spirits to work
As would have made you nothing. But in all things
I have observed the strictest reverence;
Nor for the laws alone, for those *you* have strain'd
(I do not speak of *you* but as a single
Voice of the many) somewhat beyond what
I could enforce for my authority
Were I disposed to brawl; but, as I said,
I have observed with veneration, like
A priest's for the high altar, even unto
The sacrifice of my own blood and quiet,
Safety, and all save honour, the decrees,
The health, the pride, and welfare of the state.
And now, sir, to your business.

LOREDANO.

'T is decreed,
That, without farther repetition of
The Question, or continuance of the trial,
Which only tends to show how stubborn guilt is
("The Ten," dispensing with the stricter law
Which still prescribes the Question till a full
Confession, and the prisoner partly having
Avow'd his crime, in not denying that
The letter to the Duke of Milan 's his),
James Foscari return to banishment,
And sail in the same galley which convey'd him.

MARINA.

Thank God! At least they will not drag him more
Before that horrible tribunal. Would he
But think so, to my mind the happiest doom,
Not he alone, but all who dwell here, could
Desire, were to escape from such a land.

DOGE.

That is not a Venetian thought, my daughter.

MARINA.

No, 't was too human. May I share his exile?

LOREDANO.

Of this "the Ten" said nothing.

MARINA.

So I thought:
That were too human, also. But it was not
Inhibited?

LOREDANO.

It was not named.

MARINA (*to the* DOGE).

Then, father,
Surely you can obtain or grant me thus much:
[*To* LOREDANO
And you, sir, not oppose my prayer to be
Permitted to accompany my husband.

DOGE.

I will endeavour.

MARINA.

And you, signor?

LOREDANO.

Lady!
'T is not for me to anticipate the pleasure
Of the tribunal.

MARINA.

Pleasure! what a word
To use for the decrees of——

DOGE.

Daughter, know you
In what a presence you pronounce these things?

MARINA.

A prince's and his subject's.

LOREDANO.

Subject!

MARINA.

Oh!
It galls you:—well, you are his equal, as
You think, but that you are not, nor would be,
Were he a peasant:—well, then, you 're a prince,
A princely noble; and what then am I?

LOREDANO.

The offspring of a noble house.

MARINA.

And wedded
To one as noble. What or whose, then, is
The presence that should silence my free thoughts?

LOREDANO.

The presence of your husband's judges.

DOGE.

And
The deference due even to the lightest word
That falls from those who rule in Venice.

MARINA.

Keep

Those maxims for your mass of scared mechanics,
Your merchants, your Dalmatian and Greek slaves,
Your tributaries, your dumb citizens,
And mask'd nobility, your sbirri, and
Your spies, your galley and your other slaves,
To whom your midnight carryings off and drownings,
Your dungeons next the palace roofs, or under
The water's level; your mysterious meetings,
And unknown dooms, and sudden executions,
Your "Bridge of Sighs," your strangling chamber, and
Your torturing instruments, have made ye seem
The beings of another and worse world!
Keep such for them: I fear ye not. I know ye;
Have known and proved your worst, in the infernal
Process of my poor husband! Treat me as
Ye treated him:—you did so, in so dealing
With him. Then what have I to fear *from* you,
Even if I were of fearful nature, which
I trust I am not?

DOGE.

You hear, she speaks wildly.

MARINA.

Not wisely, yet not wildly.

LOREDANO.

Lady! words
Utter'd within these walls, I bear no further
Than to the threshold, saving such as pass
Between the Duke and me on the state's service.
Doge! have you aught in answer?

DOGE.

Something from
The Doge; it may be also from a parent.

LOREDANO.

My mission *here* is to the *Doge*.

DOGE.

Then say
The Doge will choose his own ambassador,
Or state in person what is meet; and for
The father——

LOREDANO.

I remember *mine*.—Farewell!
I kiss the hands of the illustrious lady,
And bow me to the Duke.

[*Exit* LOREDANO.

MARINA.

Are you content?

DOGE.

I am what you behold.

MARINA.

And that 's a mystery.

DOGE.

All things are so to mortals; who can read them
Save he who made? or, if they can, the few
And gifted spirits, who have studied long
That loathsome volume—man, and pored upon
Those black and bloody leaves his heart and brain,
But learn a magic which recoils upon
The adept who pursues it: all the sins
We find in others, nature made our own,
All our advantages are those of fortune;
Birth, wealth, health, beauty, are her accidents,
And when we cry out against fate, 'twere well
We should remember fortune can take nought
Save what she *gave*—the rest was nakedness,
And lusts, and appetites, and vanities,
The universal heritage, to battle
With as we may, and least in humblest stations,
Where hunger swallows all in one low want,
And the original ordinance, that man
Must sweat for his poor pittance, keeps all passions
Aloof, save fear of famine! All is low,
And false, and hollow—clay from first to last.
The prince's urn no less than potter's vessel
Our fame is in men's breath, our lives upon
Less than their breath; our durance upon days,
Our days on seasons; our whole being on
Something which is not *us!*—So, we are slaves,
The greatest as the meanest—nothing rests
Upon our will; the will itself no less
Depends upon a straw than on a storm;
And when we think we lead, we are most led,
And still towards death, a thing which comes as much,
Without our act or choice, as birth; so that
Methinks we must have sinn'd in some old world,
And *this* is hell: the best is, that it is not
Eternal.

MARINA.

These are things we cannot judge
On earth.

DOGE.

And how then shall we judge each other,
Who are all earth, and I, who am call'd upon
To judge my son? I have administer'd
My country faithfully—victoriously—
I dare them to the proof, the *chart* of what
She was and is: my reign has doubled realms;
And, in reward, the gratitude of Venice
Has left, or is about to leave, *me* single.

MARINA.

And Foscari? I do not think of such things,
So I be left with him.

DOGE.

You shall be so;
Thus much they cannot well deny.

MARINA.

And if
They should, I will fly with him.

DOGE.

That can ne'er be.
And whither would you fly?

MARINA.

I know not, reck not—
To Syria, Egypt, to the Ottoman—
Any where, where we might respire unfetter'd,
And live, nor girt by spies, nor liable
To edicts of inquisitors of state.

DOGE.

What, wouldst thou have a renegade for husband,
And turn him into traitor?

MARINA.

He is none!
The country is the traitress, which thrusts forth
Her best and bravest from her. Tyranny
Is far the worst of treasons. Dost thou deem
None rebels except subjects? The prince who
Neglects or violates his trust is more
A brigand than the robber-chief.

DOGE.

I cannot
Charge me with such a breach of faith.

MARINA.

No; thou

Observ'st, obey'st, such laws as make old Draco's
A code of mercy by comparison.

DOGE.

I found the law; I did not make it. Were I
A subject, still I might find parts and portions
Fit for amendment; but, as prince, I never
Would change, for the sake of my house, the charter
Left by our fathers.

MARINA.

Did they make it for
The ruin of their children?

DOGE.

Under such laws, Venice
Has risen to what she is—a state to rival
In deeds, and days, and sway, and, let me add,
In glory (for we have had Roman spirits
Amongst us), all that history has bequeath'd
Of Rome and Carthage in their best times, when
The people sway'd by senates.

MARINA.

Rather say,
Groan'd under the stern oligarchs.

DOGE.

Perhaps so;
But yet subdued the world: in such a state
An individual, be he richest of
Such rank as is permitted, or the meanest,
Without a name, is alike nothing, when
The policy, irrevocably tending
To one great end, must be maintain'd in vigour.

MARINA.

This means that you are more a Doge than father.

DOGE.

It means, I am more citizen than either.
If we had not for many centuries
Had thousands of such citizens, and shall,
I trust, have still such, Venice were no city.

MARINA.

Accursed be the city where the laws
Would stifle nature's!

DOGE.

Had I as many sons
As I have years, I would have given them all,
Not without feeling, but I would have given them
To the state's service, to fulfil her wishes
On the flood, in the field, or, if it must be,
As it, alas! has been, to ostracism,
Exile, or chains, or whatsoever worse
She might decree.

MARINA.

And this is patriotism?
To me it seems the worst barbarity.
Let me seek out my husband: the sage «Ten,»
With all its jealousy, will hardly war
So far with a weak woman as deny me
A moment's access to his dungeon.

DOGE.

I'll
So far take on myself, as order that
You may be admitted.

MARINA.

And what shall I say
To Foscari from his father?

DOGE.

That he obey
The laws.

MARINA.

And nothing more? Will you not see him
Ere he depart? It may be the last time.

DOGE.

The last!—my boy!—the last time I shall see
My last of children! Tell him I will come.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Prison of JACOPO FOSCARI.

JACOPO FOSCARI (*solus*).

No light, save yon faint gleam, which shows me walls
Which never echo'd but to sorrow's sounds,
The sigh of long imprisonment, the step
Of feet on which the iron clank'd, the groan
Of death, the imprecation of despair!
And yet for this I have return'd to Venice,
With some faint hope, 't is true, that time, which wears
The marble down, had worn away the hate
Of men's hearts: but I knew them not, and here
Must I consume my own, which never beat
For Venice but with such a yearning as
The dove has for her distant nest, when wheeling
High in the air on her return to greet
Her callow brood. What letters are these which
[*Approaching the wall.*
Are scrawl'd along the inexorable wall?
Will the gleam let me trace them? Ah! the names
Of my sad predecessors in this place,
The dates of their despair, the brief words of
A grief too great for many. This stone page
Holds like an epitaph their history,
And the poor captive's tale is graven on
His dungeon barrier, like the lover's record
Upon the bark of some tall tree, which bears
His own and his beloved's name. Alas!
I recognize some names familiar to me,
And blighted like to mine, which I will add,
Fittest for such a chronicle as this,
Which only can be read, as writ, by wretches.
[*He engraves his name.*

Enter a Familiar of «the Ten.»

FAMILIAR.

I bring you food.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I pray you set it down;
I am past hunger: but my lips are parch'd—
The water!

FAMILIAR.

There.

JACOPO FOSCARI (*after drinking*).

I thank you: I am better.

FAMILIAR.

I am commanded to inform you that
Your further trial is postponed.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Till when?

FAMILIAR.

I know not.—It is also in my orders
That your illustrious lady be admitted.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Ah! they relent then—I had ceased to hope it:
'T was time.

Enter MARINA.

MARINA.

My best beloved!

JACOPO FOSCARI (*embracing her*).

My true wife,
And only friend! What happiness!

MARINA.

We 'll part
No more.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

How! wouldst thou share a dungeon?

MARINA.

Ay,
The rack, the grave, all—any thing with thee
But the tomb last of all, for there we shall
Be ignorant of each other: yet I will
Share that—all things except new separation;
It is too much to have survived the first.
How dost thou? How are those worn limbs? Alas!
Why do I ask? Thy paleness——

JACOPO FOSCARI.

'T is the joy
Of seeing thee again so soon, and so
Without expectancy, has sent the blood
Back to my heart, and left my cheeks like thine,
For thou art pale too, my Marina!

MARINA.

'T is
The gloom of this eternal cell, which never
Knew sunbeam, and the sallow sullen glare
Of the familiar's torch, which seems akin
To darkness more than light, by lending to
The dungeon vapours its bituminous smoke,
Which cloud whate'er we gaze on, even thine eyes—
No, not thine eyes—they sparkle—how they sparkle!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And thine!—but I am blinded by the torch.

MARINA.

As I had been without it. Couldst thou see here?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Nothing at first; but use and time had taught me
Familiarity with what was darkness;
And the gray twilight of such glimmerings as
Glide through the crevices made by the winds
Was kinder to mine eyes than the full sun,
When gorgeously o'ergilding any towers
Save those of Venice: but a moment ere
Thou camest hither I was busy writing.

MARINA.

What?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

My name: look, 't is there—recorded next
The name of him who here preceded me,
If dungeon dates say true.

MARINA.

And what of him?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

These walls are silent of men's ends; they only
Seem to hint shrewdly of them. Such stern walls
Were never piled on high save o'er the dead,
Or those who soon must be so.—*What of him?*
Thou askest.—What of me? may soon be ask'd,
With the like answer—doubt and dreadful surmise—
Unless thou tell'st my tale.

MARINA.

I speak of thee!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And wherefore not? All then shall speak of me:
The tyranny of silence is not lasting,
And, though events be hidden, just men's groans
Will burst all cerement, even a living grave's!
I do not *doubt* my memory, but my life;
And neither do I fear.

MARINA.

Thy life is safe.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And liberty?

MARINA.

The mind should make its own.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

That has a noble sound; but 't is a sound,
A music most impressive, but too transient:
The mind is much, but is not all. The mind
Hath nerved me to endure the risk of death,
And torture positive, far worse than death
(If death be a deep sleep), without a groan,
Or with a cry which rather shamed my judges
Than me; but 't is not all, for there are things
More woful—such as this small dungeon, where
I may breathe many years.

MARINA.

Alas! and this
Small dungeon is all that belongs to thee
Of this wide realm, of which thy sire is prince.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

That thought would scarcely aid me to endure it.
My doom is common, many are in dungeons,
But none like mine, so near their father's palace;
But then my heart is sometimes high, and hope
Will stream along those moted rays of light
Peopled with dusty atoms, which afford
Our only day; for, save the jailor's torch,
And a strange firefly, which was quickly caught
Last night in yon enormous spider's net,
I ne'er saw aught here like a ray. Alas!
I know if mind may bear us up, or no,
For I have such, and shown it before men;
It sinks in solitude: my soul is social.

MARINA.

I will be with thee.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Ah! if it were so!
But *that* they never granted—nor will grant,
And I shall be alone: no men—no books—
Those lying likenesses of lying men.
I ask'd for even those outlines of their kind,
Which they term annals, history, what you will,
Which men bequeath as portraits, and they were
Refused me; so these walls have been my study,
More faithful pictures of Venetian story,
With all their blank, or dismal stains, than is
The hall not far from hence, which bears on high
Hundreds of doges, and their deeds and dates.

MARINA.

I come to tell thee the result of their
Last council on thy doom.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I know it—look!

[*He points to his limbs, as referring to the tortures which he had undergone.*

MARINA.

No—no—no more of that: even they relent
From that atrocity.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

What then?

MARINA.

That you
Return to Candia.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Then my last hope 's gone.
I could endure my dungeon, for 't was Venice;
I could support the torture, there was something
In my native air that buoy'd my spirits up,
Like a ship on the ocean toss'd by storms,
But proudly still bestriding the high waves,
And holding on its course; but *there*, afar,
In that accursed isle of slaves, and captives,
And unbelievers, like a stranded wreck,
My very soul seem'd mouldering in my bosom,
And piecemeal I shall perish, if remanded.

MARINA.

And *here*?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

At once—by better means, as briefer.
What! would they even deny me my sires' sepulchre,
As well as home and heritage?

MARINA.

My husband!
I have sued to accompany thee hence,
And not so hopelessly. This love of thine
For an ungrateful and tyrannic soil
Is passion, and not patriotism: for me,
So I could see thee with a quiet aspect,
And the sweet freedom of the earth and air,
I would not cavil about climes or regions.
This crowd of palaces and prisons is not
A paradise; its first inhabitants
Were wretched exiles.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Well I know *how* wretched!

MARINA.

And yet you see how from their banishment
Before the Tartar into these salt isles,
Their antique energy of mind, all that
Remain'd of Rome for their inheritance,
Created by degrees an ocean-Rome;
And shall an evil, which so often leads
To good, depress thee thus?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Had I gone forth
From my own land, like the old patriarchs, seeking
Another region, with their flocks and herds;
Had I been cast out like the Jews from Zion,
Or like our fathers, driven by Attila
From fertile Italy to barren islets,
I would have given some tears to my late country,
And many thoughts; but afterwards address'd
Myself, with those about me, to create
A new home and fresh state: perhaps I could
Have borne this—though I know not.

MARINA.

Wherefore not?
It was the lot of millions, and must be
The fate of myriads more.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Ay—we but hear
Of the survivors' toil in their new lands,
Their numbers and success; but who can number
The hearts which broke in silence of that parting,
Or after their departure; of that malady[1]
Which calls up green and native fields to view
From the rough deep, with such identity
To the poor exile's fever'd eye, that he
Can scarcely be restrain'd from treading them?
That melody,[2] which out of tones and tunes
Collects such pasture for the longing sorrow
Of the sad mountaineer, when far away
From his snow canopy of cliffs and clouds,
That he feeds on the sweet, but poisonous thought,
And dies. You call this *weakness!* It is strength,
I say,—the parent of all honest feeling.
He who loves not his country can love nothing.

MARINA.

Obey her, then; 't is she that puts thee forth.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Ay, there it is: 't is like a mother's curse
Upon my soul—the mark is set upon me.
The exiles you speak of went forth by nations,
Their hands upheld each other by the way,
Their tents were pitched together—I 'm alone.

MARINA.

You shall be so no more—I will go with thee.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

My best Marina!—and our children?

MARINA.

They,
I fear, by the prevention of the state's
Abhorrent policy (which holds all ties
As threads, which may be broken at her pleasure),
Will not be suffer'd to proceed with us.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And canst thou leave them?

MARINA.

Yes. With many a pang.
But—I *can* leave them, children as they are,
To teach you to be less a child. From this
Learn you to sway your feelings, when exacted
By duties paramount; and 't is our first
On earth to bear.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Have I not borne?

MARINA.

Too much
From tyrannous injustice, and enough
To teach you not to shrink now from a lot
Which, as compared with what you have undergone
Of late, is mercy.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Ah! you never yet
Were far away from Venice, never saw
Her beautiful towers in the receding distance,
While every furrow of the vessel's track
Seem'd ploughing deep into your heart; you never
Saw day go down upon your native spires
So calmly with its gold and crimson glory,
And after dreaming a disturbed vision
Of them and theirs, awoke and found them not.

[1] The calenture.

[2] Alluding to the Swiss air and its effects.

MARINA.

I will divide this with you. Let us think
Of our departure from this much-loved city
(Since you must *love* it, as it seems), and this
Chamber of state her gratitude allots you.
Our children will be cared for by the Doge,
And by my uncles: we must sail ere night.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

That 's sudden. Shall I not behold my father?

MARINA.

You will.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Where?

MARINA.

Here or in the ducal chamber—
He said not which. I would that you could bear
Your exile as he bears it.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Blame him not.
I sometimes murmur for a moment; but
He could not now act otherwise. A show
Of feeling or compassion on his part
Would have but drawn upon his aged head
Suspicion from «the Ten,» and upon mine
Accumulated ills.

MARINA.

Accumulated!
What pangs are those they have spared you?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

That of leaving
Venice without beholding him or you,
Which might have been forbidden now, as 't was
Upon my former exile.

MARINA.

That is true,
And thus far I am also the state's debtor,
And shall be more so when I see us both
Floating on the free waves—away—away—
Be it to the earth's end, from this abhorr'd,
Unjust, and——

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Curse it not. If I am silent,
Who dares accuse my country?

MARINA.

Men and angels!
The blood of myriads reeking up to heaven,
The groans of slaves in chains, and men in dungeons,
Mothers, and wives, and sons, and sires, and subjects,
Held in the bondage of ten bald-heads; and
Though last, not least, *thy silence*. *Couldst thou* say
Aught in its favour, who would praise like *thee?*

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Let us address us then, since so it must be,
To our departure. Who comes here?

Enter LOREDANO, *attended by Familiars.*

LOREDANO (*to the Familiars*).

Retire,
But leave the torch. {*Exeunt the two Familiars.*

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Most welcome, noble signor.
I did not deem this poor place could have drawn
Such presence hither.

LOREDANO.

'T is not the first time
I have visited these places.

MARINA.

Nor would be
The last, were all men's merits well rewarded.
Came you here to insult us, or remain
As spy upon us, or as hostage for us?

LOREDANO.

Neither are of my office, noble lady!
I am sent hither to your husband, to
Announce «the Ten's» decree.

MARINA.

That tenderness
Has been anticipated: it is known.

LOREDANO.

As how?

MARINA.

I have inform'd him, not so gently,
Doubtless, as your nice feelings would prescribe,
The indulgence of your colleagues; but he knew it.
If you come for our thanks, take them, and hence!
The dungeon gloom is deep enough without you,
And full of reptiles, not less loathsome, though
Their sting is honester.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I pray you, calm you:
What can avail such words?

MARINA.

To let him know
That he is known.

LOREDANO.

Let the fair dame preserve
Her sex's privilege.

MARINA.

I have some sons, sir,
Will one day thank you better.

LOREDANO.

You do well
To nurse them wisely. Foscari—you know
Your sentence, then?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Return to Candia?

LOREDANO.

True—
For life.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Not long.

LOREDANO.

I said—for *life*.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And I
Repeat—not long.

LOREDANO.

A year's imprisonment
In Canea—afterwards the freedom of
The whole isle.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Both the same to me: the after
Freedom as is the first imprisonment.
Is 't true my wife accompanies me?

LOREDANO.

Yes,
If she so wills it.

MARINA.

Who obtain'd that justice?

LOREDANO.

One who wars not with women.

MARINA.

But oppresses
Men: howsoever, let him have *my* thanks
For the only boon I would have ask'd or taken
From him or such as he is.

LOREDANO.

He receives them
As they are offer'd.

MARINA.

May they thrive with him
So much!—no more.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Is this, sir, your whole mission?
Because we have brief time for preparation,
And you perceive your presence doth disquiet
This lady, of a house noble as yours.

MARINA.

Nobler!

LOREDANO.

How nobler?

MARINA.

As more generous!
We say the «generous steed» to express the purity
Of his high blood. Thus much I've learnt, although
Venetian (who see few steeds save of bronze),
From those Venetians who have skimm'd the coasts
Of Egypt, and her neighbour Araby:
And why not say as soon «the *generous man?*»
If race be aught, it is in qualities
More than in years; and mine, which is as old
As yours, is better in its product, nay—
Look not so stern—but get you back, and pore
Upon your genealogic trees most green
Of leaves and most mature of fruits, and there
Blush to find ancestors, who would have blush'd
For such a son—thou cold inveterate hater!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Again, Marina!

MARINA.

Again! *still*, Marina.
See you not, he comes here to glut his hate
With a last look upon our misery?
Let him partake it!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

That were difficult.

MARINA.

Nothing more easy. He partakes it now—
Ay, he may veil beneath a marble brow
And sneering lip the pang, but he partakes it.
A few brief words of truth shame the devil's servants
No less than master; I have probed his soul
A moment, as the eternal fire, ere long,
Will reach it always. See how he shrinks from me!
With death, and chains, and exile in his hand,
To scatter o'er his kind as he thinks fit:
They are his weapons, not his armour, for
I have pierced him to the core of his cold heart.
I care not for his frowns! We can but die,
And he but live, for him the very worst
Of destinies: each day secures him more
His tempter's.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

This is mere insanity.

MARINA.

It may be so; and *who* hath made us *mad?*

LOREDANO.

Let her go on; it irks not me.

MARINA.

That 's false!
You came here to enjoy a heartless triumph
Of cold looks upon manifold griefs! You came
To be sued to in vain—to mark our tears,
And hoard our groans—to gaze upon the wreck
Which you have made a prince's son—my husband;
In short, to trample on the fallen—an office
The hangman shrinks from, as all men from him!
How have you sped? We are wretched, signor, as
Your plots could make, and vengeance could desire us,
And how *feel you?*

LOREDANO.

As rocks.

MARINA.

By thunder blasted:
They feel not, but no less are shiver'd. Come,
Foscari; now let us go, and leave this felon,
The sole fit habitant of such a cell,
Which he has peopled often, but ne'er fitly
Till he himself shall brood in it alone.

Enter the DOGE.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

My father!

DOGE (*embracing him*).

Jacopo! my son—my son!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

My father still! How long it is since I
Have heard thee name my name—*our* name!

DOGE.

My boy!
Couldst thou but know——

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I rarely, sir, have murmur'd.

DOGE.

I feel too much thou hast not.

MARINA.

Doge, look there!
[*She points to* LOREDANO.

DOGE.

I see the man—what mean'st thou?

MARINA.

Caution!

LOREDANO.

Being
The virtue which this noble lady most
May practise, she doth well to recommend it.

MARINA.

Wretch! 't is no virtue, but the policy
Of those who fain must deal perforce with vice:
As such I recommend it, as I would
To one whose foot was on an adder's path.

DOGE.

Daughter, it is superfluous; I have long
Known Loredano.

LOREDANO.

You may know him better.

MARINA.

Yes; *worse* he could not.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Father, let not these
Our parting hours be lost in listening to
Reproaches, which boot nothing. Is it—is it,
Indeed, our last of meetings?

DOGE.

You behold
These white hairs!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And I feel, besides, that mine
Will never be so white. Embrace me, father!
I loved you ever—never more than now.
Look to my children—to your last child's children:
Let them be all to you which he was once,
And never be to you what I am now.
May I not see *them* also?

MARINA.

No—not *here*.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

They might behold their parent any where.

MARINA.

I would that they beheld their father in
A place which would not mingle fear with love,
To freeze their young blood in its natural current.
They have fed well, slept soft, and knew not that
Their sire was a mere hunted outlaw. Well
I know his fate may one day be their heritage,
But let it only be their *heritage*,
And not their present fee. Their senses, though
Alive to love, are yet awake to terror;
And these vile damps, too, and yon *thick green* wave
Which floats above the place where we now stand—
A cell so far below the water's level,
Sending its pestilence through every crevice,
Might strike them: *this is not their* atmosphere,
However you—and you—and, most of all,
As worthiest—*you*, sir, noble Loredano!
May breathe it without prejudice.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I had not
Reflected upon this, but acquiesce.
I shall depart, then, without meeting them?

DOGE.

Not so: they shall await you in my chamber.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And must I leave them *all*?

LOREDANO.

You must.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Not one?

LOREDANO.

They are the state's.

MARINA.

I thought they had been mine.

LOREDANO.

They are, in all maternal things.

MARINA.

That is,
In all things painful. If they 're sick, they will
Be left to me to tend them; should they die,
To me to bury and to mourn: but if
They live, they'll make you soldiers, senators,
Slaves, exiles—what *you* will; or if they are
Females with portions, brides and *bribes* for nobles!
Behold the state's care for its sons and mothers!

LOREDANO.

The hour approaches, and the wind is fair.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

How know you that here, where the genial wind
Ne'er blows in all its blustering freedom?

LOREDANO.

'T was so
When I came here. The galley floats within
A bow-shot of the «Riva di Schiavoni.»

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Father! I pray you to precede me, and
Prepare my children to behold their father.

DOGE.

Be firm, my son!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I will do my endeavour.

MARINA.

Farewell! at least to this detested dungeon,
And him to whose good offices you owe
In part your past imprisonment.

LOREDANO.

And present
Liberation.

DOGE

He speaks truth.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

No doubt: but 't is
Exchange of chains for heavier chains I owe him.
He knows this, or he had not sought to change them.
But I reproach not.

LOREDANO.

The time narrows, signor.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Alas! I little thought so lingeringly
To leave abodes like this: but when I feel
That every step I take, even from this cell,
Is one away from Venice, I look back
Even on these dull damp walls, and——

DOGE.

Boy! no tears.

MARINA.

Let them flow on: he wept not on the rack
To shame him, and they cannot shame him now.
They will relieve his heart—that too kind heart—
And I will find an hour to wipe away
Those tears, or add my own. I could weep now,
But would not gratify yon wretch so far.
Let us proceed. Doge, lead the way.

LOREDANO (*to the Familiar*).

The torch, there!

MARINA.

Yes, light us on, as to a funeral pyre,
With Loredano mourning like an heir.

DOGE.

My son, you are feeble: take this hand.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Alas!
Must youth support itself on age, and I,
Who ought to be the prop of yours?

LOREDANO.

Take mine.

MARINA.

Touch it not, Foscari; 't will sting you. Signor,
Stand off! be sure that if a grasp of yours
Would raise us from the gulf wherein we are plunged,
No hand of ours would stretch itself to meet it.
Come, Foscari, take the hand the altar gave you;
It could not save, but will support you ever.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the Ducal Palace.

Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

BARBARIGO.

And have you confidence in such a project?

LOREDANO.

I have.

BARBARIGO.

'T is hard upon his years.

LOREDANO.

Say rather
Kind to relieve him from the cares of state.

BARBARIGO.

'T will break his heart.

LOREDANO.

Age has no heart to break.
He has seen his son's half broken, and, except
A start of feeling in his dungeon, never
Swerved.

BARBARIGO.

In his countenance, I grant you, never;
But I have seen him sometimes in a calm
So desolate, that the most clamorous grief
Had nought to envy him within. Where is he?

LOREDANO.

In his own portion of the palace, with
His son, and the whole race of Foscaris.

BARBARIGO.

Bidding farewell.

LOREDANO.

A last. As soon he shall
Bid to his dukedom.

BARBARIGO.

When embarks the son?

LOREDANO.

Forthwith—when this long leave is taken. 'T is
Time to admonish them again.

BARBARIGO.

Forbear;
Retrench not from their moments.

LOREDANO.

Not I, now
We have higher business for our own. This day
Shall be the last of the old Doge's reign,
As the first of his son's last banishment,
And that is vengeance.

BARBARIGO.

In my mind, too deep.

LOREDANO.

'T is moderate—not even life for life, the rule
Denounced of retribution from all time:
They owe me still my father's and my uncle's.

BARBARIGO.

Did not the Doge deny this strongly?

LOREDANO.

Doubtless.

BARBARIGO.

And did not this shake your suspicion!

LOREDANO.

No.

BARBARIGO.

But if this deposition should take place
By our united influence in the council,
It must be done with all the deference
Due to his years, his station, and his deeds.

LOREDANO.

As much of ceremony as you will,
So that the thing be done. You may, for aught
I care, depute the Council on their knees
(Like Barbarossa to the Pope), to beg him
To have the courtesy to abdicate.

BARBARIGO.

What, if he will not?

LOREDANO.

We 'll elect another,
And make him null.

BARBARIGO.

But will the laws uphold us?

LOREDANO.

What laws?—« The Ten» are laws: and if they were not,
I will be legislator in this business.

BARBARIGO.

At your own peril?

LOREDANO.

There is none, I tell you,
Our powers are such.

BARBARIGO.

But he has twice already
Solicited permission to retire,
And twice it was refused.

LOREDANO.

The better reason
To grant it the third time.

BARBARIGO.

Unask'd?

LOREDANO.

It shows
The impression of his former instances:
If they were from his heart, he may be thankful:
If not, 't will punish his hypocrisy.
Come, they are met by this time; let us join them,
And be *thou* fix'd in purpose for this once.
I have prepared such arguments as will not
Fail to move them, and to remove him: since
Their thoughts, their objects, have been sounded, do not
You, with your wonted scruples, teach us pause,
And all will prosper.

BARBARIGO.

Could I but be certain
This is no prelude to such persecution
Of the sire as has fallen upon the son,
I would support you.

LOREDANO.

He is safe, I tell you;
His fourscore years and five may linger on
As long as he can drag them: 't is his throne
Alone is aim'd at.

BARBARIGO.

But discarded princes
Are seldom long of life.

LOREDANO.

And men of eighty
More seldom still.

BARBARIGO.

And why not wait these few years?

LOREDANO.

Because we have waited long enough, and he

Lived longer than enough. Hence! In to council!
[*Exeunt* Loredano *and* Barbarigo.

Enter Memmo *and a Senator.*

SENATOR.
A summons to « the Ten!» Why so?

MEMMO.
« The Ten»
Alone can answer: they are rarely wont
To let their thoughts anticipate their purpose
By previous proclamation. We are summon'd—
That is enough.

SENATOR.
For them, but not for us;
I would know why.

MEMMO.
You will know why anon,
If you obey, and, if not, you no less
Will know why you should have obey'd.

SENATOR.
I mean not
To oppose them, *but*——

MEMMO.
In Venice « *But*'s» a traitor.
But me no « *buts*,» unless you would pass o'er
The Bridge which few repass.

SENATOR.
I am silent.

MEMMO.
Why
Thus hesitate?—« The Ten» have call'd in aid
Of their deliberation five and twenty
Patricians of the senate—you are one,
And I another; and it seems to me
Both honour'd by the choice or chance which leads us
To mingle with a body so august.

SENATOR.
Most true. I say no more.

MEMMO.
As we hope, signor,
And all may honestly (that is, all those
Of noble blood may), one day hope to be
Decemvir, it is surely for the senate's
Chosen delegates a school of wisdom, to
Be thus admitted, though as novices,
To view the mysteries.

SENATOR.
Let us view them: they,
No doubt, are worth it.

MEMMO.
Being worth our lives
If we divulge them, doubtless they are worth
Something, at least, to you or me.

SENATOR.
I sought not
A place within the sanctuary; but being
Chosen, however reluctantly so chosen,
I shall fulfil my office.

MEMMO.
Let us not
Be latest in obeying «the Ten's» summons.

SENATOR.
All are not met, but I am of your thought
So far—let 's in.

MEMMO.
The earliest are most welcome
In earnest councils—we will not be least so.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter the Doge, Jacopo Foscari, *and* Marina.

JACOPO FOSCARI.
Ah, father! though I must and will depart,
Yet—yet—I pray you to obtain for me
That I once more return unto my home,
Howe'er remote the period. Let there be
A point of time as beacon to my heart,
With any penalty annex'd they please,
But let me still return.

DOGE.
Son Jacopo,
Go and obey our country's will: 't is not
For us to look beyond.

JACOPO FOSCARI.
But still I must
Look back. I pray you think of me.

DOGE.
Alas!
You ever were my dearest offspring, when
They were more numerous, nor can be less so
Now you are last; but did the state demand
The exile of the disinterred ashes
Of your three goodly brothers, now in earth,
And their desponding shades came flitting round
To impede the act, I must no less obey
A duty paramount to every duty.

MARINA.
My husband! let us on: this but prolongs
Our sorrow.

JACOPO FOSCARI.
But we are not summon'd yet;
The galley's sails are not unfurl'd:—who knows?
The wind may change.

MARINA.
And if it do, it will not
Change *their* hearts, or your lot; the galley's oars
Will quickly clear the harbour.

JACOPO FOSCARI.
Oh, ye elements!
Where are your storms?

MARINA.
In human breasts. Alas!
Will nothing calm you?

JACOPO FOSCARI.
Never yet did mariner
Put up to patron saint such prayers for prosperous
And pleasant breezes, as I call upon you,
Ye tutelar saints of my own city! which
Ye love not with more holy love than I,
To lash up from the deep the Adrian waves,
And waken Auster, sovereign of the tempest!
Till the sea dash me back on my own shore
A broken corse upon the barren Lido,
Where I may mingle with the sands which skirt
The land I love, and never shall see more!

MARINA.
And wish you this with *me* beside you?

JACOPO FOSCARI.
No—
No—not for thee, too good, too kind! May'st thou
Live long to be a mother to those children
Thy fond fidelity for a time deprives
Of such support! But for myself alone,

May all the winds of heaven howl down the Gulf,
And tear the vessel, till the mariners,
Appall'd, turn their despairing eyes on me,
As the Phenicians did on Jonah, then
Cast me out from amongst them, as an offering
To appease the waves. The billow which destroys me
Will be more merciful than man, and bear me,
Dead, but *still bear* me to a native grave,
From fisher's hands upon the desolate strand,
Which, of its thousand wrecks, hath ne'er received
One lacerated like the heart which then
Will be——But wherefore breaks it not? why live I?

MARINA.

To man thyself, I trust, with time, to master
Such useless passion. Until now thou wert
A sufferer, but not a loud one: why,
What is this to the things thou hast borne in silence—
Imprisonment and actual torture?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Double,
Triple, and tenfold torture! But you are right,
It must be borne. Father, your blessing.

DOGE.

Would
It could avail thee! but no less thou hast it.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Forgive——

DOGE.

What?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

My poor mother for my birth,
And me for having lived, and you yourself
(As I forgive you), for the gift of life,
Which you bestow'd upon me as my sire.

MARINA.

What hast thou done?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Nothing. I cannot charge
My memory with much save sorrow: but
I have been so beyond the common lot
Chasten'd and visited, I needs must think
That I was wicked. If it be so, may
What I have undergone here keep me from
A like hereafter.

MARINA.

Fear not: *that* 's reserved
For your oppressors.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Let me hope not.

MARINA.

Hope not?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I cannot wish them *all* they have inflicted.

MARINA.

All! the consummate fiends! A thousand fold.
May the worm which ne'er dieth feed upon them!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

They may repent.

MARINA.

And if they do, Heaven will not
Accept the tardy penitence of demons.

Enter an Officer and Guards.

OFFICER.

Signor! the boat is at the shore—the wind
Is rising—we are ready to attend you.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

And I to be attended. Once more, father,
Your hand!

DOGE.

Take it. Alas! how thine own trembles!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

No—you mistake; 't is yours that shakes, my father.
Farewell!

DOGE.

Farewell! Is there aught else?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

No—nothing.
[*To the Officer.*
Lend me your arm, good signor.

OFFICER.

You turn pale—
Let me support you—paler—ho! some aid there!
Some water!

MARINA.

Ah, he is dying!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Now, I 'm ready—
My eyes swim strangely—where 's the door?

MARINA.

Away!
Let me support him—my best love! Oh, God!
How faintly beats this heart—this pulse!

JACOPO FOSCARI.

The light!
Is it the light?—I am faint.
[*Officer presents him with water.*

OFFICER.

He will be better,
Perhaps, in the air.

JACOPO FOSCARI.

I doubt not. Father—wife—
Your hands!

MARINA.

There 's death in that damp clammy grasp.
Oh God!—My Foscari, how fare you?

JACOPO FOSCARI.

Well!
[*He dies.*

OFFICER.

He 's gone.

DOGE.

He 's free.

MARINA.

No—no, he is not dead;
There must be life yet in that heart—he could not
Thus leave me.

DOGE.

Daughter!

MARINA.

Hold thy peace, old man!
I am no daughter now—thou hast no son.
Oh, Foscari!

OFFICER.

We must remove the body.

MARINA.

Touch it not, dungeon miscreants! your base office
Ends with his life, and goes not beyond murder,
Even by your murderous laws. Leave his remains
To those who know to honour them.

OFFICER.

I must

Inform the signory, and learn their pleasure.

DOGE.

Inform the signory from *me*, the Doge,
They have no further power upon those ashes:
While he lived, he was theirs, as fits a subject—
Now he is *mine*—my broken-hearted boy!
[*Exit Officer.*

MARINA.

And I must live!

DOGE.

Your children live, Marina.

MARINA.

My children! true—they live, and I must live
To bring them up to serve the state, and die
As died their father. Oh! what best of blessings
Were barrenness in Venice! Would my mother
Had been so!

DOGE.

My unhappy children!

MARINA.

What!
You feel it then at last—*you!*—Where is now
The stoic of the state?

DOGE (*throwing himself down by the body*).

Here!

MARINA.

Ay, weep on!
I thought you had no tears—you hoarded them
Until they are useless; but weep on! he never
Shall weep more—never, never more.

Enter LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

LOREDANO.

What 's here?

MARINA.

Ah! the devil come to insult the dead! Avaunt!
Incarnate Lucifer! 't is holy ground.
A martyr's ashes now lie there, which make it
A shrine. Get thee back to thy place of torment!

BARBARIGO.

Lady, we knew not of this sad event,
But pass'd here merely on our path from council.

MARINA.

Pass on.

LOREDANO.

We sought the Doge.

MARINA (*pointing to the* DOGE, *who is still on the ground by his son's body*).

He 's busy, look,
About the business *you* provided for him.
Are ye content?

BARBARIGO.

We will not interrupt
A parent's sorrows.

MARINA.

No, ye only make them,
Then leave them.

DOGE (*rising*).

Sirs, I am ready.

BARBARIGO.

No—not now.

LOREDANO.

Yet 't was important.

DOGE.

If 't was so, I can
Only repeat—I am ready.

BARBARIGO.

It shall not be
Just now, though Venice totter'd o'er the deep
Like a frail vessel. I respect your griefs.

DOGE.

I thank you. If the tidings which you bring
Are evil, you may say them; nothing further
Can touch me more than him thou look'st on there:
If they be good, say on; you need not *fear*
That they can *comfort* me.

BARBARIGO.

I would they could!

DOGE.

I spoke not to *you*, but to Loredano.
He understands me.

MARINA.

Ah! I thought it would be so.

DOGE.

What mean you?

MARINA.

Lo there is the blood beginning
To flow through the dead lips of Foscari—
The body bleeds in presence of the assassin.
[*To* LOREDANO.
Thou cowardly murderer by law, behold
How death itself bears witness to thy deeds!

DOGE.

My child! this is a phantasy of grief.
Bear hence the body [*To his attendants*]. Signors, if it please you,
Within an hour I 'll hear you.

{*Exeunt* DOGE, MARINA, *and attendants with the body*}

[*Manent* LOREDANO *and* BARBARIGO.

BARBARIGO.

He must not
Be troubled now.

LOREDANO.

He said himself that nought
Could give him trouble farther.

BARBARIGO.

These are words;
But grief is lonely, and the breaking in
Upon it barbarous.

LOREDANO.

Sorrow preys upon
Its solitude, and nothing more diverts it
From its sad visions of the other world
Than calling it at moments back to this.
The busy have no time for tears.

BARBARIGO.

And therefore
You would deprive this old man of all business?

LOREDANO.

The thing 's decreed. The Giunta and «the Ten»
Have made it law: who shall oppose that law?

BARBARIGO.

Humanity!

LOREDANO.

Because his son is dead?

BARBARIGO.

And yet unburied.

LOREDANO.

Had we known this when
The act was passing, it might have suspended
Its passage, but impedes it not—once past.

BARBARIGO.

I'll not consent.

LOREDANO.

You have consented to
All that's essential—leave the rest to me.

BARBARIGO.

Why press his abdication now?

LOREDANO.

The feelings
Of private passion may not interrupt
The public benefit; and what the state
Decides to-day must not give way before
To-morrow for a natural accident.

BARBARIGO.

You have a son.

I *have*—and *had* a father.

BARBARIGO.

Still so inexorable?

LOREDANO.

Still.

BARBARIGO.

But let him
Inter his son before we press upon him
This edict.

LOREDANO.

Let him call up into life
My sire and uncle—I consent. Men may,
Even aged men, be, or appear to be,
Sires of a hundred sons, but cannot kindle
An atom of their ancestors from earth.
The victims are not equal: he has seen
His sons expire by natural deaths, and I
My sires by violent and mysterious maladies.
I used no poison, bribed no subtle master
Of the destructive art of healing, to
Shorten the path to the eternal cure.
His sons, and he had four, are dead, without
My dabbling in vile drugs.

BARBARIGO.

And art thou sure
He dealt in such?

LOREDANO.

Most sure.

BARBARIGO.

And yet he seems
All openness.

LOREDANO.

And so he seem'd not long
Ago to Carmagnuola.

BARBARIGO.

The attainted
And foreign traitor?

LOREDANO.

Even so: when *he*,
After the very night in which « the Ten»
(Join'd with the Doge) decided his destruction,
Met the great Duke at daybreak with a jest,
Demanding whether he should augur him
« The good day or good night?» his Doge-ship answer'd,
« That he in truth had pass'd a night of vigil,
In which (he added with a gracious smile)
There often has been question about you.» [1]
'T was true; the question was the death resolved
Of Carmagnuola, eight months ere he died;
And the old Doge, who knew him doom'd, smiled on him
With deadly cozenage, eight long months beforehand—
Eight months of such hypocrisy as is
Learnt but in eighty years. Brave Carmagnuola
Is dead; so are young Foscari and his brethren—
I never *smiled* on *them*.

BARBARIGO.

Was Carmagnuola
Your friend?

LOREDANO.

He was the safeguard of the city.
In early life its foe, but, in his manhood,
Its saviour first, then victim.

BARBARIGO.

Ah! that seems
The penalty of saving cities. He
Whom we now act against not only saved
Our own, but added others to her sway.

LOREDANO.

The Romans (and we ape them) gave a crown
To him who took a city; and they gave
A crown to him who saved a citizen
In battle: the rewards are equal. Now,
If we should measure forth the cities taken
By the Doge Foscari, with citizens
Destroy'd by him, or *through* him, the account
Were fearfully against him, although narrow'd
To private havoc, such as between him
And my dead father.

BARBARIGO.

Are you then thus fix'd?

LOREDANO.

Why, what should change me?

BARBARIGO.

That which changes me:
But you, I know, are marble to retain
A feud. But when all is accomplish'd, when
The old man is deposed, his name degraded,
His sons all dead, his family depress'd,
And you and yours triumphant, shall you sleep?

LOREDANO.

More soundly.

BARBARIGO.

That 's an error, and you 'll find it
Ere you sleep with your fathers.

LOREDANO.

They sleep not
In their accelerated graves, nor will
Till Foscari fills his. Each night I see them
Stalk frowning round my couch, and, pointing towards
The ducal palace, marshal me to vengeance.

BARBARIGO.

Fancy's distemperature! There is no passion
More spectral or fantastical than hate;
Not even its opposite, love, so peoples air
With phantoms, as this madness of the heart.

Enter an Officer.

LOREDANO.

Where go you, sirrah?

OFFICER.

By the ducal order
To forward the preparatory rites
For the late Foscari's interment.

BARBARIGO.

Their

[1] An historical fact.

Vault has been often open'd of late years.

LOREDANO.

'T will be full soon, and may be closed for ever.

OFFICER.

May I pass on?

LOREDANO.

You may.

BARBARIGO.

How bears the Doge
This last calamity?

OFFICER.

With desperate firmness.
In presence of another he says little,
But I perceive his lips move now and then;
And once or twice I heard him, from the adjoining
Apartment, mutter forth the words—«My son!»
Scarce audibly. I must proceed.

[*Exit Officer.*

BARBARIGO.

This stroke
Will move all Venice in his favour.

LOREDANO.

Right!
We must be speedy: let us call together
The delegates appointed to convey
The Council's resolution.

BARBARIGO.

I protest.
Against it at this moment.

LOREDANO.

As you please—
I 'll take their voices on it ne'ertheless.
And see whose most may sway them, yours or mine.

[*Exeunt* BARBARIGO *and* LOREDANO.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The DOGE'S *Apartment.*

The DOGE *and Attendants.*

ATTENDANT.

My lord, the deputation is in waiting;
But add, that if another hour would better
Accord with your will, they will make it theirs.

DOGE.

To me all hours are like. Let them approach.

[*Exit Attendant.*

AN OFFICER.

Prince! I have done your bidding.

DOGE.

What command?

OFFICER.

A melancholy one—to call the attendance
Of——

DOGE.

True—true—true: I crave your pardon. I
Begin to fail in apprehension, and
Wax very old—old almost as my years.
Till now I fought them off, but they begin
To overtake me.

Enter the Deputation, consisting of six of the Signory, and the Chief of the Ten.

Noble men, your pleasure!

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

In the first place, the Council doth condole
With the Doge on his late and private grief.

DOGE.

No more—no more of that.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Will not the Duke
Accept the homage of respect?

DOGE.

I do
Accept it as 't is given—proceed.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

«The Ten,»
With a selected giunta from the senate
Of twenty-five of the best born patricians,
Having deliberated on the state
Of the republic, and the o'erwhelming cares
Which, at this moment, doubly must oppress
Your years, so long devoted to your country,
Have judged it fitting, with all reverence,
Now to solicit from your wisdom (which
Upon reflection must accord in this),
The resignation of the ducal ring,
Which you have worn so long and venerably;
And, to prove that they are not ungrateful nor
Cold to your years and services, they add
An appanage of twenty hundred golden
Ducats, to make retirement not less splendid
Than should become a sovereign's retreat.

DOGE.

Did I hear rightly?

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Need I say again?

DOGE.

No.—Have you done?

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

I have spoken. Twenty-four
Hours are accorded you to give an answer.

DOGE.

I shall not need so many seconds.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

We
Will now retire.

DOGE.

Stay! Four and twenty hours
Will alter nothing which I have to say.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Speak!

DOGE.

When I twice before reiterated
My wish to abdicate, it was refused me;
And not alone refused, but ye exacted
An oath from me that I would never more
Renew this instance. I have sworn to die
In full exertion of the functions which
My country call'd me here to exercise,
According to my honour and my conscience—
I cannot break *my* oath.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Reduce us not
To the alternative of a decree,
Instead of your compliance.

DOGE.

Providence
Prolongs my days to prove and chasten me;
But ye have no right to reproach my length

Of days, since every hour has been the country's.
I am ready to lay down my life for her,
As I have laid down dearer things than life:
But for my dignity—I hold it of
The *whole* republic; when the *general* will
Is manifest, then you shall all be answer'd.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

We grieve for such an answer; but it cannot
Avail you aught.

DOGE.

I can submit to all things,
But nothing will advance; no, not a moment,
What you decree—decree.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

With this, then, must we
Return to those who sent us?

DOGE.

You have heard me.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

With all due reverence we retire.

[*Exeunt the Deputation, etc.*

Enter an Attendant.

ATTENDANT.

My lord,
The noble dame Marina craves an audience.

DOGE.

My time is hers.

Enter MARINA.

MARINA.

My lord, if I intrude—
Perhaps you fain would be alone?

DOGE.

Alone!
Alone, come all the world around me, I
Am now and evermore. But we will bear it.

MARINA.

We will; and for the sake of those who are,
Endeavour——Oh my husband!

DOGE.

Give it way!
I cannot comfort thee.

MARINA.

He might have lived,
So form'd for gentle privacy of life,
So loving, so beloved; the native of
Another land, and who so blest and blessing
As my poor Foscari? Nothing was wanting
Unto his happiness and mine save not
To be Venetian.

DOGE.

Or a prince's son.

MARINA.

Yes; all things which conduce to other men's
Imperfect happiness or high ambition,
By some strange destiny, to him proved deadly.
The country and the people whom he loved,
The prince of whom he was the elder born,
And——

DOGE.

Soon may be a prince no longer.

MARINA.

How?

DOGE.

They have taken my son from me, and now aim
At my too long worn diadem and ring.
Let them resume the gewgaws!

MARINA.

Oh the tyrants!
In such an hour too!

DOGE.

'T is the fittest time:
An hour ago I should have felt it.

MARINA.

And
Will you not now resent it?—Oh for vengeance!
But he, who, had he been enough protected,
Might have repaid protection in this moment,
Cannot assist his father.

DOGE.

Nor should do so
Against his country, had he a thousand lives
Instead of that——

MARINA.

They tortured from him. This
May be pure patriotism. I am a woman:
To me my husband and my children were
Country and home. I loved *him*—how I loved him!
I have seen him pass through such an ordeal as
The old martyrs would have shrunk from: he is gone,
And I, who would have given my blood for him,
Have nought to give but tears!. But could I compass
The retribution of his wrongs!—Well, well;
I have sons who shall be men.

DOGE.

Your grief distracts you.

MARINA.

I thought I could have borne it, when I saw him
Bow'd down by such oppression; yes, I thought
That I would rather look upon his corse
Than his prolong'd captivity:—I am punish'd
For that thought now. Would I were in his grave!

DOGE.

I must look on him once more.

MARINA.

Come with me!

DOGE.

Is he——

MARINA.

Our bridal bed is now his bier.

DOGE.

And he is in his shroud?

MARINA.

Come, come, old man!

[*Exeunt the* DOGE *and* MARINA.

Enter BARBARIGO *and* LOREDANO.

BARBARIGO (*to an Attendant*).

Where is the Doge?

ATTENDANT.

This instant retired hence
With the illustrious lady his son's widow.

LOREDANO.

Where?

ATTENDANT.

To the chamber where the body lies.

BARBARIGO.

Let us return then.

LOREDANO.

You forget, you cannot.
We have the implicit order of the giunta

To await their coming here, and join them in
Their office: they 'll be here soon after us.

BARBARIGO.

And will they press their answer on the Doge?

LOREDANO.

'T was his own wish that all should be done promptly.
He answer'd quickly, and must so be answer'd;
His dignity is look'd to, his estate
Cared for—what would he more?

BARBARIGO.

Die in his robes.
He could not have lived long; but I have done
My best to save his honours, and opposed
This proposition to the last, though vainly.
Why would the general vote compel me hither?

LOREDANO.

'T was fit that some one of such different thoughts
From ours should be a witness, lest false tongues
Should whisper that a harsh majority
Dreaded to have its acts beheld by others.

BARBARIGO.

And not less, I must needs think, for the sake
Of humbling me for my vain opposition.
You are ingenious, Loredano, in
Your modes of vengeance, nay, poetical,
A very Ovid in the art of *hating;*
'T is thus (although a secondary object,
Yet hate has microscopic eyes) to you
I owe, by way of foil to the more zealous,
This undesired association in
Your giunta's duties.

LOREDANO.

How!—*my* giunta!

BARBARIGO.

Yours?
They speak your language, watch your nod, approve
Your plans, and do your work. Are they not *yours*?

LOREDANO.

You talk unwarily. 'T were best they hear not
This from you.

BARBARIGO.

Oh! they 'll hear as much one day
From louder tongues than mine: they have gone beyond
Even their exorbitance of power; and when
This happens in the most contemn'd and abject
States, stung humanity will rise to check it.

LOREDANO.

You talk but idly.

BARBARIGO.

That remains for proof.
Here come our colleagues.

Enter the Deputation as before.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Is the Duke aware
We seek his presence?

ATTENDANT.

He shall be inform'd.
[*Exit Attendant.*

BARBARIGO.

The Duke is with his son.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

If it be so,
We will remit him till the rites are over.
Let us return. 'T is time enough to-morrow.

LOREDANO (*aside to* BARBARIGO).

Now the rich man's hell-fire upon your tongue,
Unquench'd, unquenchable! I 'll have it torn
From its vile babbling roots, till you shall utter
Nothing but sobs through blood, for this! Sage signors,
I pray ye be not hasty. [*Aloud to the others.*

BARBARIGO.

But be human!

LOREDANO.

See, the Duke comes!

Enter the DOGE.

DOGE.

I have obey'd your summons.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

We come once more to urge our past request.

DOGE.

And I to answer.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

What?

DOGE.

My only answer.
You have heard it.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Hear *you* then the last decree,
Definitive and absolute!

DOGE.

To the point—
To the point! I know of old the forms of office,
And gentle preludes to strong acts—Go on!

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

You are no longer Doge; you are released
From your imperial oath as sovereign;
Your ducal robes must be put off; but for
Your services, the state allots the appanage
Already mention'd in our former congress.
Three days are left you to remove from hence,
Under the penalty to see confiscated
All your own private fortune.

DOGE.

That last clause,
I am proud to say, would not enrich the treasury.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Your answer, Duke!

LOREDANO.

Your answer, Francis Foscari!

DOGE.

If I could have foreseen that my old age
Was prejudicial to the state, the chief
Of the republic never would have shown
Himself so far ungrateful as to place
His own high dignity before his country;
But this *life* having been so many years
Not useless to that country, I would fain
Have consecrated my last moments to her.
But the decree being renderd, I obey.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

If you would have the three days named extended,
We willingly will lengthen them to eight,
As sign of our esteem.

DOGE.

Not eight hours, signor,
Nor even eight minutes.—There 's the ducal ring.
[*Taking off his ring and cap.*
And there the ducal diadem. And so
The Adriatic 's free to wed another.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Yet go not forth so quickly.

DOGE.

I am old, sir,
And even to move but slowly must begin
To move betimes. Methinks I see amongst you
A face I know not—Senator! your name,
You, by your garb, Chief of the Forty!

MEMMO.

Signor,
I am the son of Marco Memmo.

DOGE.

Ah!
Your father was my friend.—But *sons* and *fathers!*
What, ho! my servants there!

ATTENDANT.

My prince!

DOGE.

No prince—
There are the princes of the prince!
[*Pointing to the Ten's Deputation.*
Prepare
To part from hence upon the instant.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Why
So rashly? 't will give scandal.

DOGE.

Answer that;
[*To the Ten.*
It is your province.—Sirs, bestir yourselves:
[*To the Servants.*
There is one burthen which I beg you bear
With care, although 't is past all farther harm—
But I will look to that myself.

BARBARIGO.

He means
The body of his son.

DOGE.

And call Marina,
My daughter!

Enter MARINA.

DOGE.

Get thee ready, we must mourn
Elsewhere.

MARINA.

And every where.

DOGE.

True; but in freedom,
Without these jealous spies upon the great.
Signors, you may depart: what would you more?
We are going: do you fear that we shall bear
The palace with us? Its *old* walls ten times
As *old* as I am, and I 'm very old,
Have served you, so have I, and I and they
Could tell a tale; but I invoke them not
To fall upon you! else they would, as erst
The pillars of stone Dagon's temple on
The Israelite and his Philistine foes.
Such power I do believe there might exist
In such a curse as mine, provoked by such
As you; but I curse not. Adieu, good signors!
May the next duke be better than the present!

LOREDANO.

The *present* duke is Paschal Malipiero.

DOGE.

Not till I pass the threshold of these doors.

LOREDANO.

Saint Mark's great bell is soon about to toll
For his inauguration.

DOGE.

Earth and heaven!
Ye will reverberate this peal; and I
Live to hear this!—the first doge who e'er heard
Such sound for his successor! Happier he,
My attainted predecessor, stern Faliero—
This insult at the least was spared him.

LOREDANO.

What!
Do you regret a traitor?

DOGE.

No—I merely
Envy the dead.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

My lord, if you indeed
Are bent upon this rash abandonment
Of the state's palace, at the least retire
By the private staircase, which conducts you towards
The landing-place of the canal.

DOGE.

No. I
Will now descend the stairs by which I mounted
To sovereignty—the Giant's Stairs, on whose
Broad eminence I was invested duke.
My services have call'd me up those steps,
The malice of my foes will drive me down them.
There five and thirty years ago was I
Install'd, and traversed these same halls from which
I never thought to be divorced except
A corse—a corse, it might be, fighting for them—
But not push'd hence by fellow citizens.
But, come; my son and I will go together—
He to his grave, and I to pray for mine.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

What, thus in public?

DOGE.

I was publicly
Elected, and so will I be deposed.
Marina! art thou willing?

MARINA.

Here 's my arm!

DOGE.

And here my *staff:* thus propp'd will I go forth.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

It must not be—the people will perceive it.

DOGE.

The people!—There 's no people, you well know it,
Else you dare not deal thus by them or me.
There is a *populace,* perhaps, whose looks
May shame you; but they dare not groan nor curse you,
Save with their hearts and eyes.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

You speak in passion,
Else——

DOGE.

You have reason. I have spoken much
More than my wont; it is a foible which
Was not of mine, but more excuses you,
Inasmuch as it shows that I approach
A dotage which may justify this deed

Of yours, although the law does not, nor will.
Farewell, sirs!

BARBARIGO.

You shall not depart without
An escort fitting past and present rank.
We will accompany, with due respect,
The Doge unto his private palace. Say,
My brethren, will we not?

DIFFERENT VOICES.

Ay!—Ay!

DOGE.

You shall not
Stir—in my train, at least. I enter'd here
As sovereign—I go out as citizen
By the same portals, but as citizen.
All these vain ceremonies are base insults,
Which only ulcerate the heart the more,
Applying poisons there as antidotes.
Pomp is for princes—I am *none!*—That 's false,
I *am*, but only to these gates.—Ah!

LOREDANO.

Hark!

[*The great bell of Saint Mark's tolls.*

BARBARIGO.

The bell!

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Saint Mark's, which tolls for the election
Of Malipiero.

DOGE.

Well I recognize
The sound! I heard it once, but once before,
And that is five and thirty years ago;
Even *then* I *was not young*.

BARBARIGO.

Sit down, my lord!
You tremble.

DOGE.

'T is the knell of my poor boy!
My heart aches bitterly.

BARBARIGO.

I pray you sit.

DOGE.

No; my seat here has been a throne till now.
Marina! let us go.

MARINA.

Most readily.

DOGE (*walks a few steps, then stops*).

I feel a thirst—will no one bring me here
A cup of water?

BARBARIGO.

I——

MARINA.

And I——

LOREDANO.

And I——

[*The* DOGE *takes a goblet from the hand of* LOREDANO.

DOGE.

I take *yours*, Loredano, from the hand
Most fit for such an hour as this.

LOREDANO.

Why so?

DOGE.

'T is said that our Venetian crystal has
Such pure antipathy to poisons, as
To burst if aught of venom touches it.
You bore this goblet, and it is not broken.

LOREDANO.

Well, sir!

DOGE.

Then it is false, or you are true.
For my own part, I credit neither; 't is
An idle legend.

MARINA.

You talk wildly, and
Had better now be seated, nor as yet
Depart. Ah! now you look as look'd my husband!

BARBARIGO.

He sinks!—support him!—quick—a chair—support him?

DOGE.

The bell tolls on!—let 's hence—my brain 's on fire!

BARBARIGO.

I do beseech you, lean upon us!

DOGE.

No!
A sovereign should die standing. My poor boy!
Off with your arms!—*That bell!*

[*The* DOGE *drops down, and dies.*

MARINA.

My God! my God!

BARBARIGO (*to* LOREDANO).

Behold! your work 's completed!

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Is there then
No aid? Call in assistance!

ATTENDANT.

'T is all over.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

If it be so, at least his obsequies
Shall be such as befits his name and nation,
His rank and his devotion to the duties
Of the realm, while his age permitted him
To do himself and them full justice. Brethren,
Say, shall it not be so?

BARBARIGO.

He has not had
The misery to die a subject where
He reign'd: then let his funeral rites be princely.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

We are agreed, then?

All, except LOREDANO, *answer*

Yes.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Heaven's peace be with him!

MARINA.

Signors, your pardon: this is mockery.
Juggle no more with that poor remnant, which,
A moment since, while yet it had a soul
(A soul by whom you have increased your empire,
And made your power as proud as was his glory),
You banish'd from his palace, and tore down
From his high place with such relentless coldness:
And now, when he can neither know these honours,
Nor would accept them if he could, you, signors,
Purpose, with idle and superfluous pomp,
To make a pageant over what you trampled.
A princely funeral will be your reproach,
And not his honour.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Lady, we revoke not
Our purposes so readily.

MARINA.

I know it,
As far as touches torturing the living.

I thought the dead had been beyond even *you*,
Though (some, no doubt), consign'd to powers which may
Resemble that you exercise on earth.
Leave him to me; you would have done so for
His dregs of life, which you have kindly shorten'd:
It is my last of duties, and may prove
A dreary comfort in my desolation.
Grief is fantastical, and loves the dead,
And the apparel of the grave.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Do you
Pretend still to this office?

MARINA.

I do, signor.
Though his possessions have been all consumed
In the state's service, I have still my dowry,
Which shall be consecrated to his rites,
And those of—— [*She stops with agitation.*

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Best retain it for your children.

MARINA.

Ay, they are fatherless, I thank you.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

We
Cannot comply with your request. His relics
Shall be exposed with wonted pomp, and follow'd
Unto their home by the new Doge, not clad
As *Doge*, but simply as a senator.

MARINA.

I have heard of murderers, who have interr'd
Their victims; but ne'er heard, until this hour,
Of so much splendour in hypocrisy
O'er those they slew. I 've heard of widows' tears—
Alas! I have shed some—always thanks to you!
I 've heard of *heirs* in sables—you have left none
To the deceased, so you would act the part
Of such. Well, sirs, your will be done! as one day,
I trust, Heaven's will be done too!

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

Know you, lady,
To whom ye speak, and perils of such speech?

MARINA.

I know the former better than yourselves;
The latter—like yourselves; and can face both.
Wish you more funerals?

BARBARIGO.

Heed not her rash words;
Her circumstances must excuse her bearing.

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

We will not note them down.

BARBARIGO (*turning to* LOREDANO, *who is writing upon his tablets*).

What art thou writing,
With such an earnest brow, upon thy tablets?

LOREDANO (*pointing to the* DOGE'S *body*).

That *he* has paid me![1]

CHIEF OF THE TEN.

What debt did he owe you?

LOREDANO.

A long and just one; nature's debt and *mine*.
[*Curtain falls.*

[1] «*L'ha pagata.*» An historical fact. See the History of Venice, by P. Daru, page 411, vol. ii.

APPENDIX.

Extrait de l'Histoire de la République de Venise, par P. Daru, de l'Académie française. Tom. 2.

Depuis trente ans, la république n'avait pas déposé les armes. Elle avait acquis les provinces de Brescia, de Bergame, de Crême, et la principauté de Ravenne.

Mais ces guerres continuelles faisaient beaucoup de malheureux et de mécontents. Le doge François Foscari, à qui on ne pouvait pardonner d'en avoir été le promoteur, manifesta une seconde fois, en 1442, et probablement avec plus de sincérité que la première, l'intention d'abdiquer sa dignité. Le conseil s'y refusa encore. On avait exigé de lui le serment de ne plus quitter le dogat. Il était déja avancé dans la vieillesse, conservant cependant beaucoup de force de tête et de caractère, et jouissant de la gloire d'avoir vu la république étendre au loin les limites de ses domaines pendant son administration.

Au milieu de ces prospérités, de grands chagrins vinrent mettre à l'épreuve la fermeté de son ame.

Son fils, Jacques Foscari, fut accusé, en 1445, d'avoir reçu des présents de quelques princes ou seigneurs étrangers, notamment, disait-on, du duc de Milan, Philippe Visconti. C'était non seulement une bassesse, mais une infraction des lois positives de la république.

Le conseil des dix traita cette affaire comme s'il se fût agi d'un délit commis par un particulier obscur. L'accusé fut amené devant ses juges, devant le doge, qui ne crut pas pouvoir s'abstenir de présider le tribunal. Là, il fut interrogé, appliqué à la question,[1] déclaré coupable, et il entendit, de la bouche de son père, l'arrêt qui le condamnait à un bannissement perpétuel, et le reléguait à Naples de Romanie, pour y finir ses jours.

Embarqué sur une galère pour se rendre au lieu de son exil, il tomba malade à Trieste. Les sollicitations du doge obtinrent, non sans difficulté, qu'on lui assignât une autre résidence. Enfin le conseil des dix lui permit de se retirer à Trévise, en lui imposant l'obligation d'y rester sous peine de mort, et de se présenter tous les jours devant le gouverneur.

Il y était depuis cinq ans, lorsqu'un des chefs du conseil des dix fut assassiné. Les soupçons se portèrent sur lui: un de ses domestiques qu'on avait vu à Venise fut arrêté et subit la torture. Les bourreaux ne purent lui arracher aucun aveu. Ce terrible tribunal se fit amener le maître, le soumit aux mêmes épreuves; il résista à tous les tourments, ne cessant d'attester son innocence;[2] mais on ne

[1] E datagli la corda per avere da lui la verità; chiamato il consiglio de' dieci colla giunta, nel quale fu messer lo doge, fu sentenziato. (Marin Sanuto Vite de' Duchi, F. Foscari.)

[2] E fù tormentato nè mai confessò cosa alcuna, pure parve al consiglio de' dieci di confinarlo in vita alla Canea. (Ibid.) Voici le texte du jugement; «Cum Jacobus Foscari per occasionem percussionis et mortis Hermolai Donati fuit retentus et examinatus, et propter significationes, testificationes, et scripturas quæ habentur contra eum, clare apparet ipsum esse reum criminis prædicti, sed propter incantationes et verba quæ sibi reperta sunt, de quibus existit indicia manifesta, videtur propter obstinatam mentem suam, non esse possibile extrahere ab ipso illam veritatem, quæ clara est per scripturas et per testificationes, quoniam in fune aliquam nec vocem, nec genitum, sed solum intra dentes voces ipse videtur et auditur infra se loqui, etc. . . . Tamen non est standum in istis terminis, propter honorem statûs nostri et pro multis respectibus, præsertim quod regimen nostrum occupatur in hac re et qui interdictum est amplius progredere: vadit pars quod dictus Jacobus Foscari, propter ea quæ habentur de illo, mittatur in confinium in civitate Canex,» etc. Notice sur le procès de Jacques Fos-

vit dans cette constance que de l'obstination; de ce qu'il taisait le fait, on conclut que ce fait existait : on attribua sa fermeté à la magie, et on le relégua à la Canée. De cette terre lointaine, le banni, digne alors de quelque pitié, ne cessait d'écrire à son père, à ses amis, pour obtenir quelque adoucissement à sa déportation. N'obtenant rien, et sachant que la terreur qu'inspirait le conseil des dix ne lui permettait pas d'espérer de trouver dans Venise une seule voix qui s'élevât en sa faveur, il fit une lettre pour le nouveau duc de Milan, par laquelle, au nom des bons offices que Sforce avait reçus du chef de la république, il implorait son intervention en faveur d'un innocent, du fils du doge.

Cette lettre, selon quelques historiens, fut confiée à un marchand qui avait promis de la faire parvenir au duc, mais qui, trop averti de ce qu'il y avait à craindre en se rendant l'intermédiaire d'une pareille correspondance, se hâta, en débarquant à Venise, de la remettre au chef du tribunal. Une autre version, qui paraît plus sûre, rapporte que la lettre fut surprise par un espion, attaché aux pas de l'exilé.[1]

Ce fut un nouveau délit dont on eut à punir Jacques Foscari. Réclamer la protection d'un prince étranger était un crime, dans un sujet de la république. Une galère partit sur-le-champ pour l'amener dans les prisons de Venise. A son arrivée, il fut soumis à l'estrapade.[2] C'était une singulière destinée pour le citoyen d'une république et pour le fils d'un prince, d'être trois fois dans sa vie appliqué à la question. Cette fois la torture était d'autant plus odieuse, qu'elle n'avait point d'objet, le fait qu'on avait à lui reprocher étant incontestable.

Quand on demanda à l'accusé, dans les intervalles que les bourreaux lui accordaient, pourquoi il avait écrit la lettre qu'on lui produisait, il répondit que c'était précisément parcequ'il ne doutait pas qu'elle ne tombât entre les mains du tribunal, que toute autre voie lui avait été fermée pour faire parvenir ses réclamations, qu'il s'attendait bien qu'on le ferait amener à Venise, mais qu'il avait tout risqué pour avoir la consolation de voir sa femme, son père, et sa mère encore une fois.

Sur cette naïve déclaration, on confirma sa sentence d'exil; mais on l'aggrava, en y ajoutant qu'il serait retenu en prison pendant un an. Cette rigueur, dont on usait envers un malheureux était sans doute odieuse; mais cette politique, qui défendait à tous les citoyens de faire intervenir les étrangers dans les affaires intérieures de la république, était sage. Elle était chez eux une maxime de gouvernement et une maxime inflexible. L'historien Paul Morosini[3] a conté que l'empereur Frédéric III, pendant qu'il était l'hôte des Vénitiens, demanda comme une faveur particulière, l'admission d'un citoyen dans le grand conseil, et la grâce d'un ancien gouverneur de Candie, gendre du doge, et banni pour sa mauvaise administration, sans pouvoir obtenir ni l'une ni l'autre.

Cependant on ne put refuser au condamné la permission de voir sa femme, ses enfants, ses parents, qu'il allait quitter pour toujours. Cette dernière entrevue même fut accompagnée de cruauté, par la sévère circonspection, qui retenait les épanchements de la douleur paternelle et conjugale. Ce ne fut point dans l'intérieur de leur appartement, ce fut dans une des grandes salles du palais, qu'une femme, accompagnée de ses quatre fils, vint faire les derniers adieux à son mari, qu'un père octogénaire et la dogaresse accablée d'infirmités, jouirent un moment de la triste consolation de mêler leurs larmes à celles de leur exilé. Il se jeta à leurs genoux en leur tendant des mains disloquées par la torture, pour les supplier de solliciter quelque adoucissement à la sentence qui venait d'être prononcée contre lui. Son père eut le courage de lui répondre : « Non, mon fils, respectez votre arrêt, et obéissez sans murmure à la seigneurie.»[1] A ces mots il se sépara de l'infortuné, qui fut sur-le-champ embarqué pour Candie.

L'antiquité vit avec autant d'horreur que d'admiration un père condamnant ses fils évidemment coupables. Elle hésita pour qualifier de vertu sublime ou de férocité cet effort qui paraît au-dessus de la nature humaine;[2] mais ici, où la première faute n'était qu'une faiblesse, où la seconde n'était pas prouvée, où la troisième n'avait rien de criminel, comment concevoir la constance d'un père, qui voit torturer trois fois son fils unique, qui l'entend condamner sans preuves, et qui n'éclate pas en plaintes; qui ne l'aborde que pour lui montrer un visage plus austère qu'attendri, et qui, au moment de s'en séparer pour jamais, lui interdit les murmures et jusqu'à l'espérance? Comment expliquer une si cruelle circonspection, si ce n'est en avouant, à notre honte, que la tyrannie peut obtenir de l'espèce humaine les mêmes efforts que la vertu? La servitude aurait-elle son héroïsme comme la liberté?

Quelque temps après ce jugement, on découvrit le véritable auteur de l'assassinat, dont Jacques Foscari portait la peine; mais il n'était plus temps de réparer cette atroce injustice, le malheureux était mort dans sa prison.

Il me reste à raconter la suite des malheurs du père. L'histoire les attribue à l'impatience qu'avaient ses ennemis et ses rivaux de voir vaquer sa place. Elle accuse formellement Jacques Lorédan, l'un des chefs du conseil des dix, de s'être livré contre ce vieillard aux conseils d'une haine héréditaire, et qui depuis long-temps divisait leurs maisons.[3]

François Foscari avait essayé de la faire cesser, en offrant sa fille à l'illustre amiral Pierre Loredan, pour un de ses fils. L'alliance avait été rejetée, et l'inimitié des

cart, dans un volume intitulé, Raccolta di memorie storiche e anneddote, per formar la Storia dell' eccellentissimo consiglio di X, dalla sua prima institutzione sino a' giorni nostri, con le diverse variazioni o riforme nelle varie epoche successe. (Archives de Venise.)

[1] La notice citée cr-de sus qui rapporte les actes de cette procédure.

[2] Ebbe prima per sapere la verità trenta squassi di corda. (Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi. F. Trevisi.)

[3] Historia di Venezia, lib. 25.

[1] Marin Sanuto, dans sa chronique, Vite de' Duchi, se sert ici sans en avoir eu l'intention d'une expression assez énergique. « Il doge era vecchio in decrepita età e camminava con una mazzetta. E quando gli andò parlogli molto constantemente che parea che non fosse suo figliuolo, licet fosse figliuolo unico, e Jacopo disse, messer padre, vi prego che procurate per me, acciocchè io torni a casa mia. Il doge disse: Jacopo, va e obbedisci a quello che vuole la terra, e non cercar più oltre. »

[2] Cela fut un acte que l'on ne scauroit ny suffisamment louer, ny assez blasmer : car, ou c'estoit une excellence de vertu, qui rendoit ainsi son cœur impassible, ou une violence de passion qui le rendoit insensible, dont ne l'une ne l'autre n'est chose petite, ains surpassant l'ordinaire d'humaine nature et tenant ou de la divinité ou de la bestialité. Mais il est plus raisonnable que le jugement des hommes s'accorde à sa gloire, que la faiblesse des jugeans fasse descroire sa vertu. Mais pour lors quand il se fut retiré, tout le monde demeura sur la place, comme transy d'horreur et de frayeur, par un long temps sans mot dire, pour avoir veu ce qui avoit été fait. (Plutarque, Valerius Publicola.)

[3] Je suis principalement dans ce recit une relation manuscrite de la deposition de Franc[illegible]. Cet art. qui est dans le volume intitulé Raccolta di memorie storiche e anneddote, per formar la Storia dell' eccellentissimo consiglio di X. (Archives de Venise.)

deux familles s'en était accrue. Dans tous les conseils, dans toutes les affaires, le doge trouvait toujours les Lorédan prêts à combattre ses propositions ou ses intérêts. Il lui échappa un jour de dire qu'il ne se croirait réellement prince que lorsque Pierre Loredan aurait cessé de vivre. Cet amiral mourut quelque temps après d'une incommodité assez prompte qu'on ne put expliquer. Il n'en fallut pas davantage aux malveillants pour insinuer que François Foscari, ayant desiré cette mort, pouvait bien l'avoir hâtée.

Ces bruits s'accréditèrent encore lorsqu'on vit aussi périr subitement Marc Loredan, frère de Pierre, et cela dans le moment où, en sa qualité d'avogador, il instruisait un procès contre André Donato, gendre du doge, accusé de péculat. On écrivit sur la tombe de l'amiral qu'il avait été enlevé à la patrie par le poison.

Il n'y avait aucune preuve, aucun indice contre François Foscari, aucune raison même de le soupçonner. Quand sa vie entière n'aurait pas démenti une imputation aussi odieuse, il savait que son rang ne lui promettait ni l'impunité ni même l'indulgence. La mort tragique de l'un de ses prédécesseurs l'en avertissait, et il n'avait que trop d'exemples domestiques du soin que le conseil des dix prenait d'humilier le chef de la république.

Cependant, Jacques Loredan, fils de Pierre, croyait ou feignait de croire avoir à venger les pertes de sa famille.[1] Dans ses livres de comptes (car il faisait le commerce, comme à cette époque presque tous les patriciens,) il avait inscrit de sa propre main le doge au nombre de ses débiteurs, pour la mort, y était-il dit, de mon père et de mon oncle.[2] De l'autre côté du registre, il avait laissé une page en blanc, pour y faire mention du recouvrement de cette dette, et en effet, après la perte du doge, il écrivit sur son registre : il me l'a payée, l'ha pagata.

Jacques Loredan fut élu membre du conseil des dix, en devint un des trois chefs, et se promit bien de profiter de cette occasion pour accomplir la vengeance qu'il méditait.

Le doge en sortant de la terrible épreuve qu'il venait de subir, pendant le procès de son fils, s'était retiré au fond de son palais : incapable de se livrer aux affaires, consumé de chagrins, accablé de vieillesse, il ne se montrait plus en public, ni même dans les conseils. Cette retraite, si facile à expliquer dans un vieillard octogénaire si malheureux, déplut aux decemvirs, qui voulurent y voir un murmure contre leurs arrêts.

Loredan commença par se plaindre devant ses collègues du tort que les infirmités du doge, son absence des conseils, apportaient à l'expédition des affaires ; il finit par hasarder et réussit à faire agréer la proposition de le déposer. Ce n'était pas la première fois que Venise avait pour prince un homme dans la caducité : l'usage et les lois y avaient pourvu ; dans ces circonstances le doge était suppléé par le plus ancien du conseil. Ici, cela ne suffisait pas aux ennemis de Foscari. Pour donner plus de solennité à la délibération, le conseil des dix demanda une adjonction de vingt-cinq sénateurs ; mais comme on n'en énonçait pas l'objet, et que le grand conseil était loin de le soupçonner, il se trouva que Marc Foscari, frère du doge, leur fut donné pour l'un des adjoints. Au lieu de l'admettre à la délibération, ou de réclamer contre ce choix, on enferma ce sénateur dans une chambre séparée, et on lui fit jurer de ne jamais parler de cette exclusion qu'il éprouvait, en lui déclarant qu'il y allait de sa vie ; ce qui n'empêcha pas qu'on inscrivît son nom au bas du décret, comme s'il y eût pris part.[1]

Quand on en vint à la délibération, Loredan la provoqua en ces termes.[2] « Si l'utilité publique doit imposer silence à tous les intérêts privés, je ne doute pas que nous ne prenions aujourd'hui une mesure que la patrie réclame, que nous lui devons. Les états ne peuvent se maintenir dans un ordre de choses immuable : vous n'avez qu'à voir comme le nôtre est changé, et combien il le serait davantage s'il n'y avait une autorité assez ferme pour y porter remède. J'ai honte de vous faire remarquer la confusion qui règne dans les conseils, le désordre des délibérations, l'encombrement des affaires, et la légèreté avec laquelle les plus importantes sont décidées ; la licence de notre jeunesse, le peu d'assiduité des magistrats, l'introduction de nouveautés dangereuses. Quel est l'effet de ces désordres? de compromettre notre considération. Quelle en est la cause? l'absence d'un chef capable de modérer les uns, de diriger les autres, de donner l'exemple à tous, et de maintenir la force des lois.

« Où est le temps où nos décrets étaient aussitôt exécutés que rendus? où François Carrare se trouvait investi dans Padoue, avant de pouvoir être seulement informé que nous voulions lui faire la guerre? Nous avons vu tout le contraire dans la dernière guerre contre le duc de Milan. Malheureuse la république qui est sans chef!

« Je ne vous rappelle pas tous ces inconvénients et leurs suites déplorables, pour vous affliger, pour vous effrayer, mais pour vous faire souvenir que vous êtes les maîtres, les conservateurs de cet état fondé par vos pères, et de la liberté que nous devons à leurs travaux, à leurs institutions. Ici, le mal indique le remède. Nous n'avons point de chef, il nous en faut un. Notre prince est notre ouvrage, nous avons donc le droit de juger son mérite quand il s'agit de l'élire, et son incapacité quand elle se manifeste. J'ajouterai que le peuple, encore bien qu'il n'ait pas le droit de prononcer sur les actions de ses maîtres, apprendra ce changement avec transport. C'est la providence, je n'en doute pas, qui lui inspire elle-même ces dispositions, pour vous avertir que la république réclame cette résolution, et que le sort de l'état est en vos mains.»

Ce discours n'éprouva que de timides contradictions ; cependant, la délibération dura huit jours. L'assemblée, ne se jugeant pas aussi sûre de l'approbation universelle que l'orateur voulait le lui faire croire, desirait que le doge donnât lui-même sa démission. Il l'avait déjà proposée deux fois, et on n'avait pas voulu l'accepter.

Aucune loi ne portait que le prince fût révocable : il était au contraire à vie, et les exemples qu'on pouvait citer de plusieurs doges déposés, prouvaient que de telles révolutions avaient toujours été le résultat d'un mouvement populaire.

Mais d'ailleurs, si le doge pouvait être déposé, ce n'était pas assurément par un tribunal composé d'un petit nombre de membres, institué pour punir les crimes, et nulle-

[1] Hasce tamen injurias quamvis imaginarias non tam ad animum revocaverat Jacobus Lauredanus defunctorum nepos, quam in abecedarium vindictam opportuna. (Palazzi Fasti ducales.)

[2] Ibid. et l'Histoire Vénitienne de Vianolo.

[1] Il faut cependant remarquer que dans la notice où l'on raconte ce fait, la délibération est rapportée, que les vingt-cinq adjoints y sont nommés, et que le nom de Marc Foscari ne s'y trouve pas.

[2] Cette harangue se lit dans la notice citée ci-dessus.

ment investi du droit de révoquer ce que le corps souverain de l'état avait fait.

Cependant le tribunal arrêta que les six conseillers de la seigneurie, et les chefs du conseil des dix, se transporteraient auprès du doge, pour lui signifier que l'excellentissime conseil avait jugé convenable qu'il abdiquât une dignité dont son âge ne lui permettait plus de remplir les fonctions. On lui donnait 1500 ducats d'or pour son entretien, et vingt-quatre heures pour se décider.[1]

Foscari répondit sur-le-champ avec beaucoup de gravité, que deux fois il avait voulu se démettre de sa charge; qu'au lieu de le lui permettre, on avait exigé de lui le serment de ne plus réitérer cette demande; que la providence avait prolongé ses jours pour l'éprouver et pour l'affliger; que cependant on n'était pas en droit de reprocher sa longue vie à un homme qui avait employé quatre-vingt-quatre ans au service de la république; qu'il était prêt encore à lui sacrifier sa vie; mais que, pour sa dignité, il la tenait de la république entière, et qu'il se réservait de répondre sur ce sujet, quand la volonté générale se serait légalement manifestée.

Le lendemain, à l'heure indiquée, les conseillers et les chefs des dix se présentèrent. Il ne voulut pas leur donner d'autre réponse. Le conseil s'assembla sur-le-champ, lui envoya demander encore une fois sa résolution, séance tenante, et, la réponse ayant été la même, on prononça que le doge était relevé de son serment et déposé de sa dignité: on lui assigna une pension de 1500 ducats d'or, en lui enjoignant de sortir du palais dans huit jours, sous peine de voir tous ses biens confisqués.[2]

Le lendemain, ce décret fut porté au doge, et ce fut Jacques Loredan qui eut la cruelle joie de le lui présenter. Il répondit: «Si j'avais pu prévoir que ma vieillesse fût préjudiciable à l'état, le chef de la république ne se serait pas montré assez ingrat, pour préférer sa dignité à la patrie; mais cette vie lui ayant été utile pendant tant d'années, je voulais lui en consacrer jusqu'au dernier moment. Le décret est rendu, je m'y conformerai.» Après avoir parlé ainsi, il se dépouilla des marques de sa dignité, remit l'anneau ducal qui fut brisé en sa présence, et dès le jour suivant il quitta ce palais, qu'il avait habité pendant trente-cinq ans, accompagné de son frère, de ses parents, et de ses amis. Un secrétaire, qui se trouva sur le perron, l'invita à descendre par un escalier dérobé, afin d'éviter la foule du peuple, qui s'était rassemblé dans les cours, mais il s'y refusa, disant qu'il voulait descendre par où il était monté; et quand il fut au bas de l'escalier des géants, il se retourna, appuyé sur sa béquille, vers le palais, en proférant ces paroles: «Mes services m'y avaient appelé, la malice de mes ennemis m'en fait sortir.»

La foule qui s'ouvrait sur son passage, et qui avait peut-être desiré sa mort, était émue de respect et d'attendrissement.[3] Rentré dans sa maison, il recommanda à sa famille d'oublier les injures de ses ennemis. Personne dans les divers corps de l'état ne se crut en droit de s'étonner, qu'un prince inamovible eût été déposé sans qu'on lui reprochât rien; que l'état eût perdu son chef, à l'insu du sénat et du corps souverain lui-même. Le peuple seul laissa échapper quelques regrets: une proclamation du conseil des dix prescrivit le silence le plus absolu sur cette affaire, sous peine de mort.

[1] Ce décret est rapporté textuellement dans la notice.

[2] La notice rapporte aussi ce décret.

[3] On lit dans la notice ces propres mots: «Se fosse stato in loro potere volentieri lo avrebbero restituito.»

Avant de donner un successeur à François Foscari, une nouvelle loi fut rendue, qui défendait au doge d'ouvrir et de lire, autrement qu'en présence de ses conseillers, les dépêches des ambassadeurs de la république, et les lettres des princes étrangers.[1]

Les électeurs entrèrent au conclave, et nommèrent au dogat Pascal Malipier, le 30 octobre 1457. La cloche de Saint-Marc, qui annonçait à Venise son nouveau prince, vint frapper l'oreille de François Foscari; cette fois sa fermeté l'abandonna, il éprouva un tel saisissement, qu'il mourut le lendemain.[2]

La république arrêta qu'on lui rendrait les mêmes honneurs funèbres que s'il fût mort dans l'exercice de sa dignité; mais lorsqu'on se présenta pour enlever ses restes, sa veuve, qui de son nom était Marine Nani, déclara qu'elle ne le souffrirait point; qu'on ne devait pas traiter en prince après sa mort celui que vivant on avait dépouillé de la couronne, et que, puisqu'il avait consumé ses biens au service de l'état, elle saurait consacrer sa dot à lui faire rendre les derniers honneurs.[3] On ne tint aucun compte de cette résistance, et malgré les protestations de l'ancienne dogaresse, le corps fut enlevé, revêtu des ornements ducaux, exposé en public, et les obsèques furent célébrées avec la pompe accoutumée. Le nouveau doge assista au convoi en robe de sénateur.

La pitié qu'avait inspirée le malheur de ce vieillard, ne fut pas tout-à-fait stérile. Un an après, on osa dire que le conseil des dix avait outrepassé ses pouvoirs, et il lui fut défendu par une loi du grand conseil de s'ingérer à l'avenir de juger le prince, à moins que ce ne fût pour cause de félonie.[4]

Un acte d'autorité tel que la déposition d'un doge inamovible de sa nature, aurait pu exciter un soulèvement général, ou au moins occasioner une division dans une république autrement constituée que Venise. Mais depuis trois ans, il existait dans celle-ci une magistrature, ou plutôt une autorité, devant laquelle tout devait se taire.

Extrait de l'Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du moyen âge, par J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi, tom. x.

Le doge de Venise, qui avait prévenu par ce traité une guerre non moins dangereuse que celle qu'il avait terminée presque en même temps par le traité de Lodi, était alors parvenu à une extrême vieillesse. François Foscari occupait cette première dignité de l'état dès le 15 avril 1423. Quoiqu'il fût déjà âgé de plus de cinquante-un ans à l'époque de son élection, il était cependant le plus jeune des quarante-un électeurs. Il avait eu beaucoup de peine à parvenir au rang qu'il convoitait, et son élection avait été conduite avec beaucoup d'adresse. Pendant plusieurs tours de scrutin ses amis les plus zélés s'étaient abstenus de lui donner leur suffrage, pour que les autres ne le considérassent pas comme un concurrent redoutable.[5] Le conseil des dix craignait son crédit parmi la noblesse pauvre, parce qu'il avait cherché à se la rendre favorable, tandis qu'il était procurateur de Saint-Marc, en faisant employer plus de trente mille ducats à doter des jeunes filles de bonne

[1] Hist. di Venetia, di Paolo Morosini, lib. 23.

[2] Hist. di Pietro Justiniani, lib. 8.

[3] Hist. d'Egnatio, lib. 6. cap. 7.

[4] Ce décret est du 25 octobre, 1458. La notice le rapporte.

[5] Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 967.

maison, ou à établir de jeunes gentilshommes. On craignait encore sa nombreuse famille, car alors il était père de quatre enfans, et marié de nouveau; enfin on redoutait son ambition et son goût pour la guerre. L'opinion que ses adversaires s'étaient formée de lui fut vérifiée par les événemens; pendant trente-quatre ans que Foscari fut à la tête de la république, elle ne cessa point de combattre. Si les hostilités étaient suspendues durant quelques mois, c'était pour recommencer bientôt avec plus de vigueur. Ce fut l'époque où Venise étendit son empire sur Brescia, Bergame, Ravenne, et Crême, où elle fonda sa domination de Lombardie, et parut sans cesse sur le point d'asservir toute cette province. Profond, courageux, inébranlable, Foscari communiqua aux conseils son propre caractère, et ses talens lui firent obtenir plus d'influence sur la république, que n'avaient exercé la plupart de ses prédécesseurs. Mais si son ambition avait eu pour but l'agrandissement de sa famille, elle fut cruellement trompée: trois de ses fils moururent dans les huit années qui suivirent son élection; le quatrième, Jacob, par lequel la maison Foscari s'est perpétuée, fut victime de la jalousie du conseil des dix, et empoisonna par ses malheurs les jours de son père.[1]

En effet, le conseil des dix, redoublant de défiance envers le chef de l'état, lorsqu'il le voyait plus fort par ses talens et sa popularité, veillait sans cesse sur Foscari, pour le punir de son crédit et de sa gloire. Au mois de février 1445, Michel Bevilacqua, Florentin, exilé à Venise, accusa en secret Jacques Foscari auprès des inquisiteurs d'état, d'avoir reçu du duc Philippe Visconti, des présens d'argent et de joyaux, par les mains des gens de sa maison. Telle était l'odieuse procédure adoptée à Venise, que sur cette accusation secrète, le fils du doge, du représentant de la majesté de la république, fut mis à la torture. On lui arracha par l'estrapade l'aveu des charges portées contre lui; il fut relégué pour le reste de ses jours à Napoli de Romanie, avec obligation de se présenter chaque matin au commandant de la place.[2] Cependant, le vaisseau qui le portait ayant touché à Trieste, Jacob, grièvement malade des suites de la torture, et plus encore de l'humiliation qu'il avait éprouvée, demanda en grace au conseil des dix de n'être pas envoyé plus loin. Il obtint cette faveur, par une délibération du 28 décembre 1446; il fut rappelé à Trévise, et il eut la liberté d'habiter tout le Trévisan indifféremment.[3]

Il vivait en paix à Trévise; et la fille de Léonard Contarini, qu'il avait épousée le 10 février 1441, était venue le joindre dans son exil, lorsque, le 5 novembre 1450, Almoro Donato, chef du conseil des dix, fut assassiné. Les deux autres inquisiteurs d'état, Triadano Gritti et Antonio Venieri portèrent leurs soupçons sur Jacob Foscari, parce qu'un domestique à lui, nommé Olivier, avait été vu ce soir-là même à Venise, et avait des premiers donné la nouvelle de cet assassinat. Olivier fut mis à la torture, mais il nia jusqu'à la fin, avec un courage inébranlable, le crime dont on l'accusait, quoique ses juges eussent la barbarie de lui faire donner jusqu'à quatre-vingts tours d'estrapade. Cependant, comme Jacob Foscari avait de puissans motifs d'inimitié contre le conseil des dix qui l'avait condamné, et qui témoignait de la haine au doge son père, on essaya de mettre à son tour Jacob à la torture, et l'on prolongea contre lui ces affreux tourments, sans réussir à en tirer aucune confession. Malgré sa dénégation, le conseil des dix le condamna à être transporté à la Canée, et accorda une récompense à son délateur. Mais les horribles douleurs que Jacob Foscari avait éprouvées, avaient troublé sa raison; ses persécuteurs, touchés de ce dernier malheur, permirent qu'on le ramenât à Venise le 26 mai 1451. Il embrassa son père, il puisa dans ses exhortations quelque courage et quelque calme, et il fut reconduit immédiatement à la Canée.[1] Sur ces entrefaites, Nicolas Erizzo, homme déjà noté pour un précédent crime, confessa, en mourant, que c'était lui qui avoit tué Almoro Donato.[2]

Le malheureux doge, François Foscari, avait déjà cherché, à plusieurs reprises, à abdiquer une dignité si funeste à lui-même et à sa famille. Il lui semblait que, redescendu au rang de simple citoyen, comme il n'inspirerait plus de crainte ou de jalousie, on n'accablerait plus son fils par ces effroyables persécutions. Abattu par la mort de ses premiers enfans, il avoit voulu, dès le 26 juin 1433, déposer une dignité, durant l'exercice de laquelle sa patrie avait été tourmentée par la guerre, par la peste, et par des malheurs de tout genre.[3] Il renouvela cette proposition après les jugemens rendus contre son fils; mais le conseil des dix le retenait forcément sur le trône, comme il retenait son fils dans les fers.

En vain Jacob Foscari, obligé de se présenter chaque jour au gouverneur de la Canée, réclamait contre l'injustice de sa dernière sentence, sur laquelle la confession d'Erizzo ne laissait plus de doutes. En vain il demandait grâce au farouche conseil des dix; il ne pouvait obtenir aucune réponse. Le desir de revoir son père et sa mère, arrivés tous deux au dernier terme de la vieillesse, le desir de revoir une patrie dont la cruauté ne méritait pas un si tendre amour, se changèrent en lui en une vraie fureur. Ne pouvant retourner à Venise pour y vivre libre, il voulut du moins y aller chercher un supplice. Il écrivit au duc de Milan à la fin de mai 1456, pour implorer sa protection auprès du sénat: et sachant qu'une telle lettre serait considérée comme un crime, il l'exposa lui-même dans un lieu où il était sûr qu'elle serait saisie par les espions qui l'entouraient. En effet, la lettre étant déférée au conseil des dix, on l'envoya chercher aussitôt, et il fut reconduit à Venise le 19 juillet 1456.[4]

Jacob Foscari ne nia point sa lettre, il raconta en même temps dans quel but il l'avait écrite, et comment il l'avait fait tomber entre les mains de son délateur. Malgré ces aveux, Foscari fut remis à la torture, et on lui donna trente tours d'estrapade, pour voir s'il confirmerait ensuite ses dépositions. Quand on le détacha de la corde, on le trouva déchiré par ces horribles secousses. Les juges permirent alors à son père, à sa mère, à sa femme, et à ses fils, d'aller le voir dans sa prison. Le vieux Foscari, appuyé sur un bâton, ne se traina qu'avec peine dans la chambre où son fils unique était pansé de ses blessures. Ce fils demandait encore la grace de mourir dans sa maison.—« Retourne à ton exil, mon fils, puisque ta patrie l'ordonne, lui dit le doge, et soumets-toi à sa volonté.» Mais en rentrant

[1] Marin Sanuto, p. 968.
[2] Ibid. p. 968.
[3] Ibid. Vite, p. 1123.

[1] Marin Sanuto, p. 1138.—M. Ant. Sabellico. Deca III, L. IV, f. 187.
[2] Ibid. 1139.
[3] Ibid. p. 1032.
[4] Ibid. p. 1162.

dans son palais, ce malheureux vieillard s'évanouit, épuisé par la violence qu'il s'était faite. Jacob devait encore passer une année en prison à la Canée, avant qu'on lui rendît la même liberté limitée à laquelle il était réduit avant cet événement; mais à peine fut-il débarqué sur cette terre d'exil, qu'il y mourut de douleur.[1]

Dès-lors, et pendant quinze mois, le vieux doge accablé d'années et de chagrins, ne recouvra plus la force de son corps ou celle de son âme; il n'assistait plus à aucun des conseils, et il ne pouvait plus remplir aucune des fonctions de sa dignité. Il était entré dans sa quatre-vingt-sixième année, et si le conseil des dix avait été susceptible de quelque pitié, il aurait attendu en silence la fin, sans doute prochaine, d'une carrière marquée par tant de gloire et tant de malheurs. Mais le chef du conseil des dix était alors Jacques Loredano, fils de Marc, et neveu de Pierre, le grand amiral, qui toute leur vie avaient été les ennemis acharnés du vieux doge. Ils avaient transmis leur haine à leurs enfants, et cette vieille rancune n'était pas encore satisfaite.[2] A l'instigation de Loredano, Jérôme Barbarigo, inquisiteur d'état, proposa au conseil des dix, au mois d'octobre 1457, de soumettre Foscari à une nouvelle humiliation. Dès que ce magistrat ne pouvait plus remplir ses fonctions, Barbarigo demanda qu'on nommât un autre doge. Le conseil, qui avait refusé par deux fois l'abdication de Foscari, parce que la constitution ne pouvait la permettre, hésita avant de se mettre en contradiction avec ses propres décrets. Les discussions dans le conseil et la junte se prolongèrent pendant huit jours, jusque fort avant dans la nuit. Cependant, on fit entrer dans l'assemblée Marco Foscari, procurateur de Saint-Marc, et frère du doge, pour qu'il fût lié par le redoutable serment du secret, et qu'il ne pût arrêter les mesures de ses ennemis. Enfin, le conseil se rendit auprès du doge, et lui demanda d'abdiquer volontairement un emploi qu'il ne pouvait plus exercer. «J'ai juré,» répondit le vieillard, «de remplir jusqu'à ma mort, selon mon honneur et ma conscience, les fonctions auxquelles ma patrie m'a appelé. Je ne puis me délier moi-même de mon serment; qu'un ordre des conseils dispose de moi, je m'y soumettrai, mais je ne le devancerai pas.» Alors une nouvelle délibération du conseil délia François Foscari de son serment ducal, lui assura une pension de deux mille ducats pour le reste de sa vie, et lui ordonna d'évacuer en trois jours le palais, et de déposer les ornemens de sa dignité. Le doge ayant remarqué parmi les conseillers qui lui portèrent cet ordre, un chef de la quarantie qu'il ne connaissait pas, demanda son nom: «Je suis le fils de Marco Memmo,» lui dit le conseiller.—«Ah! ton père était mon ami,» lui dit le vieux doge, en soupirant. Il donna aussitôt des ordres pour qu'on transportât ses effets dans une maison à lui; et le lendemain, 23 octobre, on le vit, se soutenant à peine, et appuyé sur son vieux frère, redescendre ces mêmes escaliers sur lesquels, trente-quatre ans auparavant, on l'avait vu installé avec tant de pompe, et traverser ces mêmes salles où la république avait reçu ses sermens. Le peuple entier parut indigné de tant de dureté exercée contre un vieillard qu'il respectait et qu'il aimait; mais le conseil des dix fit publier une défense de parler de cette révolution, sous peine d'être traduit devant les inquisiteurs d'état. Le 20 octobre, Pasqual Malipieri, procurateur de Saint-Marc, fut élu pour successeur de Foscari; celui-ci n'eut pas néanmoins l'humiliation de vivre sujet, là où il avait régné. En entendant le son des cloches, qui sonnaient en actions de grace pour cette élection, il mourut subitement d'une hémorragie causée par une veine qui s'éclata dans sa poitrine.[1]

«Le doge, blessé de trouver constamment un contradicteur et un censeur si amer dans son frère, lui dit un jour en plein conseil: 'Messire Augustin, vous faites tout votre possible pour hâter ma mort; vous vous flattez de me succéder: mais si les autres vous connaissent aussi bien que je vous connais, ils n'auront garde de vous élire.' Là dessus il se leva, ému de colère, rentra dans son appartement, et mourut quelques jours après. Ce frère contre lequel il s'était emporté fut précisément le successeur qu'on lui donna. C'était un mérite dont on aimait à tenir compte, surtout à un parent, de s'être mis en opposition avec le chef de la république.»[2] *Daru, Histoire de Venise,* vol. ii. sec. xi. p. 533.

In Lady Morgan's fearless and excellent work upon «Italy,» I perceive the expression of «Rome of the Ocean» applied to Venice. The same phrase occurs in the «Two Foscari.» My publisher can vouch for me that the tragedy was written and sent to England some time before I had seen Lady Morgan's work, which I only received on the 16th of August. I hasten, however, to notice the coincidence, and to yield the originality of the phrase to her who first placed it before the public. I am the more anxious to do this, as I am informed (for I have seen but few of the specimens, and those accidentally) that there have been lately brought against me charges of plagiarism. I have also had an anonymous sort of threatening intimation of the same kind, apparently with the intent of extorting money. To such charges I have no answer to make. One of them is ludicrous enough. I am reproached for having formed the description of a shipwreck in verse from the narratives of many *actual* shipwrecks in *prose,* selecting such materials as were most striking. Gibbon makes it a merit in Tasso «to have copied the minutest details of the siege of Jerusalem from the Chronicles.» In *me* it may be a demerit, I presume; let it remain so. Whilst I have been occupied in defending *Pope's* character, the lower orders of Grub-street appear to have been assailing *mine:* this is as it should be, both in them and in me. One of the accusations in the nameless epistle alluded to is still more laughable: it states seriously that I «received five hundred pounds for writing advertisements for Day and Martin's patent blacking!» This is the highest compliment to my literary powers which I ever received. It states also «that a person has been trying to make

[1] Marin Sanuto, p. 1163.—Navagiero Stor. Venez. p. 1118.

[2] Vettor Sandi Storia civile Veneziana, P. II. L. VIII. p. 715. p. 717.

[1] Marin Sanuto, Vite de' Duchi di Venezia, p. 1164.—Chronicum Eugubinum, T. XXI. p. 992.—Christoforo da Soldo Istoria Bresciana, T. XXI. p. 891.—Navagiero Storia Veneziana, T. XXIII. p. 1120.—M. A. Sabellico. Deca III. L. VIII. f. 201.

[2] The Venetians appear to have had a particular turn for breaking the hearts of their Doges: the above is another instance of the kind in the Doge Marco Barbarigo; he was succeeded by his brother Agostino Barbarigo, whose chief merit is above-mentioned.

acquaintance with Mr Townsend, a gentleman of the law, who was with me on business in Venice three years ago, for the purpose of obtaining any defamatory particulars of my life from this occasional visitor.» Mr Townsend is welcome to say what he knows. I mention these particulars merely to show the world in general what the *literary* lower world contains, and their way of setting to work. Another charge made, I am told, in the « Literary Gazette» is, that I wrote the notes to « Queen Mab;» a work which I never saw till some time after its publication, and which I recollect showing to Mr Sotheby as a poem of great power and imagination. I never wrote a line of the notes, nor ever saw them except in their published form. No one knows better than their real author, that his opinions and mine differ materially upon the metaphysical portion of that work; though in common with all who are not blinded by baseness and bigotry, I highly admire the poetry of that and his other publications.

Mr Southey, too, in his pious preface to a poem whose blasphemy is as harmless as the sedition of Wat Tyler, because it is equally absurd with that sincere production, calls upon the « legislature to look to it,» as the toleration of such writings led to the French Revolution: *not* such writings as Wat Tyler, but as those of the « Satanic School.» This is not true, and Mr Southey knows it to be not true. Every French writer of any freedom was persecuted; Voltaire and Rousseau were exiles, Marmontel and Diderot were sent to the Bastille, and a perpetual war was waged with the whole class by the existing despotism. In the next place, the French Revolution was *not* occasioned by any writings whatsoever, but must have occurred had no such writers ever existed. It is the fashion to attribute every thing to the French revolution, and the French revolution to every thing but its real cause. That cause is obvious—the government exacted too much, and the people could neither *give* nor *bear more*. Without this, the Encyclopedists might have written their fingers off without the occurrence of a single alteration. And the *English* revolution—(the first, I mean) what was it occasioned by? The *puritans* were surely as pious and moral as Wesley or his biographer? Acts—acts on the part of government, and *not* writings against them, have caused the past convulsions, and are tending to the future.

I look upon such as inevitable, though no revolutionist: I wish to see the English constitution restored and not destroyed. Born an aristocrat, and naturally one by temper, with the greater part of my present property in the funds, what have *I* to gain by a revolution? Perhaps I have more to lose in every way than Mr Southey, with all his places and presents for panegyrics and abuse into the bargain. But that a revolution is inevitable, I repeat. The government may exult over the repression of petty tumults; these are but the receding waves repulsed and broken for a moment on the shore, while the great tide is still rolling on and gaining ground with every breaker. Mr Southey accuses us of attacking the religion of the country; and is he abetting it by writing lives of *Wesley*? One mode of worship is merely destroyed by another. There never was, nor ever will be, a country without a religion. We shall be told of *France* again: but it was only Paris and a frantic party, which for a moment upheld their dogmatic nonsense of theo-philanthropy. The church of England, if overthrown, will be swept away by the sectarians, and not by the sceptics. People are too wise, too well-informed, too certain of their own immense importance in the realms of space, ever to submit to the impiety of doubt. There may be a few such diffident speculators, like water in the pale sunbeam of human reason, but they are very few; and their opinions, without enthusiasm or appeal to the passions, can never gain proselytes—unless indeed, they are persecuted: *that*, to be sure, will increase any thing.

Mr S, with a cowardly ferocity, exults over the anticipated « death-bed repentance» of the objects of his dislike; and indulges himself in a pleasant « Vision of Judgment,» in prose as well as verse, full of impious impudence. What Mr S.'s sensations or ours may be in the awful moment of leaving this state of existence, neither he nor we can pretend to decide. In common, I presume, with most men of any reflection, *I* have not waited for a « death-bed» to repent of many of my actions, notwithstanding the « diabolical pride» which this pitiful renegado in his rancour would impute to those who scorn *him*. Whether, upon the whole, the good or evil of my deeds may preponderate, is not for me to ascertain; but, as my means and opportunities have been greater, I shall limit my present defence to an assertion (easily proved, if necessary) that I, « in my degree,» have done more real good in any one given year, since I was twenty, than Mr Southey in the whole course of his shifting and turncoat existence. There are several actions to which I can look back with an honest pride, not to be damped by the calumnies of a hireling. There are others to which I recur with sorrow and repentance; but the only *act* of *my* life of which Mr Southey can have any real knowledge, as it was one which brought me in contact with a near connexion of his own, did no dishonour to that connexion nor to me.

I am not ignorant of Mr Southey's calumnies on a different occasion, knowing them to be such, which he scattered abroad, on his return from Switzerland, against me and others: they have done him no good in this world; and, if his creed be the right one, they will do him less in the next. What *his* « death-bed» may be, it is not my province to predicate: let him settle it with his Maker, as I must do with mine. There is something at once ludicrous and blasphemous in this arrogant scribbler of all works sitting down to deal damnation and destruction upon his fellow creatures, with Wat Tyler, the Apotheosis of George the Third, and the Elegy on Martin the regicide, all shuffled together in his writing-desk. One of his consolations appears to be a Latin note from a work of a Mr Landor, the author of « Gebir,» whose friendship for Robert Southey will, it seems, « be an honour to him when the ephemeral disputes and ephemeral reputations of the day are forgotten.» I for one neither envy him «the friendship,» nor the glory in reversion which is to accrue from it, like Mr Thelusson's fortune in the third and fourth generation.—This friendship will probably be as memorable as his own epics, which (as I quoted to him ten or twelve years ago in « English Bards») Porson said «would be remembered when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, and not till then.» For the present, I leave him.

Cain,

A MYSTERY.

« Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.»—Gen. iii. 1.

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

This "Mystery of Cain" is Inscribed,

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND, AND FAITHFUL SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

The following scenes are entitled « a Mystery,» in conformity with the ancient title annexed to dramas upon similar subjects, which were styled « Mysteries, or Moralities.» The author has by no means taken the same liberties with his subject which were common formerly, as may be seen by any reader curious enough to refer to those very profane productions, whether in English, French, Italian, or Spanish. The author has endeavoured to preserve the language adapted to his characters; and where it is (and this is but rarely) taken from actual *Scripture*, he has made as little alteration, even of words, as the rhythm would permit. The reader will recollect that the book of Genesis does not state that Eve was tempted by a demon, but by « the Serpent;» and that only because he was « the most subtil of all the beasts of the field.» Whatever interpretation the Rabbins and the Fathers may have put upon this, I must take the words as I find them, and reply with Bishop Watson upon similar occasions, when the Fathers were quoted to him, as Moderator in the Schools of Cambridge, « Behold the Book!»—holding up the Scripture. It is to be recollected that my present subject has nothing to do with the *New Testament*, to which no reference can be here made without anachronism. With the poems upon similar topics I have not been recently familiar. Since I was twenty, I have never read Milton; but I had read him so frequently before, that this may make little difference. Gesner's « Death of Abel» I have never read since I was eight years of age, at Aberdeen. The general impression of my recollection is delight; but of the contents I remember only that Cain's wife was called Mahala, and Abel's Thirza.—In the following pages I have called them « Adah» and « Zillah,» the earliest female names which occur in Genesis; they were those of Lamech's wives: those of Cain and Abel are not called by their names. Whether, then, a coincidence of subject may have caused the same in expression, I know nothing, and care as little.

The reader will please to bear in mind (what few choose to recollect) that there is no allusion to a future state in any of the books of Moses, nor indeed in the Old Testament. For a reason for this extraordinary omission he may consult « Warburton's Divine Legation;» whether satisfactory or not, no better has yet been assigned. I have therefore supposed it new to Cain, without, I hope, any perversion of Holy Writ.

With regard to the language of Lucifer, it was difficult for me to make him talk like a Clergyman upon the same subjects; but I have done what I could to restrain him within the bounds of spiritual politeness.

If he disclaims having tempted Eve in the shape of the Serpent, it is only because the book of Genesis has not the most distant allusion to any thing of the kind, but merely to the Serpent in his serpentine capacity.

Note.—The reader will perceive that the author has partly adopted in this poem the notion of Cuvier, that the world had been destroyed several times before the creation of man. This speculation, derived from the different strata and the bones of enormous and unknown animals found in them, is not contrary to the Mosaic account, but rather confirms it; as no human bones have yet been discovered in those strata, although those of many known animals are found near the remains of the unknown. The assertion of Lucifer, that the pre-adamite world was also peopled by rational beings much more intelligent than man, and proportionably powerful to the mammoth, etc. etc. is, of course, a poetical fiction to help him to make out his case.

I ought to add, that there is a « Tramelogedie» of Alfieri, called « Abel.»—I have never read that nor any other of the posthumous works of the writer, except his life.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.	WOMEN.
Adam.	Eve.
Cain.	Adah.
Abel.	Zillah.

SPIRITS.

Angel of the Lord.
Lucifer.

CAIN.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Land without Paradise.—Time, Sunrise.

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, ADAH, ZILLAH, *offering a Sacrifice.*

ADAM.

God, the Eternal! Infinite! All-Wise!—
Who out of darkness on the deep didst make
Light on the waters with a word—all hail!
Jehovah, with returning light, all hail!

EVE.

God! who didst name the day, and separate
Morning from night, till then divided never—
Who didst divide the wave from wave, and call
Part of thy work the firmament—all hail!

ABEL.

God! who didst call the elements into
Earth—ocean—air—and fire, and with the day
And night, and worlds which these illuminate
Or shadow, madest beings to enjoy them,
And love both them and thee—all hail! all hail!

ADAH.

God, the Eternal! Parent of all things!
Who didst create these best and beauteous beings,
To be beloved, more than all, save thee—
Let me love thee and them:—All hail! all hail!

ZILLAH.

Oh, God! who loving, making, blessing all,
Yet didst permit the serpent to creep in,
And drive my father forth from Paradise,
Keep us from further evil:—Hail! all hail!

ADAM.

Son Cain, my first-born, wherefore art thou silent?

CAIN.

Why should I speak?

ADAM.

To pray.

CAIN.

Have ye not pray'd?

ADAM.

We have, most fervently.

CAIN.

And loudly: I
Have heard you.

ADAM.

So will God, I trust.

ABEL.

Amen!

ADAM.

But thou, my eldest-born, art silent still.

CAIN.

'T is better I should be so.

ADAM.

Wherefore so?

CAIN.

I have nought to ask.

ADAM.

Nor aught to thank for?

CAIN.

No.

ADAM.

Dost thou not live?

CAIN.

Must I not die?

EVE.

Alas!
The fruit of our forbidden tree begins
To fall.

ADAM.

And we must gather it again.
Oh, God! why didst thou plant the tree of knowledge?

CAIN.

And wherefore pluck'd ye not the tree of life?
Ye might have then defied him.

ADAM.

Oh! my son,
Blaspheme not: these are serpents' words.

CAIN.

Why not?
The snake spoke *truth*: it *was* the tree of knowledge;
It *was* the tree of life:—knowledge is good,
And life is good; and how can both be evil?

EVE.

My boy! thou speakest as I spoke in sin,
Before thy birth: let me not see renew'd
My misery in thine. I have repented.
Let me not see my offspring fall into
The snares beyond the walls of Paradise,
Which e'en in Paradise destroy'd his parents.
Content thee with what *is*. Had we been so,
Thou now hadst been contented.—Oh, my son!

ADAM.

Our orisons completed, let us hence,
Each to his task of toil—not heavy, though
Needful: the earth is young, and yields us kindly
Her fruits with little labour.

EVE.

Cain, my son,
Behold thy father cheerful and resign'd,
And do as he doth.

[*Exit* ADAM *and* EVE.

ZILLAH.

Wilt thou not, my brother?

ABEL.

Why wilt thou wear this gloom upon thy brow,
Which can avail thee nothing, save to rouse
The Eternal anger?

ADAH.

My beloved Cain,
Wilt thou frown even on me?

CAIN.

No, Adah! no;
I fain would be alone a little while.
Abel, I'm sick at heart; but it will pass:
Precede me, brother—I will follow shortly.
And you, too, sisters, tarry not behind;
Your gentleness must not be harshly met:
I 'll follow you anon.

ADAH.

If not, I will
Return to seek you here.

ABEL.

The peace of God
Be on your spirit, brother!

[*Exit* ABEL, ZILLAH, *and* ADAH.

CAIN (*solus*).

And this is
Life!—Toil! and wherefore should I toil?—because
My father could not keep his place in Eden.
What had *I* done in this?—I was unborn,
I sought not to be born; nor love the state
To which that birth has brought me. Why did he
Yield to the serpent and the woman? or,
Yielding, why suffer? What was there in this?
The tree was planted, and why not for him?
If not, why place him near it, where it grew,
The fairest in the centre? They have but
One answer to all questions, «'t was *his* will,
And *he* is good.» How know I that? Because
He is all-powerful must all-good, too, follow?
I judge but by the fruits—and they are bitter—
Which I must feed on for a fault not mine.
Whom have we here?—A shape like to the angels,
Yet of a sterner and a sadder aspect
Of spiritual essence: why do I quake?
Why should I fear him more than other spirits,
Whom I see daily wave their fiery swords
Before the gates round which I linger oft,
In twilight's hour, to catch a glimpse of those
Gardens which are my just inheritance,
Ere the night closes o'er the inhibited walls
And the immortal trees which overtop
The cherubim-defended battlements?
If I shrink not from these, the fire-arm'd angels,
Why should I quail from him who now approaches?
Yet he seems mightier far than them, nor less
Beauteous, and yet not all as beautiful
As he hath been, and might be: sorrow seems
Half of his immortality. And is it
So? and can aught grieve save humanity?
He cometh.

Enter LUCIFER.

LUCIFER.

Mortal!

CAIN.

Spirit, who art thou?

LUCIFER.

Master of spirits.

CAIN.

And being so, canst thou
Leave them, and walk with dust?

LUCIFER.

I know the thoughts
Of dust, and feel for it, and with you.

CAIN.

How!
You know my thoughts?

LUCIFER.

They are the thoughts of all
Worthy of thought;—'t is your immortal part
Which speaks within you.

CAIN.

What immortal part?
This has not been reveal'd: the tree of life
Was withheld from us by my father's folly,
While that of knowledge, by my mother's haste,
Was pluck'd too soon; and all the fruit is death!

LUCIFER.

They have deceived thee; thou shalt live.

CAIN.

I live,
But live to die: and, living, see no thing
To make death hateful, save an innate clinging,
A loathsome and yet all invincible
Instinct of life, which I abhor, as I
Despise myself, yet cannot overcome—
And so I live. Would I had never lived!

LUCIFER.

Thou livest, and must live for ever: think not
The earth, which is thine outward cov'ring, is
Existence—it will cease, and thou wilt be
No less than thou art now.

CAIN.

No *less!* and why
No more?

LUCIFER.

It may be thou shalt be as we.

CAIN.

And ye?

LUCIFER.

Are everlasting.

CAIN.

Are ye happy?

LUCIFER.

We are mighty.

CAIN.

Are ye happy?

LUCIFER.

No: art thou?

CAIN.

How should I be so? Look on me!

LUCIFER.

Poor clay!
And thou pretendest to be wretched! Thou!

CAIN.

I am:—and thou, with all thy might, what art thou?

LUCIFER.

One who aspired to be what made thee, and
Would not have made thee what thou art.

CAIN.

Ah!
Thou look'st almost a god; and—

LUCIFER.

I am none:
And having fail'd to be one, would be nought
Save what I am. He conquer'd; let him reign!

CAIN.

Who?

LUCIFER.

Thy sire's Maker, and the earth's.

CAIN.

And heaven's,
And all that in them is. So I have heard
His seraphs sing; and so my father saith.

LUCIFER.

They say—what they must sing and say, on pain
Of being that which I am—and thou art—
Of spirits and of men.

CAIN.

And what is that?

LUCIFER.

Souls who dare use their immortality—
Souls who dare look the Omnipotent tyrant in
His everlasting face, and tell him, that
His evil is not good! If he has made,
As he saith—which I know not, nor believe—
But, if he made us—he cannot unmake:
We are immortal!—nay, he 'd *have* us so,

That he may torture:—let him! He is great—
But, in his greatness, is no happier than
We in our conflict! Goodness would not make
Evil; and what else hath he made? But let him
Sit on his vast and solitary throne,
Creating worlds, to make eternity
Less burthensome to his immense existence
And unparticipated solitude!
Let him crowd orb on orb: he is alone
Indefinite, indissoluble tyrant!
Could he but crush himself, 't were the best boon
He ever granted: but let him reign on
And multiply himself in misery!
Spirits and men, at least we sympathise;
And, suffering in concert, make our pangs,
Innumerable, more endurable,
By the unbounded sympathy of all—
With all! But *He!* so wretched in his height,
So restless in his wretchedness, must still
Create, and re-create———

CAIN.

Thou speak'st to me of things which long have swum
In visions through my thought: I never could
Reconcile what I saw with what I heard.
My father and my mother talk to me
Of serpents, and of fruits and trees: I see
The gates of what they call their Paradise
Guarded by fiery-sworded cherubim,
Which shut them out, and me: I feel the weight
Of daily toil, and constant thought: I look
Around a world where I seem nothing, with
Thoughts which arise within me, as if they
Could master all things:—but I thought alone
This misery was *mine*.—My father is
Tamed down; my mother has forgot the mind
Which made her thirst for knowledge at the risk
Of an eternal curse; my brother is
A watching shepherd boy, who offers up
The firstlings of the flock to him who bids
The earth yield nothing to us without sweat;
My sister Zillah sings an earlier hymn
Than the bird's matins; and my Adah, my
Own and beloved, she too understands not
The mind which overwhelms me: never till
Now met I aught to sympathise with me.
'T is well—I rather would consort with spirits.

LUCIFER.

And hadst thou not been fit by thine own soul
For such companionship, I would not now
Have stood before thee as I am: a serpent
Had been enough to charm ye, as before.

CAIN.

Ah! didst *thou* tempt my mother?

LUCIFER.

I tempt none,
Save with the truth: was not the tree, the tree
Of knowledge? and was not the tree of life
Still fruitful? Did *I* bid her pluck them not?
Did *I* plant things prohibited within
The reach of beings innocent, and curious
By their own innocence? I would have made ye
Gods; and even He who thrust ye forth, so thrust ye
Because «ye should not eat the fruits of life,
And become gods as we.» Were those his words?

CAIN.

They were, as I have heard from those who heard them
In thunder.

LUCIFER.

Then who was the demon? He
Who would not let ye live, or he who would
Have made ye live for ever in the joy
And power of knowledge?

CAIN.

Would they had snatch'd both
The fruits, or neither!

LUCIFER.

One is yours already,
The other may be still.

CAIN.

How so?

LUCIFER.

By being
Yourselves, in your resistance. Nothing can
Quench the mind, if the mind will be itself
And centre of surrounding things—'t is made
To sway.

CAIN.

But didst thou tempt my parents?

LUCIFER.

I?
Poor clay! what should I tempt them for, or how?

CAIN.

They say the serpent was a spirit.

LUCIFER.

Who
Saith that? It is not written so on high:
The proud One will not so far falsify,
Though man's vast fears and little vanity
Would make him cast upon the spiritual nature
His own low failing. The snake was the snake—
No more; and yet not less than those he tempted,
In nature being earth also—*more* in *wisdom*,
Since he could overcome them, and foreknew
The knowledge fatal to their narrow joys.
Think'st thou I 'd take the shape of things that die?

CAIN.

But the thing had a demon?

LUCIFER.

He but woke one
In those he spake to with his forky tongue.
I tell thee that the serpent was no more
Than a mere serpent: ask the cherubim
Who guard the tempting tree. When thousand ages
Have roll'd o'er your dead ashes, and your seed's,
The seed of the then world may thus array
Their earliest fault in fable, and attribute
To me a shape I scorn, as I scorn all
That bows to him who made things but to bend
Before his sullen, solé eternity;
But we, who see the truth, must speak it. Thy
Fond parents listen'd to a creeping thing,
And fell. For what should spirits tempt them? What
Was there to envy in the narrow bounds
Of Paradise, that spirits who pervade
Space———but I speak to thee of what thou know'st not,
With all thy tree of knowledge.

CAIN.

But thou canst not
Speak aught of knowledge which I would not know,
And do not thirst to know, and bear a mind
To know.

LUCIFER.

And heart to look on?

CAIN.

Be it proved.

LUCIFER.

Dar'st thou to look on Death?

CAIN.

He has not yet
Been seen.

LUCIFER.

But must be undergone.

CAIN.

My father
Says he is something dreadful, and my mother
Weeps when he 's named; and Abel lifts his eyes
To heaven, and Zillah casts hers to the earth,
And sighs a prayer; and Adah looks on me,
And speaks not.

LUCIFER.

And thou?

CAIN.

Thoughts unspeakable
Crowd in my breast to burning, when I hear
Of this almighty Death, who is, it seems,
Inevitable. Could I wrestle with him?
I wrestled with the lion, when a boy,
In play, till he ran roaring from my gripe.

LUCIFER.

It has no shape, but will absorb all things
That bear the form of earth-born being.

CAIN.

Ah!
I thought it was a being: who could do
Such evil things to beings save a being?

LUCIFER.

Ask the Destroyer.

CAIN.

Who?

LUCIFER.

The Maker—call him
Which name thou wilt; he makes but to destroy.

CAIN.

I knew not that, yet thought it, since I heard
Of death: although I know not what it is,
Yet it seems horrible. I have look'd out
In the vast desolate night in search of him;
And, when I saw gigantic shadows in
The umbrage of the walls of Eden, chequer'd
By the far-flashing of the cherubs' swords,
I watch'd for what I thought his coming; for
With fear rose longing in my heart to know
What 't was which shook us all—but nothing came.
And then I turn'd my weary eyes from off
Our native and forbidden Paradise,
Up to the lights above us, in the azure,
Which are so beautiful: shall they, too, die?

LUCIFER.

Perhaps—but long outlive both thine and thee.

CAIN.

I 'm glad of that; I would not have them die,
They are so lovely What is death? I fear,
I feel, it is a dreadful thing; but what,
I cannot compass: 't is denounced against us,
Both them who sinn'd and sinn'd not, as an ill—
What ill?

LUCIFER.

To be resolved into the earth.

CAIN.

But shall I know it?

LUCIFER.

As I know not death,
I cannot answer.

CAIN.

Were I quiet earth,
That were no evil: would I ne'er had been
Aught else but dust!

LUCIFER.

That is a grov'ling wish,
Less than thy father's, for he wish'd to know.

CAIN.

But not to live, or wherefore pluck'd he not
The life-tree?

LUCIFER.

He was hinder'd.

CAIN.

Deadly error!
Not to snatch first that fruit: but ere he pluck'd
The knowledge, he was ignorant of death.
Alas! I scarcely now know what it is,
And yet I fear it—fear I know not what!

LUCIFER.

And I who know all things, fear nothing: see
What is true knowledge.

CAIN.

Wilt thou teach me all?

LUCIFER.

Ay, upon one condition.

CAIN.

Name it.

LUCIFER.

That
Thou dost fall down and worship me—thy Lord.

CAIN.

Thou art not the Lord my father worships.

LUCIFER.

No.

CAIN.

His equal?

LUCIFER.

No;—I have nought in common with him!
Nor would: I would be aught above—beneath—
Aught save a sharer or a servant of
His power. I dwell apart; but I am great:—
Many there are who worship me and more
Who shall—be thou amongst the first.

CAIN.

I never
As yet have bow'd unto my father's God,
Although my brother Abel oft implores
That I would join with him in sacrifice:—
Why should I bow to thee?

LUCIFER.

Hast thou ne'er bow'd
To him?

CAIN.

Have I not said it?—need I say it?
Could not thy mighty knowledge teach thee that?

LUCIFER.

He who bows not to him has bow'd to me!

CAIN.

But I will bend to neither.

LUCIFER.

Ne'er the less,
Thou art my worshipper: not worshipping
Him makes thee mine the same.

CAIN.

And what is that?

LUCIFER.

Thou 'lt know here—and hereafter.

CAIN.

Let me but
Be taught the mystery of my being.

LUCIFER.

Follow
Where I will lead thee.

CAIN.

But I must retire
To till the earth—for I had promised——

LUCIFER.

What?

CAIN.

To cull some first fruits.

LUCIFER.

Why?

CAIN.

To offer up
With Abel on an altar.

LUCIFER.

Saidst thou not
Thou ne'er hadst bent to him who made thee?

CAIN.

Yes—
But Abel's earnest prayer has wrought upon me;
The offering is more his than mine—and Adah——

LUCIFER.

Why dost thou hesitate?

CAIN.

She is my sister,
Born on the same day, of the same womb; and
She wrung from me, with tears, this promise, and
Rather than see her weep, I would, methinks,
Bear all—and worship aught.

LUCIFER.

Then follow me!

CAIN.

I will.

Enter ADAH.

ADAH.

My brother, I have come for thee;
It is our hour of rest and joy—and we
Have less without thee. Thou hast labour'd not
This morn; but I have done thy task; the fruits
Are ripe, and glowing as the light which ripens:
Come away.

CAIN.

See'st thou not?

ADAH.

I see an angel;
We have seen many: will he share our hour
Of rest?—he is welcome.

CAIN.

But he is not like
The angels we have seen.

ADAH.

Are there, then, others?
But he is welcome, as they were: they deign'd
To be our guests—will he?

CAIN (*to Lucifer*).

Wilt thou?

LUCIFER.

I ask
Thee to be mine.

CAIN.

I must away with him.

ADAH.

And leave us?

CAIN.

Ay.

ADAH.

And *me*?

CAIN.

Beloved Adah!

ADAH.

Let me go with thee.

LUCIFER.

No, she must not.

ADAH.

Who
Art thou that steppest between heart and heart?

CAIN.

He is a god.

ADAH.

How know'st thou!

CAIN.

He speaks like
A god.

ADAH.

So did the serpent, and it lied.

LUCIFER.

Thou errest, Adah!—was not the tree that
Of knowledge?

ADAH.

Ay—to our eternal sorrow.

LUCIFER.

And yet that grief is knowledge—so he lied not:
And if he did betray you, 'twas with truth;
And truth in its own essence cannot be
But good.

ADAH.

But all we know of it has gather'd
Evil on ill: expulsion from our home,
And dread, and toil, and sweat, and heaviness;
Remorse of that which was, and hope of that
Which cometh not. Cain! walk not with this spirit.
Bear with what we have borne, and love me—I
Love thee.

LUCIFER.

More than thy mother and thy sire?

ADAH.

I do. Is that a sin, too?

LUCIFER.

No, not yet;
It one day will be in your children.

ADAH.

What!
Must not my daughter love her brother Enoch?

LUCIFER.

Not as thou lovest Cain!

ADAH.

Oh, my God!
Shall they not love and bring forth things that love
Out of their love? have they not drawn their milk

Out of this bosom? was not he, their father,
Born of the same sole womb, in the same hour
With me? did we not love each other? and,
In multiplying our being, multiply
Things which will love each other as we love
Them?—And as I love thee, my Cain! go not
Forth with this spirit; he is not of ours.

LUCIFER.

The sin I speak of is not of my making,
And cannot be a sin in you—whate'er
It seem in those who will replace ye in
Mortality.

ADAH.

What is the sin which is not
Sin in itself? Can circumstance make sin
Or virtue?—if it doth, we are the slaves
Of——

LUCIFER.

Higher things than ye are slaves: and higher
Than them or ye would be so, did they not
Prefer an independency of torture
To the smooth agonies of adulation
In hymns and harpings, and self-seeking prayers
To that which is omnipotent, because
It is omnipotent, and not from love,
But terror and self-hope.

ADAH.

Omnipotence
Must be all goodness.

LUCIFER.

Was it so in Eden?

ADAH.

Fiend! tempt me not with beauty; thou art fairer
Than was the serpent, and as false.

LUCIFER.

As true.
Ask Eve, your mother; bears she not the knowledge
Of good and evil?

ADAH.

Oh, my mother! thou
Hast pluck'd a fruit more fatal to thine offspring
Than to thyself; thou at the least hast past
Thy youth in Paradise, in innocent
And happy intercourse with happy spirits;
But we, thy children, ignorant of Eden,
Are girt about by demons, who assume
The words of God, and tempt us with our own
Dissatisfied and curious thoughts—as thou
Wert work'd on by the snake, in thy most flush'd
And heedless, harmless wantonness of bliss.
I cannot answer this immortal thing
Which stands before me; I cannot abhor him;
I look upon him with a pleasing fear,
And yet I fly not from him: in his eye
There is a fastening attraction which
Fixes my fluttering eyes on his; my heart
Beats quick; he awes me, and yet draws me near,
Nearer and nearer: Cain—Cain—save me from him!

CAIN.

What dreads my Adah? This is no ill spirit.

ADAH.

He is not God—nor God's: I have beheld
The cherubs and the seraphs; he looks not
Like them.

CAIN.

But there are spirits loftier still—
The archangels.

LUCIFER.

And still loftier than the archangels.

ADAH.

Ay—but not blessed.

LUCIFER.

If the blessedness
Consists in slavery—no.

ADAH.

I have heard it said,
The seraphs *love most*—cherubim *know most*—
And this should be a cherub—since he loves not.

LUCIFER.

And if the higher knowledge quenches love,
What must *he be* you cannot love when known?
Since the all-knowing cherubim love least,
The seraphs' love can be but ignorance:
That they are not compatible, the doom
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.
Choose betwixt love and knowledge—since there is
No other choice: your sire hath chosen already;
His worship is but fear.

ADAH.

Oh, Cain! choose love.

CAIN.

For thee, my Adah, I choose not—it was
Born with me—but I love nought else.

ADAH.

Our parents?

CAIN.

Did they love us when they snatch'd from the tree
That which hath driven us all from Paradise?

ADAH.

We were not born then—and if we had been,
Should we not love them and our children, Cain?

CAIN.

My little Enoch! and his lisping sister!
Could I but deem them happy, I would half
Forget——but it can never be forgotten
Through thrice a thousand generations! never
Shall men love the remembrance of the man
Who sow'd the seed of evil and mankind
In the same hour! They pluck'd the tree of science
And sin—and not content with their own sorrow,
Begot *me*—*thee*—and all the few that are,
And all the unnumber'd and innumerable
Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,
To inherit agonies accumulated
By ages!—And *I* must be sire of such things!
Thy beauty and thy love—my love and joy,
The rapturous moment and the placid hour,
All we love in our children and each other,
But lead them and ourselves through many years
Of sin and pain—or few, but still of sorrow,
Intercheck'd with an instant of brief pleasure,
To Death—the unknown! Methinks the tree of knowledge
Hath not fulfill'd its promise:—if they sinn'd,
At least they ought to have known all things that are
Of knowledge—and the mystery of death.
What do they know?—that they are miserable.
What need of snakes and fruits to teach us that!

ADAH.

I am not wretched, Cain, and if thou
Wert happy—

CAIN.

Be thou happy then alone—

I will have nought to do with happiness,
Which humbles me and mine.

ADAH.

Alone I could not,
Nor *would* be happy: but with those around us,
I think I could be so, despite of death,
Which, as I know it not, I dread not, though
It seems an awful shadow—if I may
Judge from what I have heard.

LUCIFER.

And thou couldst not
Alone, thou say'st, be happy?

ADAH.

Alone! Oh, my God!
Who could be happy and alone, or good?
To me my solitude seems sin; unless
When I think how soon I shall see my brother,
His brother, and our children, and our parents.

LUCIFER.

Yet thy God is alone; and is he happy?
Lonely and good?

ADAH.

He is not so; he hath
The angels and the mortals to make happy,
And thus becomes so in diffusing joy:
What else can joy be but the spreading joy?

LUCIFER.

Ask of your sire, the exile fresh from Eden;
Or of his first-born son; ask your own heart,
It is not tranquil.

ADAH.

Alas! no; and you—
Are you of heaven?

LUCIFER.

If I am not, inquire
The cause of this all-spreading happiness
(Which you proclaim) of the all-great and good
Maker of life and living things; it is
His secret, and he keeps it. We must bear,
And some of us resist, and both in vain,
His seraphs say; but it is worth the trial,
Since better may not be without: there is
A wisdom in the spirit, which directs
To right, as in the dim blue air the eye
Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon
The star which watches, welcoming the morn.

ADAH.

It is a beautiful star; I love it for
Its beauty.

LUCIFER.

And why not adore?

ADAH.

Our father
Adores the Invisible only.

LUCIFER.

But the symbols
Of the Invisible are the loveliest
Of what is visible; and yon bright star
Is leader of the host of heaven.

ADAH.

Our father
Saith that he has beheld the God himself
Who made him and our mother.

LUCIFER.

Hast *thou* seen him?

ADAH.

Yes—in his works.

LUCIFER.

But in his being?

ADAH.

No—
Save in my father, who is God's own image;
Or in his angels, who are like to thee—
And brighter, yet less beautiful and powerful
In seeming: as the silent sunny noon,
All light, they look upon us; but thou seem'st
Like an ethereal night, where long white clouds
Streak the deep purple, and unnumber'd stars
Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault
With things that look as if they would be suns;
So beautiful, unnumber'd, and endearing,
Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,
They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost thou.
Thou seem'st unhappy; do not make us so,
And I will weep for thee.

LUCIFER.

Alas! those tears!
Couldst thou but know what oceans will be shed—

ADAH.

By me?

LUCIFER.

By all.

ADAH.

What all?

LUCIFER.

The million millions—
Thy myriad myriads—the all-peopled earth—
The unpeopled earth—and the o'er-peopled Hell,
Of which thy bosom is the germ.

ADAH.

Oh Cain!
This spirit curseth us.

CAIN.

Let him say on;
Him will I follow.

ADAH.

Whither?

LUCIFER.

To a place
Whence he shall come back to thee in an hour;
But in that hour see things of many days.

ADAH.

How can that be?

LUCIFER.

Did not your Maker make
Out of old worlds this new one in few days?
And cannot I, who aided in this work,
Show in an hour what he hath made in many,
Or hath destroy'd in few?

CAIN.

Lead on.

ADAH.

Will he
In sooth return within an hour?

LUCIFER.

He shall.
With us acts are exempt from time, and we
Can crowd eternity into an hour,
Or stretch an hour into eternity:
We breathe not by a mortal measurement—
But that 's a mystery. Cain, come on with me.

ADAH.

Will he return?

LUCIFER.

Ay, woman! he alone
Of mortals from that place (the first and last
Who shall return, save ONE)—shall come back to thee
To make that silent and expectant world
As populous as this: at present there
Are few inhabitants.

ADAH.

Where dwellest thou?

LUCIFER.

Throughout all space. Where should I dwell? Where are
Thy God or Gods—there am I; all things are
Divided with me; life and death—and time—
Eternity—and heaven and earth—and that
Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with
Those who once peopled or shall people both—
These are my realms! So that I do divide
His, and possess a kingdom which is not
His. If I were not that which I have said,
Could I stand here? His angels are within
Your vision.

ADAH.

So they were when the fair serpent
Spoke with our mother first.

LUCIFER.

Cain! thou hast heard.
If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate
That thirst: nor ask thee to partake of fruits
Which shall deprive thee of a single good
The conqueror has left thee. Follow me.

CAIN.

Spirit, I have said it. [*Exeunt* LUCIFER *and* CAIN.

ADAH (*follows, exclaiming*)

Cain! my brother! Cain!

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The Abyss of Space.

CAIN.

I tread on air, and sink not; yet I fear
To sink.

LUCIFER.

Have faith in me, and thou shalt be
Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.

CAIN.

Can I do so without impiety?

LUCIFER.

Believe—and sink not! doubt—and perish! thus
Would run the edict of the other God,
Who names me demon to his angels; they
Echo the sound to miserable things,
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,
Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem
Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them
In their abasement. I will have none such:
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be
Amerced, for doubts beyond thy little life,
With torture of *my* dooming. There will come
An hour, when toss'd upon some water-drops,
A man shall say to a man, "Believe in me,
And walk the waters;" and the man shall walk
The billows and be safe. *I* will not say
Believe in *me*, as a conditional creed
To save thee; but fly with me o'er the gulf
Of space an equal flight, and I will show
What thou dar'st not deny, the history
Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

CAIN.

Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,
Is yon our earth?

LUCIFER.

Dost thou not recognize
The dust which form'd your father?

CAIN.

Can it be?
Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,
With an inferior circlet near it still,
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night?
Is this our Paradise? Where are its walls,
And they who guard them?

LUCIFER.

Point me out the site
Of Paradise.

CAIN.

How should I? As we move
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,
And as it waxes little, and then less,
Gathers a halo round it, like the light
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise:
Methinks they both, as we recede from them,
Appear to join the innumerable stars
Which are around us; and, as we move on,
Increase their myriads.

LUCIFER.

And if there should be
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited
By greater things, and they themselves far more
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,
Though multiplied to animated atoms,
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,
What wouldst thou think?

CAIN.

I should be proud of thought
Which knew such things.

LUCIFER.

But if that high thought were
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and,
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,
All foul and fulsome, and the very best
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,
A most enervating and filthy cheat
To lure thee on to the renewal of
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be
As frail, and few so happy——

CAIN.

Spirit! I
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing,
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of
A hideous heritage I owe to them
No less than life; a heritage not happy,
If I may judge till now. But, spirit, if
It be as thou hast said (and I within
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),
Here let me die: for to give birth to those

Who can but suffer many years, and die,
Methinks, is merely propagating death,
And multiplying murder.

LUCIFER.

Thou canst not
All die—there is what must survive.

CAIN.

The Other
Spake not of this unto my father, when
He shut him forth from Paradise, with death
Written upon his forehead. But at least
Let what is mortal of me perish, that
I may be in the rest as angels are.

LUCIFER.

I am angelic: wouldst thou be as I am?

CAIN.

I know not what thou art: I see thy power,
And see thou show'st me things beyond *my* power,
Beyond all power of my born faculties,
Although inferior still to my desires
And my conceptions.

LUCIFER.

What are they, which dwell
So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn
With worms in clay?

CAIN.

And what art thou, who dwellest
So haughtily in spirit, and canst range
Nature and immortality, and yet
Seem'st sorrowful?

LUCIFER.

I seem that which I am;
And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou
Wouldst be immortal?

CAIN.

Thou hast said, I must be
Immortal in despite of me. I knew not
This until lately—but since it must be,
Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.

LUCIFER.

Thou didst before I came upon thee.

CAIN.

How?

LUCIFER.

By suffering.

CAIN.

And must torture be immortal?

LUCIFER.

We and thy sons will try. But now, behold!
Is it not glorious?

CAIN.

Oh, thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased
And still-increasing lights! what are ye? what
Is this blue wilderness of interminable
Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an aerial universe of endless
Expansion, at which my soul aches to think,
Intoxicated with eternity?
Oh God! Oh Gods! or whatsoe'er ye are!
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents, or whatsoe'er
They may be! Let me die, as atoms die
(If that they die), or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is:
Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.

LUCIFER.

Art thou not nearer? look back to thine earth!

CAIN.

Where is it? I see nothing save a mass
Of most innumerable lights.

LUCIFER.

Look there!

CAIN.

I cannot see it.

LUCIFER.

Yet it sparkles still.

CAIN.

What, yonder?

LUCIFER.

Yea.

CAIN.

And wilt thou tell me so?
Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms
Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world
Which bears them.

LUCIFER.

Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,
Each bright and sparkling,—what dost think of them?

CAIN.

That they are beautiful in their own sphere,
And that the night, which makes both beautiful
The little shining fire-fly in its flight,
And the immortal star in its great course,
Must both be guided.

LUCIFER.

But by whom or what?

CAIN.

Show me.

LUCIFER.

Dar'st thou behold?

CAIN.

How know I what
I *dare* behold? as yet, thou hast shown nought
I dare not gaze on further.

LUCIFER.

On, then, with me.
Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal?

CAIN.

Why what are things?

LUCIFER.

Both partly: but what doth
Sit next thy heart?

CAIN.

The things I see.

LUCIFER.

But what
Sate nearest it?

CAIN.

The things I have not seen,
Nor ever shall—the mysteries of death.

LUCIFER.

What if I show to thee things which have died,
As I have shown thee much which cannot die?

CAIN.

Do so.

LUCIFER.

Away, then! on our mighty wings.

CAIN.

Oh! how we cleave the blue! The stars fade from us!
The earth! where is my earth? let me look on it,
For I was made of it.

LUCIFER.

T is now beyond thee,
Less in the universe than thou in it:
Yet deem not that thou canst escape it; thou
Shalt soon return to earth, and all its dust;
T is part of thy eternity, and mine.

CAIN.

Where dost thou lead me?

LUCIFER.

To what was before thee!
The phantasm of the world; of which thy world
Is but the wreck.

CAIN.

What! is it not then new?

LUCIFER.

No more than life is: and that was ere thou
Or *I* were, or the things which seem to us
Greater than either: many things will have
No end; and some, which would pretend to have
Had no beginning, have had one as mean
As thou; and mightier things have been extinct
To make way for much meaner than we can
Surmise; for *moments* only and the *space*
Have been and must be all *unchangeable*.
But changes make not death, except to clay;
But thou art clay—and canst but comprehend
That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.

CAIN.

Clay, spirit! What thou wilt, I can survey.

LUCIFER.

Away, then!

CAIN.

But the lights fade from me fast,
And some till now grew larger as we approach'd,
And wore the look of worlds.

LUCIFER.

And such they are.

CAIN.

And Edens in them?

LUCIFER.

It may be.

CAIN.

And men?

LUCIFER.

Yea, or things higher.

CAIN.

Ay! and serpents too?

LUCIFER.

Wouldst thou have men without them? must no reptiles
Breathe, save the erect ones?

CAIN.

How the lights recede!
Where fly we?

LUCIFER.

To the world of phantoms, which
Are beings past, and shadows still to come.

CAIN.

But it grows dark, and dark—the stars are gone!

LUCIFER.

And yet thou seest.

CAIN.

T is a fearful light!
No sun, no moon, no lights innumerable.
The very blue of the empurpled night
Fades to a dreary twilight; yet I see
Huge dusky masses, but unlike the worlds
We were approaching, which, begirt with light,
Seem'd full of life even when their atmosphere
Of light gave way, and show'd them taking shapes
Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains;
And some emitting sparks, and some displaying
Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt
With luminous belts, and floating moons, which took
Like them the features of fair earth:—instead,
All here seems dark and dreadful.

LUCIFER.

But distinct.
Thou seekest to behold death, and dead things?

CAIN.

I seek it not; but as I know there are
Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and me,
And all that we inherit, liable
To such, I would behold at once, what I
Must one day see perforce.

LUCIFER.

Behold!

CAIN.

T is darkness.

LUCIFER.

And so it shall be ever; but we will
Unfold its gates!

CAIN.

Enormous vapours roll
Apart—what 's this?

LUCIFER.

Enter!

CAIN.

Can I return?

LUCIFER.

Return! be sure: how else should death be peopled?
Its present realm is thin to what it will be,
Through thee and thine.

CAIN.

The clouds still open wide
And wider, and make widening circles round us.

LUCIFER.

Advance!

CAIN.

And thou!

LUCIFER.

Fear not—without me thou
Couldst not have gone beyond thy world. On! on!

They disappear through the clouds.

SCENE II.

Hades.

Enter LUCIFER *and* CAIN.

CAIN.

How silent and how vast are these dim worlds!
For they seem more than one, and yet more peopled
Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which swung
So thickly in the upper air, that I

Had deem'd them rather the bright populace
Of some all unimaginable heaven
Than things to be inhabited themselves,
But that on drawing near them I beheld
Their swelling into palpable immensity
Of matter, which seem'd made for life to dwell on,
Rather than life itself. But here, all is
So shadowy and so full of twilight, that
It speaks of a day past.

LUCIFER.

It is the realm
Of death.—Wouldst have it present?

CAIN.

Till I know
That which it really is, I cannot answer.
But if it be as I have heard my father
Deal out in his long homilies, 't is a thing—
Oh God! I dare not think on 't! Cursed be
He who invented life that leads to death!
Or the dull mass of life, that being life
Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it—
Even for the innocent!

LUCIFER.

Dost thou curse thy father?

CAIN.

Cursed he not me in giving me my birth?
Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring
To pluck the fruit forbidden?

LUCIFER.

Thou say'st well:
The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and thee—
But for thy sons and brother!

CAIN.

Let them share it
With me, their sire and brother! What else is
Bequeath'd to me?-I leave them my inheritance.
Oh ye interminable gloomy realms
Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,
Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all
Mighty and melancholy—what are ye?
Live ye, or have ye lived?

LUCIFER.

Somewhat of both.

CAIN.

Then what is death?

LUCIFER.

What? Hath not He who made ye
Said 't is another life?

CAIN.

Till now He hath
Said nothing, save that all shall die.

LUCIFER.

Perhaps
He one day will unfold that further secret.

CAIN.

Happy the day!

LUCIFER.

Yes, happy! when unfolded
Through agonies unspeakable, and clogg'd
With agonies eternal, to innumerable
Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,
All to be animated for this only!

CAIN.

What are these mighty phantoms which I see
Floating around me?—they wear not the form
Of the intelligences I have seen
Round our regretted and unenter'd Eden,
Nor wear the form of man as I have view'd it
In Adam's, and in Abel's, and in mine,
Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's;
And yet they have an aspect, which, though not
Of men nor angels, looks like something, which,
If not the last, rose higher than the first,
Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full
Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable
Shape; for I never saw such. They bear not
The wing of seraph, nor the face of man,
Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that is
Now breathing; mighty yet and beautiful
As the most beautiful and mighty which
Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce
Can call them living.

LUCIFER.

Yet they lived.

CAIN.

Where?

LUCIFER.

Where
Thou livest.

CAIN.

When?

LUCIFER.

On what thou callest earth
They did inhabit.

CAIN.

Adam is the first.

LUCIFER.

Of thine, I grant thee—but too mean to be
The last of these.

CAIN.

And what are they?

LUCIFER.

That which
Thou shalt be.

CAIN.

But what *were* they?

LUCIFER.

Living, high,
Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,
As much superior unto all thy sire,
Adam, could e'er have been in Eden, as
The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,
In its dull damp degeneracy, to
Thee and thy son;—and how weak they are, judge
By thy own flesh.

CAIN.

Ah me! and did *they* perish?

LUCIFER.

Yes, from their earth, as thou wilt fade from thine.

CAIN.

But was *mine* theirs?

LUCIFER.

It was.

CAIN.

But not as now:
It is too little and too lowly to
Sustain such creatures.

LUCIFER.

True, it was more glorious.

CAIN.

And wherefore did it fall?

LUCIFER.

Ask Him who fells.

CAIN.

But how?

LUCIFER.

By a most crushing and inexorable
Destruction and disorder of the elements,
Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos
Subsiding has struck out a world: such things,
Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity.—
Pass on, and gaze upon the past.

CAIN.

'T is awful!

LUCIFER.

And true. Behold these phantoms! they were once
Material as thou art.

CAIN.

And must I be
Like them?

LUCIFER.

Let He who made thee answer that.
I show thee what thy predecessors are,
And what they *were* thou feelest, in degree
Inferior as thy petty feelings and
Thy pettier portion of the immortal part
Of high intelligence and earthly strength.
What ye in common have with what they had
Is life, and what ye *shall* have—death; the rest
Of your poor attributes is such as suits
Reptiles engender'd out of the subsiding
Slime of a mighty universe, crush'd into
A scarcely-yet shaped planet, peopled with
Things whose enjoyment was to be in blindness—
A Paradise of Ignorance, from which
Knowledge was barr'd as poison. But behold
What these superior beings are or were;
Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till
The earth, thy task—I'll waft thee there in safety.

CAIN.

No: I'll stay here.

LUCIFER.

How long?

CAIN.

For ever! Since
I must one day return here from the earth,
I rather would remain; I am sick of all
That dust has shown me—let me dwell in shadows.

LUCIFER.

It cannot be: thou now beholdest as
A vision that which is reality.
To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou
Must pass through what the things thou see'st have
pass'd—
The gates of death.

CAIN.

By what gate have we enter'd
Even now?

LUCIFER.

By mine! But, plighted to return,
My spirit buoys thee up to breathe in regions
Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on;
But do not think to dwell here till thine hour
Is come.

CAIN.

And these, too, can they ne'er repass
To earth again?

LUCIFER.

Their earth is gone for ever—
So changed by its convulsion, they would not
Be conscious to a single present spot
Of its new scarcely harden'd surface—'t was—
Oh, what a beautiful world it *was!*

CAIN.

And is;
It is not with the earth, though I must till it,
I feel at war, but that I may not profit
By what it bears of beautiful untoiling,
Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts
With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears
Of death and life.

LUCIFER.

What thy world is thou see'st,
But canst not comprehend the shadow of
That which it was.

CAIN.

And those enormous creatures,
Phantoms inferior in intelligence
(At least so seeming) to the things we have pass'd,
Resembling somewhat the wild habitants
Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest which
Roar nightly in the forest, but ten-fold
In magnitude and terror; taller than
The cherub-guarded walls of Eden, with
Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which fence them,
And tusks projecting like the trees stripp'd of
Their bark and branches—what were they?

LUCIFER.

That which
The mammoth is in thy world;—but these lie
By myriads underneath its surface.

CAIN.

But
None on it?

LUCIFER.

No: for thy frail race to war
With them would render the curse on it useless—
T would be destroy'd so early.

CAIN.

But why *war?*

LUCIFER.

You have forgotten the denunciation
Which drove your race from Eden—war with all things,
And death to all things, and disease to most things,
And pangs, and bitterness; these were the fruits
Of the forbidden tree.

CAIN.

But animals—
Did they too eat of it, that they must die?

LUCIFER.

Your Maker told ye, *they* were made for you,
As you for him.—You would not have their doom
Superior to your own? Had Adam not
Fallen, all had stood.

CAIN.

Alas! the hopeless wretches!
They too must share my sire's fate, like his sons;
Like them, too, without having shared the apple;
Like them, too, without the so dear-bought *knowledge!*
It was a lying tree—for we *know* nothing.
At least it *promised knowledge* at the *price*
Of death—but *knowledge* still: but what *knows* man?

LUCIFER.

It may be death leads to the *highest* knowledge;
And being of all things the sole thing certain,
At least leads to the *surest* science: therefore
The tree was true, though deadly.

CAIN.

These dim realms!
I see them, but I know them not.

LUCIFER.

Because
Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot
Comprehend spirit wholly—but 't is something
To know there are such realms.

CAIN.

We knew already
That there was death.

LUCIFER.

But not what was beyond it.

CAIN.

Nor know I now.

LUCIFER.

Thou know'st that there is
A state, and many states beyond thine own—
And this thou knewest not this morn.

CAIN.

But all
Seems dim and shadowy.

LUCIFER.

Be content; it will
Seem clearer to thine immortality.

CAIN.

And yon immeasurable liquid space
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,
Which looks like water, and which I should deem
The river which flows out of Paradise
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bankless
And boundless and of an ethereal hue—
What is it?

LUCIFER.

There is still some such on earth,
Although inferior, and thy children shall
Dwell near it—'t is the fantasm of an ocean.

CAIN.

'T is like another world; a liquid sun—
And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er
Its shining surface?

LUCIFER.

Are its habitants,
The past leviathans.

CAIN.

And yon immense
Serpent, which rears his dripping mane and vasty
Head ten times higher than the haughtiest cedar
Forth from the abyss, looking as he could coil
Himself around the orbs we lately look'd on—
Is he not of the kind which bask'd beneath
The tree in Eden?

LUCIFER.

Eve, thy mother, best
Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.

CAIN.

This seems too terrible. No doubt the other
Had more of beauty.

LUCIFER.

Hast thou ne'er beheld him?

CAIN.

Many of the same kind (at least so call'd),
But never that precisely which persuaded
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.

LUCIFER.

Your father saw him not?

CAIN.

No: 't was my mother
Who tempted him—she tempted by the serpent.

LUCIFER.

Good man! whene'er thy wife, or thy sons' wives
Tempt thee or them to aught that 's new or strange,
Be sure thou see'st first who hath tempted *them*.

CAIN.

Thy precept comes too late: there is no more
For serpents to tempt woman to.

LUCIFER.

But there
Are some things still which woman may tempt man to,
And man tempt woman:—let thy sons look to it!
My counsel is a kind one; for 't is even
Given chiefly at my own expense: 't is true,
'T will not be follow'd, so there 's little lost.

CAIN.

I understand not this.

LUCIFER.

The happier thou!—
Thy world and thou are still too young! Thou thinkest
Thyself most wicked and unhappy: is it
Not so?

CAIN.

For crime I know not; but for pain,
I have felt much.

LUCIFER.

First-born of the first man!
Thy present state of sin—and thou art evil,
Of sorrow—and thou sufferest, are both Eden,
In all its innocence, compared to what
Thou shortly may'st be; and that state again,
In its redoubled wretchedness, a paradise
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulating
In generations like to dust (which they
In fact but add to), shall endure and do.—
Now let us back to earth!

CAIN.

And wherefore didst thou
Lead me here only to inform me this?

LUCIFER.

Was not thy quest for knowledge?

CAIN.

Yes: as being
The road to happiness.

LUCIFER.

If truth be so,
Thou hast it.

CAIN.

Then my father's God did well
When he prohibited the fatal tree.

LUCIFER.

But had done better in not planting it.
But ignorance of evil doth not save
From evil; it must still roll on the same,
A part of all things.

CAIN.

Not of all things. No:
I'll not believe it—for I thirst for good.

LUCIFER.

And who and what doth not? *Who* covets evil
For its own bitter sake?—*None*—nothing! 't is
The leaven of all life and lifelessness.

CAIN.

Within those glorious orbs which we behold,
Distant and dazzling, and innumerable,
Ere we came down into this phantom realm,
Ill cannot come; they are too beautiful.

LUCIFER.

Thou hast seen them from afar.

CAIN.

And what of that?
Distance can but diminish glory—they
When nearer must be more ineffable.

LUCIFER.

Approach the things of earth most beautiful,
And judge their beauty near.

CAIN.

I have done this—
The loveliest thing I know is loveliest nearest.

LUCIFER.

Then there must be delusion.—What is that,
Which being nearest to thine eyes is still
More beautiful than beauteous things remote?

CAIN.

My sister Adah.—All the stars of heaven,
The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb
Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world—
The hues of twilight—the sun's gorgeous coming—
His setting indescribable, which fills
My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold
Him sink, and feel my heart float softly with him
Along that western paradise of clouds—
The forest shade—the green bough—the bird's voice—
The vesper bird's, which seems to sing of love,
And mingles with the song of cherubim,
As the day closes over Eden's walls;—
All these are nothing to my eyes and heart,
Like Adah's face: I turn from earth and heaven
To gaze on it.

LUCIFER.

'T is frail as fair mortality,
In the first dawn and bloom of young creation
And earliest embraces of earth's parents,
Can make its offspring; still it is delusion.

CAIN.

You think so, being not her brother.

LUCIFER.

Mortal!
My brotherhood 's with those who have no children.

CAIN.

Then thou canst have no fellowship with us.

LUCIFER.

It may be that thine own shall be for me.
But if thou dost possess a beautiful
Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,
Why art thou wretched?

CAIN.

Why do I exist?
Why art *thou* wretched? why are all things so?
Even He who made us must be as the maker
Of things unhappy! To produce destruction
Can surely never be the task of joy,
And yet my sire says He 's omnipotent:
Then why is evil—He being good? I ask'd
This question of my father; and he said,
Because this evil only was the path
To good. Strange good, that must arise from out
Its deadly opposite. I lately saw
A lamb stung by a reptile: the poor suckling
Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain
And piteous bleating of its restless dam:
My father pluck'd some herbs, and laid them to
The wound; and by degrees the helpless wretch
Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain
The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous
Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.
Behold, my son! said Adam, how from evil
Springs good!

LUCIFER.

What didst thou answer?

CAIN.

Nothing; for
He is my father: but I thought, that 't were
A better portion for the animal
Never to have been *stung at all*, than to
Purchase renewal of its little life
With agonies unutterable, though
Dispell'd by antidotes.

LUCIFER.

But as thou saidst
Of all beloved things thou lovest her
Who shared thy mother's milk, and giveth hers
Unto thy children——

CAIN.

Most assuredly:
What should I be without her?

LUCIFER.

What am I?

CAIN.

Dost thou love nothing?

LUCIFER.

What does thy God love?

CAIN.

All things, my father says; but I confess
I see it not in their allotment here.

LUCIFER.

And therefore thou canst not see if *I* love
Or no, except some vast and general purpose,
To which particular things must melt like snows.

CAIN.

Snows! what are they?

LUCIFER.

Be happier in not knowing
What thy remoter offspring must encounter;
But bask beneath the clime which knows no winter!

CAIN.

But dost thou not love something like thyself?

LUCIFER.

And dost thou love *thyself*?

CAIN.

Yes, but love more
What makes my feelings more endurable,
And is more than myself, because I love it.

LUCIFER.

Thou lovest it, because 't is beautiful,
As was the apple in thy mother's eye;
And when it ceases to be so, thy love
Will cease, like any other appetite.

CAIN.

Cease to be beautiful! how can that be?

LUCIFER.

With time.

CAIN.

But time has past, and hitherto
Even Adam and my mother both are fair:
Not fair like Adah and the seraphim—
But very fair.

LUCIFER.

All that must pass away
In them and her.

CAIN.

I 'm sorry for it; but
Cannot conceive my love for her the less.
And when her beauty disappears, methinks
He who creates all beauty will lose more
Than me in seeing perish such a work.

LUCIFER.

I pity thee who lovest what must perish.

CAIN.

And I thee who lov'st nothing.

LUCIFER.

And thy brother—
Sits he not near thy heart?

CAIN.

Why should he not?

LUCIFER.

Thy father loves him well—so does thy God.

CAIN.

And so do I.

LUCIFER.

'T is well and meekly done.

CAIN.

Meekly!

LUCIFER.

He is the second born of flesh,
And is his mother's favourite.

CAIN.

Let him keep
Her favour, since the serpent was the first
To win it.

LUCIFER.

And his father's?

CAIN.

What is that
To me? should I not love that which all love?

LUCIFER.

And the Jehovah—the indulgent Lord,
And bounteous planter of barr'd Paradise—
He, too, looks smilingly on Abel.

CAIN.

I
Ne'er saw Him, and I know not if He smiles.

LUCIFER.

But you have seen his angels.

CAIN.

Rarely.

LUCIFER.

But
Sufficiently to see they love your brother;
His sacrifices are acceptable.

CAIN.

So be they! wherefore speak to me of this?

LUCIFER.

Because thou hast thought of this ere now.

CAIN.

And if I *have* thought, why recal a thought that——(*he pauses, as agitated*)—Spirit!
Here we are in *thy* world; speak not of *mine*.
Thou hast shown me wonders; thou hast shown me those
Mighty Pre-Adamites who walk'd the earth
Of which ours is the wreck; thou hast pointed out
Myriads of starry worlds, of which our own
Is the dim and remote companion, in
Infinity of life: thou hast shown me shadows
Of that existence with the dreaded name
Which my sire brought us—death; thou hast shown me much—
But not all: show me where Jehovah dwells,
In his especial Paradise—or *thine*:
Where is it?

LUCIFER.

Here, and o'er all space.

CAIN.

But ye
Have some allotted dwelling—as all things;
Clay has its earth, and other worlds their tenants;
All temporary breathing creatures their
Peculiar element; and things which have
Long ceased to breathe *our* breath, have theirs, thou say'st;
And the Jehovah and thyself have thine—
Ye do not dwell together?

LUCIFER.

No, we reign
Together, but our dwellings are asunder.

CAIN.

Would there were only one of ye! perchance
An unity of purpose might make union
In elements which seem now jarr'd in storms.
How came ye, being spirits, wise and infinite,
To separate? Are ye not as brethren in
Your essence, and your nature, and your glory?

LUCIFER.

Art thou not Abel's brother?

CAIN.

We are brethren,
And so we shall remain; but were it not so,
Is spirit like to flesh? can it fall out?
Infinity with immortality?
Jarring and turning space to misery—
For what?

LUCIFER.

To reign.

CAIN.

Did ye not tell me that
Ye are both eternal?

LUCIFER.

Yea!

CAIN.

And what I have seen,
Yon blue immensity, is boundless?

LUCIFER.

Ay.

CAIN.

And cannot ye both *reign* then?—is there not
Enough?—why should ye differ?

LUCIFER.

We *both* reign.

CAIN.

But one of you makes evil.

LUCIFER.

Which?

CAIN.

Thou! for
If thou canst do man good, why dost thou not?

LUCIFER.

And why not he who made? *I* made ye not;
Ye are *his* creatures, and not mine.

CAIN.

Then leave us
His creatures, as thou say'st we are, or show me
Thy dwelling, or *his* dwelling.

LUCIFER.

I could show thee
Both; but the time will come thou shalt see one
Of them for evermore.

CAIN.

And why not now?

LUCIFER.

Thy human mind hath scarcely grasp to gather
The little I have shown thee into calm
And clear thought; and *thou* wouldst go on aspiring
To the great double mysteries! the *two Principles!*
And gaze upon them on their secret thrones!
Dust! limit thy ambition, for to see
Either of these, would be for thee to perish!

CAIN.

And let me perish, so I see them!

LUCIFER.

There
The son of her who snatch'd the apple spake!
But thou wouldst only perish, and not see them;
That sight is for the other state.

CAIN.

Of death?

LUCIFER.

That is the prelude.

CAIN.

Then I dread it less,
Now that I know it leads to something definite.

LUCIFER.

And now I will convey thee to thy world,
Where thou shalt multiply the race of Adam,
Eat, drink, toil, tremble, laugh, weep, sleep, and die.

CAIN.

And to what end have I beheld these things
Which thou hast shown me?

LUCIFER.

Didst thou not require
Knowledge? And have I not, in what I show'd,
Taught thee to know thyself?

CAIN.

Alas! I seem
Nothing.

LUCIFER.

And this should be the human sum
Of knowledge, to know mortal nature's nothingness;
Bequeath that science to thy children, and
'T will spare them many tortures.

CAIN.

Haughty spirit!
Thou speak'st it proudly; but thyself, though proud,
Hast a superior.

LUCIFER.

No! By heaven, which He
Holds, and the abyss, and the immensity
Of worlds and life, which I hold with him—No!
I have a victor—true; but no superior.
Homage He has from all—but none from me:
I battle it against him, as I battled
In highest heaven. Through all eternity,
And the unfathomable gulfs of Hades,
And the interminable realms of space,
And the infinity of endless ages,
All, all, will I dispute! And world by world,
And star by star, and universe by universe
Shall tremble in the balance, till the great
Conflict shall cease, if ever it shall cease,
Which it ne'er shall, till he or I be quench'd!
And what can quench our immortality,
Or mutual and irrevocable hate?
He as a conqueror will call the conquer'd
Evil; but what will be the *good* He gives?
Were I the victor, *his* works would be deem'd
The only evil ones. And you, ye new
And scarce-born mortals, what have been his gifts
To you already in your little world?

CAIN.

But few; and some of those but bitter.

LUCIFER.

Back
With me, then, to thine earth, and try the rest
Of his celestial boons to ye and yours.
Evil and good are things in their own essence,
And not made good or evil by the giver;
But if He gives you good—so call him; if
Evil springs from *Him*, do not name it *mine*,
Till ye know better its true fount; and judge
Not by words, though of spirits, but the fruits
Of your existence, such as it must be.
One good gift has the fatal apple given—
Your *reason*:—let it not be over-sway'd
By tyrannous threats to force you into faith
'Gainst all external sense and inward feeling:
Think and endure,—and form an inner world
In your own bosom—where the outward fails:
So shall you nearer be the spiritual
Nature, and war triumphant with your own.

[*They disappear.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

The Earth near Eden, as in Act I.

Enter CAIN *and* ADAH.

ADAH.

Hush! tread softly, Cain.

CAIN.

I will; but wherefore?

ADAH.

Our little Enoch sleeps upon yon bed
Of leaves, beneath the cypress.

CAIN.

Cypress! 't is
A gloomy tree, which looks as if it mourn'd
O'er what it shadows; wherefore didst thou choose it
For our child's canopy?

ADAH.

Because its branches

Shut out the sun like night, and therefore seem'd
Fitting to shadow slumber.

CAIN.

Ay, the last—
And longest; but no matter—lead me to him.

[*They go up to the child.*

How lovely he appears! his little cheeks,
In their pure incarnation, vying with
The rose leaves strewn beneath them.

ADAH.

And his lips, too,
How beautifully parted! No, you shall not
Kiss him, at least not now: he will awake soon—
His hour of mid-day rest is nearly over,
But it were pity to disturb him till
'T is closed.

CAIN.

You have said well; I will contain
My heart till then. He smiles, and sleeps!—Sleep on
And smile, thou little, young inheritor
Of a world scarce less young: sleep on, and smile!
Thine are the hours and days when both are cheering
And innocent! *thou* hast not pluck'd the fruit—
Thou know'st not thou art naked! Must the time
Come thou shalt be amerced for sins unknown,
Which were not thine nor mine? But now sleep on!
His cheeks are reddening into deeper smiles,
And shining lids are trembling o'er his long
Lashes, dark as the cypress which waves o'er them;
Half open, from beneath them the clear blue
Laughs out, although in slumber. He must dream—
Of what? Of Paradise!—Ay! dream of it,
My disinherited boy! 'T is but a dream;
For never more thyself, thy sons, nor fathers,
Shall walk in that forbidden place of joy!

ADAH.

Dear Cain! Nay, do not whisper o'er our son
Such melancholy yearnings o'er the past:
Why wilt thou always mourn for paradise?
Can we not make another?

CAIN.

Where?

ADAH.

Here, or
Where'er thou wilt: where'er thou art, I feel not
The want of this so much regretted Eden.
Have I not thee, our boy, our sire, and brother,
And Zillah—our sweet sister, and our Eve,
To whom we owe so much besides our birth?

CAIN.

Yes, death, too, is amongst the debts we owe her.

ADAH.

Cain! that proud spirit, who withdrew thee hence,
Hath sadden'd thine still deeper. I had hoped
The promised wonders which thou hast beheld,
Visions, thou say'st, of past and present worlds,
Would have composed thy mind into the calm
Of a contented knowledge; but I see
Thy guide hath done thee evil: still I thank him,
And can forgive him all, that he so soon
Hath given thee back to us.

CAIN.

So soon?

ADAH.

'T is scarcely
Two hours since ye departed: two *long* hours
To *me*, but only *hours* upon the sun.

CAIN.

And yet I have approach'd that sun, and seen
Worlds which he once shone on, and never more
Shall light; and worlds he never lit: methought
Years had roll'd o'er my absence.

ADAH.

Hardly hours.

CAIN.

The mind then hath capacity of time,
And measures it by that which it beholds,
Pleasing or painful, little or almighty.
I had beheld the immemorial works
Of endless beings; skirr'd extinguish'd worlds;
And, gazing on eternity, methought
I had borrow'd more by a few drops of ages
From its immensity; but now I feel
My littleness again. Well said the spirit,
That I was nothing!

ADAH.

Wherefore said he so?
Jehovah said not that.

CAIN.

No: *He* contents him
With making us the *nothing* which we are;
And after flattering dust with glimpses of
Eden and immortality, resolves
It back to dust again—for what?

ADAH.

Thou know'st—
Even for our parents' error.

CAIN.

What is that
To us? they sinn'd, then *let them* die!

ADAH.

Thou hast not spoken well, nor is that thought
Thy own, but of the spirit who was with thee.
Would *I* could die for them, so *they* might live!

CAIN.

Why, so say I—provided that one victim
Might satiate the insatiable of life,
And that our little rosy sleeper there
Might never taste of death nor human sorrow,
Nor hand it down to those who spring from him.

ADAH.

How know we that some such atonement one day
May not redeem our race?

CAIN.

By sacrificing
The harmless for the guilty? what atonement
Were there? why, *we* are innocent: what have we
Done, that we must be victims for a deed
Before our birth, or need have victims to
Atone for this mysterious, nameless sin—
If it be such a sin to seek for knowledge?

ADAH.

Alas! thou sinnest now my Cain; thy words
Sound impious in mine ears.

CAIN.

Then leave me!

ADAH.

Never,
Though thy God left thee.

CAIN.

Say, what have we here?

ADAH.

Two altars, which our brother Abel made
During thine absence, whereupon to offer
A sacrifice to God on thy return.

CAIN.

And how knew *he*, that *I* would be so ready
With the burnt offerings, which he daily brings
With a meek brow, whose base humility
Shows more of fear than worship, as a bribe
To the Creator?

ADAH.

Surely, 't is well done.

CAIN.

One altar may suffice; *I* have no offering.

ADAH.

The fruits of the earth, the early, beautiful
Blossom and bud, and bloom of flowers, and fruits;
These are a goodly offering to the Lord,
Given with a gentle and a contrite spirit.

CAIN.

I have toil'd, and till'd, and sweaten in the sun
According to the curse:—must I do more?
For what should I be gentle? for a war
With all the elements ere they will yield
The bread we eat? For what must I be grateful?
For being dust, and groveling in the dust,
Till I return to dust? If I am nothing—
For nothing shall I be an hypocrite,
And seem well pleased with pain? For what should I
Be contrite? for my father's sin, already
Expiate with what we all have undergone,
And to be more than expiated by
The ages prophesied, upon our seed?
Little deems our young blooming sleeper, there,
The germs of an eternal misery
To myriads is within him! better 't were
I snatch'd him in his sleep, and dash'd him 'gainst
The rocks, than let him live to——

ADAH.

Oh, my God!
Touch not the child—my child! *thy* child! Oh Cain!

CAIN.

Fear not! for all the stars, and all the power
Which sways them, I would not accost yon infant
With ruder greeting than a father's kiss.

ADAH.

Then, why so awful in thy speech?

CAIN.

I said,
T were better that he ceased to live, than give
Life to so much of sorrow as he must
Endure, and, harder still, bequeath; but since
That saying jars you, let us only say—
T were better that he never had been born.

ADAH.

Oh, do not say so! Where were then the joys,
The mother's joys of watching, nourishing,
And loving him? Soft! he awakes. Sweet Enoch!
[*She goes to the child.*
Oh Cain! look on him; see how full of life,
Of strength, of bloom, of beauty, and of joy,
How like to me—how like to thee, when gentle,
For *then* we are *all* alike; is 't not so, Cain?
Mother, and sire, and son, our features are
Reflected in each other; as they are
In the clear waters, when *they* are *gentle*, and
When *thou* art *gentle*. Love us, then, my Cain!
And love thyself for our sakes, for we love thee.
Look! how he laughs and stretches out his arms,
And opens wide his blue eyes upon thine,
To hail his father; while his little form
Flutters as wing'd with joy. Talk not of pain!
The childless cherubs well might envy thee
The pleasures of a parent! Bless him, Cain!
As yet he hath no words to thank thee, but
His heart will, and thine own too.

CAIN.

Bless thee, boy!
If that a mortal blessing may avail thee,
To save thee from the serpent's curse!

ADAH.

It shall.
Surely a father's blessing may avert
A reptile subtlety.

CAIN.

Of that I doubt;
But bless him ne'er the less.

ADAH.

Our brother comes.

CAIN.

Thy brother Abel.

Enter ABEL.

ABEL.

Welcome, Cain! My brother,
The peace of God be on thee!

CAIN.

Abel! hail!

ABEL.

Our sister tells me that thou hast been wandering,
In high communion with a spirit, far
Beyond our wonted range. Was he of those
We have seen and spoken with, like to our father?

CAIN.

No.

ABEL.

Why then commune with him? he may be
A foe to the Most High.

CAIN.

And friend to man.
Has the Most High been so—if so you term him?

ABEL.

Term him! your words are strange to-day, my brother.
My sister Adah, leave us for a while—
We mean to sacrifice.

ADAH.

Farewell, my Cain;
But first embrace thy son. May his soft spirit,
And Abel's pious ministry, recal thee
To peace and holiness!

[*Exit* ADAH, *with her child.*

ABEL.

Where hast thou been?

CAIN.

I know not.

ABEL.

Nor what thou hast seen?

CAIN.

The dead,
The immortal, the unbounded, the omnipotent,
The overpowering mysteries of space—
The innumerable worlds that were and are—
A whirlwind of such overwhelming things,

Suns, moons, and earths, upon their loud-voiced spheres
Singing in thunder round me, as have made me
Unfit for mortal converse: leave me, Abel.

ABEL.

Thine eyes are flashing with unnatural light—
Thy cheek is flush'd with an unnatural hue—
Thy words are fraught with an unnatural sound—
What may this mean?

CAIN.

It means——I pray thee, leave me.

ABEL.

Not till we have pray'd and sacrificed together.

CAIN.

Abel, I pray thee, sacrifice alone—
Jehovah loves thee well.

ABEL.

Both well, I hope.

CAIN.

But thee the better: I care not for that;
Thou art fitter for his worship than I am:
Revere him, then—but let it be alone—
At least without me.

ABEL.

Brother, I should ill
Deserve the name of our great father's son,
If as my elder I revered thee not,
And in the worship of our God call'd not
On thee to join me, and precede me in
Our priesthood—'t is thy place.

CAIN.

But I have ne'er
Asserted it.

ABEL.

The more my grief; I pray thee
To do so now: thy soul seems labouring in
Some strong delusion; it will calm thee.

CAIN.

No;
Nothing can calm me more. *Calm!* say I? Never
Knew I what calm was in the soul, although
I have seen the elements still'd. My Abel, leave me!
Or let me leave thee to thy pious purpose.

ABEL.

Neither; we must perform our task together.
Spurn me not.

CAIN.

If it must be so——well, then,
What shall I do?

ABEL.

Choose one of those two altars.

CAIN.

Choose for me: they to me are so much turf
And stone.

ABEL.

Choose thou!

CAIN.

I have chosen.

ABEL.

'T is the highest,
And suits thee, as the elder. Now prepare
Thine offerings.

CAIN.

Where are thine?

ABEL.

Behold them here—
The firstlings of the flock, and fat thereof—
A shepherd's humble offering.

CAIN.

I have no flocks;
I am a tiller of the ground, and must
Yield what it yieldeth to my toil—its fruit:
[*He gathers fruits.*
Behold them in their various bloom and ripeness.
[*They dress their altars, and kindle a flame upon them.*

ABEL.

My brother, as the elder, offer first
Thy prayer and thanksgiving with sacrifice.

CAIN.

No—I am new to this; lead thou the way,
And I will follow—as I may.

ABEL (*kneeling*).

Oh God!
Who made us, and who breathed the breath of life
Within our nostrils, who hath blessed us,
And spared, despite our father's sin, to make
His children all lost, as they might have been,
Had not thy justice been so temper'd with
The mercy which is thy delight, as to
Accord a pardon like a paradise,
Compared with our great crimes:—Sole Lord of light!
Of good, and glory, and eternity;
Without whom all were evil, and with whom
Nothing can err, except to some good end
Of thine omnipotent benevolence—
Inscrutable, but still to be fulfill'd—
Accept from out thy humble first of shepherd's
First of the first-born flocks—an offering,
In itself nothing—as what offering can be
Aught unto thee?—but yet accept it for
The thanksgiving of him who spreads it in
The face of thy high heaven, bowing his own
Even to the dust, of which he is, in honour
Of thee, and of thy name, for evermore!

CAIN (*standing erect during this speech*).

Spirit! whate'er or whosoe'er thou art,
Omnipotent, it may be—and, if good,
Shown in the exemption of thy deeds from evil;
Jehovah upon earth! and God in heaven!
And it may be with other names, because
Thine attributes seem many, as thy works:
If thou must be propitiated with prayers,
Take them! If thou must be induced with altars,
And soften'd with a sacrifice, receive them!
Two beings here erect them unto thee.
If thou lovest blood, the shepherd's shrine, which smokes
On my right hand, hath shed it for thy service,
In the first of his flock, whose limbs now reek
In sanguinary incense to thy skies;
Of if the sweet and blooming fruits of earth,
And milder seasons, which the unstain'd turf
I spread them on now offers in the face
Of the broad sun which ripen'd them, may seem
Good to thee, inasmuch as they have not
Suffer'd in limb or life, and rather form
A sample of thy works, than supplication
To look on ours! If a shrine without victim,
And altar without gore, may win thy favour,
Look on it! and for him who dresseth it,
He is—such as thou mad'st him; and seeks nothing
Which must be won by kneeling: if he 's evil,
Strike him! thou art omnipotent, and may'st,—

For what can he oppose? If he be good,
Strike him, or spare him, as thou wilt! since all
Rests upon thee; and good and evil seem
To have no power themselves, save in thy will;
And whether that be good or ill I know not,
Not being omnipotent, nor fit to judge
Omnipotence, but merely to endure
Its mandate; which thus far I have endured.

[*The fire upon the altar of* ABEL *kindles into a column of the brightest flame, and ascends to heaven; while a whirlwind throws down the altar of* CAIN, *and scatters the fruits abroad upon the earth.*

ABEL (*kneeling*).

Oh, brother, pray! Jehovah 's wroth with thee!

CAIN.

Why so?

ABEL.

Thy fruits are scatter'd on the earth.

CAIN.

From earth they came, to earth let them return;
Their seed will bear fresh fruit there ere the summer:
Thy burnt flesh-offering prospers better; see
How heaven licks up the flames, when thick with blood!

ABEL.

Think not upon my offerings' acceptance,
But make another of thine own before
It is too late.

CAIN.

I will build no more altars,
Nor suffer any.—

ABEL (*rising*).

Cain! what meanest thou?

CAIN.

To cast down yon vile flatt'rer of the clouds,
The smoky harbinger of thy dull prayers—
Thine altar, with its blood of lambs and kids,
Which fed on milk, to be destroy'd in blood.

ABEL (*opposing him*).

Thou shalt not:—add not impious works to impious
Words! let that altar stand—'t is hallow'd now
By the immortal pleasure of Jehovah,
In his acceptance of the victims.

CAIN.

His!
His pleasure! what was his high pleasure in
The fumes of scorching flesh and smoking blood,
To the pain of the bleating mothers, which
Still yearn for their dead offspring? or the pangs
Of the sad ignorant victims underneath
Thy pious knife? Give way! this bloody record
Shall not stand in the sun, to shame creation!

ABEL.

Brother, give back! thou shalt not touch my altar
With violence: if that thou wilt adopt it,
To try another sacrifice, 't is thine.

CAIN.

Another sacrifice! Give way, or else
That sacrifice may be——

ABEL.

What meanest thou?

CAIN.

Give—
Give way! thy God loves blood!—then look to it:—
Give way, ere he hath *more!*

ABEL.

In *his* great name,
I stand between thee and the shrine which hath
Had his acceptance.

CAIN.

If thou lov'st thyself,
Stand back till I have strew'd this turf along
Its native soil:—else——

ABEL (*opposing him*).

I love God far more
Than life.

CAIN (*striking him with a brand, on the temples, which he snatches from the altar*).

Then take thy life unto thy God,
Since he loves lives.

ABEL (*falls*).

What hast thou done, my brother?

CAIN.

Brother!

ABEL.

Oh, God! receive thy servant, and
Forgive his slayer, for he knew not what
He did.—Cain, give me—give me thy hand; and tell
Poor Zillah——

CAIN (*after a moment's stupefaction*).

My hand! 't is all red, and with—
What?

[*A long pause.—Looking slowly round.*

Where am I? alone! Where 's Abel? where
Cain? Can it be that I am he? My brother,
Awake!—why liest thou so on the green earth?
'T is not the hour of slumber:—why so pale?
What hast thou?——thou wert full of life this morn!
Abel! I pray thee, mock me not! I smote
Too fiercely, but not fatally. Ah, why
Wouldst thou oppose me? This is mockery;
And only done to daunt me:—'t was a blow—
And but a blow. Stir—stir—nay, only stir!
Why, so—that 's well!—thou breath'st! breathe upon me!
Oh, God! Oh, God!

ABEL (*very faintly*).

What 's he who speaks of God?

CAIN.

Thy murderer.

ABEL.

Then may God forgive him! Cain,
Comfort poor Zillah:—she has but one brother
Now. [ABEL *dies.*

CAIN.

And I none! Who makes me brotherless?
His eyes are open! then he is not dead!
Death is like sleep; and sleep shuts down our lids.
His lips, too, are apart; why then he breathes!
And yet I feel it not.—His heart!—his heart!—
Let me see, doth it beat?—methinks——No!—no!
This is a vision, else I am become
The native of another and worse world.
The earth swims round me:—what is this?—'t is wet;

[*Puts his hand to his brow, and then looks at it.*

And yet there are no dews! 'T is blood—my blood—
My brother's and my own; and shed by me!
Then what have I further to do with life,
Since I have taken life from my own flesh?
But he can not be dead!—Is silence death?
No; he will wake: then let me watch by him.

Life cannot be so slight, as to be quench'd
Thus quickly!—he hath spoken to me since—
What shall I say to him?—My brother!—No;
He will not answer to that name; for brethren
Smite not each other. Yet—yet—speak to me.
Oh! for a word more of that gentle voice,
That I may bear to hear my own again!

Enter ZILLAH.

ZILLAH.

I heard a heavy sound: what can it be?
'T is Cain; and watching by my husband. What
Dost thou there, brother? Doth he sleep? Oh! heaven!
What means this paleness, and yon stream?—No! no!
It is not blood; for who would shed his blood?
Abel! what 's this?—who hath done this? He moves not;
He breathes not: and his hands drop down from mine
With stony lifelessness! Ah! cruel Cain!
Why cam'st thou not in time to save him from
This violence? Whatever hath assail'd him,
Thou wert the stronger, and should'st have stepp'd in
Between him and aggression! Father!—Eve!—
Adah!—come hither! Death is in the world!

[*Exit* ZILLAH, *calling on her parents, etc.*

CAIN (*solus*).

And who hath brought him there?—I—who abhor
The name of death so deeply, that the thought
Empoison'd all my life, before I knew
His aspect—I have led him here, and given
My brother to his cold and still embrace,
As if he would not have asserted his
Inexorable claim without my aid.
I am awake at last—a dreary dream
Had madden'd me:—but *he* shall ne'er awake!

Enter ADAM, EVE, ADAH, *and* ZILLAH.

ADAM.

A voice of woe from Zillah brings me here.—
What do I see?—'T is true!—My son!—my son!
Woman, behold the serpent's work, and thine!

[*To* EVE.

EVE.

Oh! speak not of it now: the serpent's fangs
Are in my heart. My best beloved, Abel!
Jehovah! this is punishment beyond
A mother's sin, to take *him* from me!

ADAM.

Who,
Or what hath done this deed?—speak, Cain, since thou
Wert present: was it some more hostile angel,
Who walks not with Jehovah? or some wild
Brute of the forest?

EVE.

Ah! a livid light
Breaks through, as from a thunder-cloud! yon brand,
Massy and bloody! snatch'd from off the altar,
And black with smoke, and red with——

ADAM.

Speak, my son!
Speak, and assure us, wretched as we are,
That we are not more miserable still.

ADAH.

Speak, Cain! and say it was not *thou!*

EVE.

It was.
I see it now—he hangs his guilty head,
And covers his ferocious eye with hands
Incarnadine.

ADAH.

Mother, thou dost him wrong—
Cain! clear thee from this horrible accusal,
Which grief wrings from our parent.

EVE.

Hear, Jehovah!
May the eternal serpent's curse be on him!
For he was fitter for his seed than ours.
May all his days be desolate! May——

ADAH.

Hold!
Curse him not, mother, for he is thy son—
Curse him not, mother, for he is my brother,
And my betroth'd.

EVE.

He hath left thee no brother—
Zillah no husband—me *no son!*—for thus
I curse him from my sight for evermore!
All bonds I break between us, as he broke
That of his nature, in yon—Oh death! death!
Why didst thou not take *me*, who first incurr'd thee?
Why dost thou not so now?

ADAM.

Eve! let not this,
Thy natural grief, lead to impiety!
A heavy doom was long forespoken to us;
And now that it begins, let it be borne
In such sort as may show our God, that we
Are faithful servants to his holy will.

EVE (*pointing to Cain*).

His will! the will of yon incarnate spirit
Of death, whom I have brought upon the earth
To strew it with the dead. May all the curses
Of life be on him! and his agonies
Drive him forth o'er the wilderness, like us
From Eden, till his children do by him
As he did by his brother! May the swords
And wings of fiery cherubim pursue him
By day and night—snakes spring up in his path—
Earth's fruits be ashes in his mouth—the leaves
On which he lays his head to sleep be strew'd
With scorpions! May his dreams be of his victim!
His waking a continual dread of death!
May the clear rivers turn to blood as he
Stoops down to stain them with his raging lip!
May every element shun or change to him!
May he live in the pangs which others die with!
And death itself wax something worse than death
To him who first acquainted him with man!
Hence, fratricide! henceforth that word is *Cain*,
Through all the coming myriads of mankind,
Who shall abhor thee, though thou wert their sire!
May the grass wither from thy feet! the woods
Deny thee shelter! earth a home! the dust
A grave! the sun his light! and heaven her God!

[*Exit* EVE.

ADAM.

Cain! get thee forth: we dwell no more together.
Depart! and leave the dead to me—I am
Henceforth alone—we never must meet more.

ADAH.

Oh, part not with him thus, my father: do not
Add thy deep curse to Eve's upon his head!

ADAM.

I curse him not: his spirit be his curse.
Come, Zillah!

ZILLAH.

I must watch my husband's corse.

ADAM.

We will return again, when he is gone
Who hath provided for us this dread office.
Come, Zillah!

ZILLAH.

Yet one kiss on yon pale clay,
And those lips once so warm—my heart! my heart!

[*Exeunt* ADAM *and* ZILLAH *weeping.*

ADAH.

Cain! thou hast heard, we must go forth. I am ready,
So shall our children be. I will bear Enoch,
And you his sister. Ere the sun declines
Let us depart, nor walk the wilderness
Under the cloud of night.—Nay, speak to me,
To *me—thine own.*

CAIN.

Leave me!

ADAH.

Why, all have left thee.

CAIN.

And wherefore lingerest thou? Dost thou not fear
To dwell with one who hath done this?

ADAH.

I fear
Nothing except to leave thee, much as I
Shrink from the deed which leaves thee brotherless.
I must not speak of this—it is between thee
And the great God.

A Voice from within exclaims,

Cain! Cain!

ADAH.

Hear'st thou that voice?

The Voice within.

Cain! Cain!

ADAH.

It soundeth like an angel's tone.

Enter the ANGEL *of the Lord.*

Where is thy brother Abel?

CAIN.

Am I then
My brother's keeper?

ANGEL.

Cain! what hast thou done?
The voice of thy slain brother's blood cries out,
Even from the ground, unto the Lord!—Now art thou
Cursed from the earth, which open'd late her mouth
To drink thy brother's blood from thy rash hand.
Henceforth, when thou shalt till the ground, it shall not
Yield thee her strength; a fugitive shalt thou
Be from this day, and vagabond on earth!

ADAH.

This punishment is more than he can bear.
Behold, thou drivest him from the face of earth,
And from the face of God shall he be hid.
A fugitive and vagabond on earth,
T will come to pass, that whoso findeth him
Shall slay him.

CAIN.

Would they could! but who are they
Shall slay me? where are these on the lone earth
As yet unpeopled?

ANGEL.

Thou hast slain thy brother,
And who shall warrant thee against thy son?

ADAH.

Angel of light! be merciful, nor say
That this poor aching breast now nourishes
A murderer in my boy, and of his father.

ANGEL.

Then he would but be what his father is.
Did not the milk of Eve give nutriment
To him thou now see'st so besmear'd with blood?
The fratricide might well engender parricides.—
But it shall not be so—the Lord thy God
And mine commandeth me to set his seal
On Cain, so that he may go forth in safety.
Who slayeth Cain, a sevenfold vengeance shall
Be taken on his head. Come hither!

CAIN.

What
Wouldst thou with me?

ANGEL.

To mark upon thy brow
Exemption from such deeds as thou hast done.

CAIN.

No, let me die!

ANGEL.

It must not be.

[*The* ANGEL *sets the mark on* CAIN's *brow.*

CAIN.

It burns
My brow, but nought to that which is within it.
Is there more? let me meet it as I may.

ANGEL.

Stern hast thou been and stubborn from the womb,
As the ground thou must henceforth till; but he
Thou slew'st was gentle as the flocks he tended.

CAIN.

After the fall too soon was I begotten;
Ere yet my mother's mind subsided from
The serpent, and my sire still mourn'd for Eden.
That which I am, I am; I did not seek
For life, nor did I make myself; but could I
With my own death redeem him from the dust—
And why not so? let him return to day,
And I lie ghastly! so shall be restored
By God the life to him he loved: and taken
From me a being I ne'er loved to bear.

ANGEL.

Who shall heal murder? what is done is done.
Go forth! fulfil thy days! and be thy deeds
Unlike the last! [*The* ANGEL *disappears.*

ADAH.

He 's gone, let us go forth;
I hear our little Enoch cry within
Our bower.

CAIN.

Ah! little knows he what he weeps for!
And I who have shed blood cannot shed tears!
But the four rivers[1] would not cleanse my soul.
Think'st thou my boy will bear to look on me?

ADAH.

If I thought that he would not, I would—

[1] The four rivers which flowed round Eden, and consequently the only waters with which Cain was acquainted upon the earth.

CAIN (*interrupting her*).

No,
No more of threats: we have had too many of them:
Go to our children; I will follow thee.

ADAH.

I will not leave thee lonely with the dead;
Let us depart together.

CAIN.

Oh! thou dead
And everlasting witness! whose unsinking
Blood darkens earth and heaven! what thou *now* art,
I know not! but if *thou* see'st what *I* am,
I think thou wilt forgive him, whom his God
Can ne'er forgive, nor his own soul.—Farewell!
I must not, dare not, touch what I have made thee.
I, who sprung from the same womb with thee, drain'd
The same breast, clasp'd thee often to my own,
In fondness brotherly and boyish, I
Can never meet thee more, nor even dare
To do that for thee, which thou shouldst have done
For me—compose thy limbs into their grave—
The first grave yet dug for mortality.
But who hath dug that grave? Oh, earth! Oh, earth!
For all the fruits thou hast render'd to me, I
Give thee back this.—Now for the wilderness.

[ADAH *stoops down and kisses the body of* ABEL.

ADAH.

A dreary, and an early doom, my brother,
Has been thy lot! Of all who mourn for thee,
I alone must not weep. My office is
Henceforth to dry up tears, and not to shed them;
But yet, of all who mourn, none mourn like me,
Not only for thyself, but him who slew thee.
Now, Cain! I will divide thy burden with thee.

CAIN.

Eastward from Eden will we take our way;
'T is the most desolate, and suits my steps.

ADAH.

Lead! thou shalt be my guide, and may our God
Be thine! Now let us carry forth our children.

CAIN.

And *he* who lieth there was childless.
I have dried the fountain of a gentle race,
Which might have graced his recent marriage couch,
And might have temper'd this stern blood of mine,
Uniting with our children Abel's offspring!
O Abel!

ADAH.

Peace be with him!

CAIN.

But with *me!*——

[*Exeunt.*

Werner, or, The Inheritance;

A TRAGEDY.

TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS GOETHE,

BY ONE OF HIS HUMBLEST ADMIRERS,

This Tragedy is Dedicated.

PREFACE.

THE following drama is taken entirely from the «*German's Tale, Kruitzner,*» published many years ago in «*Lee's Canterbury Tales;*» written (I believe) by two sisters, of whom one furnished only this story and another, both of which are considered superior to the remainder of the collection. I have adopted the characters, plan, and even the language, of many parts of this story. Some of the characters are modified or altered, a few of the names changed, and one character (Ida of Stralenheim) added by myself: but in the rest the original is chiefly followed. When I was young (about fourteen, I think) I first read this tale, which made a deep impression upon me; and may, indeed, be said to contain the germ of much that I have since written. I am not sure that it ever was very popular; or at any rate its popularity has since been eclipsed by that of other great writers in the same department. But I have generally found that those who *had* read it, agreed with me in their estimate of the singular power of mind and conception which it developes. I should also add *conception,* rather than execution; for the story might, perhaps, have been more developed with greater advantage. Amongst those whose opinions agreed with mine upon this story, I could mention some very high names; but it is not necessary, nor indeed of any use; for every one must judge according to their own feelings. I merely refer the reader to the original story, that he may see to what extent I have borrowed from it; and am not unwilling that he should find much greater pleasure in perusing it than the drama which is founded upon its contents.

I had begun a drama upon this tale so far back as 1815 (the first I ever attempted, except one at thirteen years old, called «*Ulric and Ilvina,*» which I had sense enough to burn), and had nearly completed an act, when I was interrupted by circumstances. This is somewhere amongst my papers in England; but as it has not been found, I have re-written the first, and added the subsequent acts.

The whole is neither intended, nor in any shape adapted, for the stage.

February, 1822.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Werner.	Henrick.
Ulric.	Eric.
Stralenheim.	Arnheim.
Idenstein.	Meister.
Gabor.	Rodolph.
Fritz.	Ludwig.

WOMEN.

Josephine.
Ida Stralenheim.

Scene—partly on the frontier of Silesia, and partly in Siegendorf Castle, near Prague.

Time—the close of the thirty years' war.

WERNER.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Hall of a decayed Palace near a small Town on the northern Frontier of Silesia—the Night tempestuous.

Werner *and* Josephine *his wife.*

JOSEPHINE.

My love, be calmer!

WERNER.

I am calm.

JOSEPHINE.

To me—
Yes, but not to thyself: thy pace is hurried,
And no one walks a chamber like to ours
With steps like thine when his heart is at rest.
Were it a garden, I should deem thee happy,
And stepping with the bee from flower to flower;
But *here!*

WERNER.

'T is chill; the tapestry lets through
The wind to which it waves: my blood is frozen.

JOSEPHINE.

Ah, no!

WERNER *(smiling).*

Why! wouldst thou have it so?

JOSEPHINE.

I would
Have it a healthful current.

WERNER.

Let it flow
Until 't is spilt or check'd—how soon, I care not.

JOSEPHINE.

And am I nothing in thy heart?

WERNER.

All—all.

JOSEPHINE.

Then canst thou wish for that which must break mine?

WERNER *(approaching her slowly).*

But for *thee* I had been—no matter what,
But much of good and evil; what I am,
Thou knowest; what I might or should have been,
Thou knowest not: but still I love thee, nor
Shall aught divide us.

[Werner *walks on abruptly, and then approaches* Josephine.

The storm of the night,
Perhaps, affects me; I 'm a thing of feelings,
And have of late been sickly, as alas!
Thou know'st by sufferings more than mine, my love!
In watching me.

JOSEPHINE.

To see thee well is much—
To see thee happy——

WERNER.

Where hast thou seen such?
Let me be wretched with the rest!

JOSEPHINE.

But think
How many in this hour of tempest shiver
Beneath the biting wind and heavy rain,
Whose every drop bows them down nearer earth,
Which hath no chamber for them save beneath
Her surface.

WERNER.

And that 's not the worst: who cares
For chambers? rest is all. The wretches whom
Thou namest—ay, the wind howls round them, and
The dull and dropping rain saps in their bones
The creeping marrow. I have been a soldier,
A hunter, and a traveller, and am
A beggar, and should know the thing thou talk'st of.

JOSEPHINE.

And art thou not now sheltered from them all?

WERNER.

Yes. And from these alone.

JOSEPHINE.

And that is something.

WERNER.

True—to a peasant.

JOSEPHINE.

Should the nobly born
Be thankless for that refuge which their habits
Of early delicacy render more
Needful than to the peasant, when the ebb
Of fortune leaves them on the shoals of life?

WERNER.

It is not that, thou know'st it is not; we
Have borne all this, I'll not say patiently,
Except in thee—but we have borne it.

JOSEPHINE.

Well?

WERNER.

Something beyond our outward sufferings (though
These were enough to gnaw into our souls)
Hath stung me oft, and, more than ever, *now.*
When, but for this untoward sickness, which
Seized me upon this desolate frontier, and
Hath wasted not alone my strength, but means,
And leaves us,—no! this is beyond me!—but
For this I had been happy—*thou* been happy—
The splendour of my rank sustain'd—my name—
My father's name—been still upheld; and, more
Than those——

JOSEPHINE *(abruptly).*

My son—our son—our Ulric,
Been clasp'd again in these long-empty arms,

And all a mother's hunger satisfied.
Twelve years! he was but eight then: beautiful
He was, and beautiful he must be now.
My Ulric! my adored!

WERNER.

I have been full oft
The chase of fortune; now she hath o'ertaken
My spirit where it cannot turn at bay,—
Sick, poor, and lonely.

JOSEPHINE.

Lonely! my dear husband?

WERNER.

Or worse—involving all I love, in this
Far worse than solitude. *Alone*, I had died,
And all been over in a nameless grave.

JOSEPHINE.

And I had not outlived thee; but pray take
Comfort! We have struggled long; and they who strive
With fortune win or weary her at last,
So that they find the goal, or cease to feel
Further. Take comfort,—we shall find our boy.

WERNER.

We were in sight of him, of every thing
Which could bring compensation for past sorrow—
And to be baffled thus!

JOSEPHINE.

We are not baffled.

WERNER.

Are we not pennyless?

JOSEPHINE.

We ne'er were wealthy.

WERNER.

But I was born to wealth, and rank, and power;
Enjoy'd them, loved them, and, alas! abused them,
And forfeited them by my father's wrath,
In my o'er-fervent youth; but for the abuse
Long sufferings have atoned. My father's death
Left the path open, yet not without snares.
This cold and creeping kinsman, who so long
Kept his eye on me, as the snake upon
The fluttering bird, hath ere this time outstept me,
Become the master of my rights, and lord
Of that which lifts him up to princes in
Dominion and domain.

JOSEPHINE.

Who knows? our son
May have return'd back to his grandsire, and
Even now uphold thy rights for thee?

WERNER.

'Tis hopeless.
Since his strange disappearance from my father's,
Entailing, as it were, my sins upon
Himself, no tidings have reveal'd his course.
I parted with him to his grandsire, on
The promise that his anger would stop short
Of the third generation; but Heaven seems
To claim her stern prerogative, and visit
Upon my boy his father's faults and follies.

JOSEPHINE.

I must hope better still,—at least we have yet
Baffled the long pursuit of Stralenheim.

WERNER.

We should have done, but for this fatal sickness,
More fatal than a mortal malady,
Because it takes not life, but life's sole solace:
Even now I feel my spirit girt about
By the snares of this avaricious fiend;—
How do I know he hath not track'd us here?

JOSEPHINE.

He does not know thy person; and his spies,
Who so long watch'd thee, have been left at Hamburgh.
Our unexpected journey, and this change
Of name, leaves all discovery far behind:
None hold us here for aught save what we seem.

WERNER.

Save what we seem! save what we *are*—sick beggars,
Even to our very hopes.——Ha! ha!

JOSEPHINE.

Alas!
That bitter laugh!

WERNER.

Who would read in this form
The high soul of the son of a long line?
Who, in this garb, the heir of princely lands?
Who, in this sunken, sickly eye, the pride
Of rank and ancestry; in this worn cheek,
And famine-hollow'd brow, the lord of halls,
Which daily feast a thousand vassals?

JOSEPHINE.

You
Ponder'd not thus upon these worldly things,
My Werner! when you deign'd to choose for bride
The foreign daughter of a wandering exile.

WERNER.

An exile's daughter with an outcast son
Were a fit marriage; but I still had hopes
To lift thee to the state we both were born for.
Your father's house was noble, though decay'd;
And worthy by its birth to match with ours.

JOSEPHINE.

Your father did not think so, though 't was noble;
But had my birth been all my claim to match
With thee, I should have deem'd it what it is.

WERNER.

And what is that in thine eyes?

JOSEPHINE.

All which it
Has done in our behalf,—nothing.

WERNER.

How,—nothing?

JOSEPHINE.

Or worse; for it has been a canker in
Thy heart from the beginning: but for this,
We had not felt our poverty, but as
Millions of myriads feel it, cheerfully;
But for these phantoms of thy feudal fathers,
Thou might'st have earn'd thy bread as thousands earn it;
Or, if that seem too humble, tried by commerce,
Or other civic means, to amend thy fortunes.

WERNER (*ironically*).

And been an Hanseatic burgher? Excellent!

JOSEPHINE.

Whate'er thou might'st have been, to me thou art,
What no state, high or low, can ever change,
My heart's first choice;—which chose thee, knowing neither
Thy birth, thy hopes, thy pride; nought, save thy sorrows:
While they last, let me comfort or divide them;
When they end, let mine end with them, or thee!

WERNER.

My better angel! such I have ever found thee;
This rashness, or this weakness of my temper,

Ne'er raised a thought to injure thee or thine.
Thou didst not mar my fortunes: my own nature
In youth was such as to unmake an empire,
Had such been my inheritance; but now,
Chasten'd, subdued, out-worn, and taught to know
Myself,—to lose this for our son and thee!
Trust me, when, in my two-and-twentieth spring,
My father barr'd me from my father's house,
The last sole scion of a thousand sires
(For I was then the last), it hurt me less
Than to behold my boy and my boy's mother
Excluded in their innocence from what
My faults deserved exclusion: although then
My passions were all living serpents, and
Twined like the gorgon's round me.

[*A knocking is heard.*

JOSEPHINE.

Hark!

WERNER.

A knocking!

JOSEPHINE.

Who can it be at this lone hour? we have
Few visitors.

WERNER.

And poverty hath none,
Save those who come to make it poorer still.
Well; I am prepared.

[WERNER *puts his hand into his bosom as if to search for some weapon.*

JOSEPHINE.

Oh! do not look so. I
Will to the door, it cannot be of import
In this lone spot of wintry desolation—
The very desert saves man from mankind.

[*She goes to the door.*

Enter IDENSTEIN.

IDENSTEIN.

A fair good evening to my fairer hostess
And worthy——what's your name, my friend?

WERNER.

Are you
Not afraid to demand it?

IDENSTEIN.

Not afraid?
Egad! I am afraid. You look as if
I ask'd for something better than your name,
By the face you put on it.

WERNER.

Better, sir!

IDENSTEIN.

Better or worse, like matrimony, what
Shall I say more? You have been a guest this month
Here in the prince's palace—(to be sure,
His highness had resign'd it to the ghosts
And rats these twelve years—but 't is still a palace)—
I say you have been our lodger, and as yet
We do not know your name.

WERNER.

My name is Werner.

IDENSTEIN.

A goodly name, a very worthy name,
As e'er was gilt upon a trader's board;
I have a cousin in the lazaretto
Of Hamburgh, who has got a wife who bore
The same. He is an officer of trust,
Surgeon's assistant (hoping to be surgeon),
And has done miracles i' the way of business.
Perhaps you are related to my relative?

WERNER.

To yours?

JOSEPHINE.

Oh, yes, we are, but distantly.

[*Aside to* WERNER.

Cannot you humour the dull gossip till
We learn his purpose?

IDENSTEIN.

Well, I'm glad of that;
I thought so all along; such natural yearnings
Play'd round my heart—blood is not water, cousin;
And so let's have some wine, and drink unto
Our better acquaintance: relatives should be
Friends.

WERNER.

You appear to have drank enough already,
And if you had not, I've no wine to offer,
Else it were yours; but this you know, or should know:
You see I am poor and sick, and will not see
That I would be alone; but to your business!
What brings you here?

IDENSTEIN.

Why, what should bring me here?

WERNER.

I know not, though I think that I could guess
That which will send you hence.

JOSEPHINE (*aside*).

Patience, dear Werner!

IDENSTEIN.

You don't know what has happened, then?

JOSEPHINE.

How should we?

IDENSTEIN.

The river has o'erflow'd.

JOSEPHINE.

Alas! we have known
That to our sorrow, for these five days; since
It keeps us here.

IDENSTEIN.

But what you don't know is,
That a great personage, who fain would cross
Against the stream, and three postillions' wishes,
Is drown'd below the ford, with five post horses,
A monkey, and a mastiff, and a valet.

JOSEPHINE.

Poor creatures! are you sure?

IDENSTEIN.

Yes, of the monkey,
And the valet, and the cattle; but as yet
We know not if his excellency's dead
Or no; your noblemen are hard to drown,
As it is fit that men in office should be;
But, what is certain is, that he has swallow'd
Enough of the Oder to have burst two peasants;
And now a Saxon and Hungarian traveller,
Who, at their proper peril, snatch'd him from
The whirling river, have sent on to crave
A lodging, or a grave, according as
It may turn out with the live or dead body.

JOSEPHINE.

And where will you receive him? here, I hope,
If we can be of service—say the word.

IDENSTEIN.

Here? no; but in the prince's own apartment,
As fits a noble guest: 'tis damp, no doubt,
Not having been inhabited these twelve years;
But then he comes from a much damper place,
So scarcely will catch cold in't, if he be
Still liable to cold—and if not, why
He'll be worse lodged to-morrow: ne'ertheless,
I have order'd fire and all appliances
To be got ready for the worst—that is,
In case he should survive.

JOSEPHINE.

Poor gentleman!
I hope he will, with all my heart.

WERNER.

Intendant,
Have you not learn'd his name? My Josephine,
[*Aside to his wife.*
Retire, I'll sift this fool. [*Exit* JOSEPHINE.

IDENSTEIN.

His name? oh Lord!
Who knows if he hath now a name or no;
'T is time enough to ask it when he's able
To give an answer, or if not, to put
His heir's upon his epitaph. Methought,
Just now you chid me for demanding names?

WERNER.

True, true, I did so; you say well and wisely.

Enter GABOR.

GABOR.

If I intrude, I crave——

IDENSTEIN.

Oh, no intrusion!
This is the palace; this a stranger like
Yourself; I pray you make yourself at home:
But where's his excellency, and how fares he?

GABOR.

Wetly and wearily, but out of peril;
He paused to change his garments in a cottage
(Where I doff'd mine for these, and came on hither),
And has almost recover'd from his drenching.
He will be here anon.

IDENSTEIN.

What ho, there! bustle!
Without there, Herman, Weilburg, Peter, Conrad!
[*Gives directions to different servants who enter.*
A nobleman sleeps here to night—see that
All is in order in the damask chamber—
Keep up the stove—I will myself to the cellar—
And Madame Idenstein (my consort, stranger,)
Shall furnish forth the bed-apparel; for,
To say the truth, they are marvellous scant of this
Within the palace precincts, since his highness
Left it some dozen years ago. And then
His excellency will sup, doubtless?

GABOR.

Faith!
I cannot tell; but I should think the pillow
Would please him better than the table, after
His soaking in your river: but for fear
Your viands should be thrown away, I mean
To sup myself, and have a friend without
Who will do honour to your good cheer with
A traveller's appetite.

IDENSTEIN.

But are you sure
His excellency——but his name, what is it?

GABOR.

I do not know.

IDENSTEIN.

And yet you saved his life.

GABOR.

I help'd my friend to do so.

IDENSTEIN.

Well, that's strange,
To save a man's life whom you do not know.

GABOR.

Not so; for there are some I know so well,
I scarce should give myself the trouble.

IDENSTEIN.

Pray,
Good friend, and who may you be?

GABOR.

By my family,
Hungarian.

IDENSTEIN.

Which is call'd?

GABOR.

It matters little.

IDENSTEIN (*aside*).

I think that all the world are grown anonymous,
Since no one cares to tell me what he's call'd!
Pray, has his excellency a large suite?

GABOR.

Sufficient.

IDENSTEIN.

How many?

GABOR.

I did not count them.
We came up by mere accident, and just
In time to drag him through his carriage window.

IDENSTEIN.

Well, what would I give to save a great man!
No doubt you'll have a swingeing sum as recompense.

GABOR.

Perhaps.

IDENSTEIN.

Now, how much do you reckon on?

GABOR.

I have not yet put up myself to sale:
In the mean time, my best reward would be
A glass of your Hochheimer, a *green* glass,
Wreathed with rich grapes and Bacchanal devices,
O'erflowing with the oldest of your vintage;
For which I promise you, in case you e'er
Run hazard of being drown'd (although I own
It seems, of all deaths, the least likely for you),
I'll pull you out for nothing. Quick, my friend,
And think, for every bumper I shall quaff,
A wave the less may roll above your head.

IDENSTEIN (*aside*).

I don't much like this fellow—close and dry
He seems, two things which suit me not; however,
Wine he shall have; if that unlocks him not,
I shall not sleep to-night for curiosity.
[*Exit* IDENSTEIN.

GABOR (*to* WERNER).

This master of the ceremonies is
The intendant of the palace, I presume.
'T is a fine building, but decay'd.

WERNER.

The apartment
Design'd for him you rescued will be found
In fitter order for a sickly guest.

GABOR.

I wonder then you occupied it not,
For you seem delicate in health.

WERNER (*quickly*).

Sir!

GABOR.

Pray
Excuse me: have I said aught to offend you?

WERNER.

Nothing: but we are strangers to each other.

GABOR.

And that's the reason I would have us less so:
I thought our bustling guest without had said
You were a chance and passing guest, the counterpart
Of me and my companions.

WERNER.

Very true.

GABOR.

Then, as we never met before, and never,
It may be, may again encounter, why,
I thought to cheer up this old dungeon here
(At least to me) by asking you to share
The fare of my companions and myself.

WERNER.

Pray, pardon me; my health——

GABOR.

Even as you please.
I have been a soldier, and perhaps am blunt
In bearing.

WERNER.

I have also served, and can
Requite a soldier's greeting.

GABOR.

In what service?
The Imperial?

WERNER (*quickly, and then interrupting himself*).

I commanded—no—I mean
I served; but it is many years ago,
When first Bohemia raised her banner 'gainst
The Austrian.

GABOR.

Well, that's over now, and peace
Has turn'd some thousand gallant hearts adrift
To live as they best may; and, to say truth,
Some take the shortest.

WERNER.

What is that?

GABOR.

Whate'er
They lay their hands on. All Silesia and
Lusatia's woods are tenanted by bands
Of the late troops, who levy on the country
Their maintenance: the Chatelains must keep
Their castle walls—beyond them 'tis but doubtful
Travel for your rich count or full-blown baron.
My comfort is that, wander where I may,
I've little left to lose now.

WERNER.

And I—nothing.

GABOR.

That's harder still. You say you were a soldier.

WERNER.

I was.

GABOR.

You look one still. All soldiers are
Or should be comrades, even though enemies.
Our swords when drawn must cross, our engines aim
(While levell'd) at each other's hearts; but when
A truce, a peace, or what you will, remits
The steel into its scabbard, and lets sleep
The spark which lights the matchlock, we are brethren.
You are poor and sickly—I am not rich but healthy;
I want for nothing which I cannot want;
You seem devoid of this—will share it?

[GABOR *pulls out his purse.*

WERNER.

Who
Told you I was a beggar?

GABOR.

You yourself,
In saying you were a soldier during peace time.

WERNER (*looking at him with suspicion*).

You know me not?

GABOR.

I know no man, not even
Myself: how should I then know one I ne'er
Beheld till half an hour since?

WERNER.

Sir, I thank you.
Your offer's noble, were it to a friend,
And not unkind as to an unknown stranger,
Though scarcely prudent; but no less I thank you.
I am a beggar in all save his trade,
And when I beg of any one, it shall be
Of him who was the first to offer what
Few can obtain by asking. Pardon me.

[*Exit* WERNER.

GABOR (*solus*).

A goodly fellow by his looks, though worn,
As most good fellows are, by pain or pleasure,
Which tear life out of us before our time:
I scarce know which most quickly; but he seems
To have seen better days, as who has not
Who has seen yesterday?—But here approaches
Our sage intendant, with the wine; however,
For the cup's sake, I'll bear the cup-bearer.

Enter IDENSTEIN.

IDENSTEIN.

'T is here! the supernaculum! twenty years
Of age, if 't is a day.

GABOR.

Which epoch makes
Young women and old wine, and 't is great pity
Of two such excellent things, increase of years,
Which still improves the one, should spoil the other.
Fill full—Here's to our hostess—your fair wife.

[*Takes the glass.*

IDENSTEIN.

Fair!—Well, I trust your taste in wine is equal
To that you show for beauty; but I pledge you
Nevertheless.

GABOR.

Is not the lovely woman
I met in the adjacent hall, who, with
An air, and port, and eye, which would have better
Beseem'd this palace in its brightest days

(Though in a garb adapted to its present
Abandonment), return'd my salutation—
Is not the same your spouse?

IDENSTEIN.

I would she were!
But you're mistaken—that's the stranger's wife.

GABOR.

And by her aspect she might be a prince's:
Though time hath touch'd her too, she still retains
Much beauty, and more majesty.

IDENSTEIN.

And that
Is more than I can say for Madame Idenstein,
At least in beauty: as for majesty,
She has some of its properties which might
Be spared—but never mind!

GABOR.

I don't. But who
May be this stranger. He too hath a bearing
Above his outward fortunes.

IDENSTEIN.

There I differ.
He's poor as Job, and not so patient; but
Who he may be, or what, or aught of him,
Except his name (and that I only learn'd
To-night), I know not.

GABOR.

But how came he here?

IDENSTEIN.

In a most miserable old calèche,
About a month since, and immediately
Fell sick, almost to death. He should have died.

GABOR.

Tender and true!—but why?

IDENSTEIN.

Why, what is life
Without a living? He has not a stiver.

GABOR.

In that case, I much wonder that a person
Of your apparent prudence should admit
Guests so forlorn into this noble mansion.

IDENSTEIN.

That's true; but pity, as you know, *does* make
One's heart commit these follies; and besides,
They had some valuables left at that time,
Which paid their way up to the present hour,
And so I thought they might as well be lodged
Here as at the small tavern, and I gave them
The run of some of the oldest palace rooms.
They served to air them, at the least as long
As they could pay for fire-wood.

GABOR.

Poor souls!

IDENSTEIN.

Ay,
Exceeding poor.

GABOR.

And yet unused to poverty,
If I mistake not. Whither were they going?

IDENSTEIN.

Oh! Heaven knows where, unless to heaven itself.
Some days ago that look'd the likeliest journey
For Werner.

GABOR.

Werner! I have heard the name,
But it may be a feign'd one.

IDENSTEIN.

Like enough!
But hark! a noise of wheels and voices, and
A blaze of torches from without. As sure
As destiny, his excellency 's come.
I must be at my post: will you not join me,
To help him from his carriage, and present
Your humble duty at the door?

GABOR.

I dragg'd him
From out that carriage when he would have given
His barony or county to repel
The rushing river from his gurgling throat.
He has valets now enough: they stood aloof then
Shaking their dripping ears upon the shore,
All roaring, «Help!» but offering none; and as
For *duty* (as you call it) I did mine *then*,
Now do *yours*. Hence, and bow and cringe him here!

IDENSTEIN.

I cringe!—but I shall lose the opportunity—
Plague take it! he 'll be *here*, and I *not there!*

[*Exit* IDENSTEIN, *hastily.*

Re-enter WERNER.

WERNER (*to himself*).

I heard a noise of wheels and voices. How
All sounds now jar me!
(*Perceiving* GABOR). Still here! Is he not
A spy of my pursuer's? His frank offer,
So suddenly, and to a stranger, wore
The aspect of a secret enemy;
For friends are slow at such.

GABOR.

You seem rapt,
And yet the time is not akin to thought.
These old walls will be noisy soon. The baron,
Or count (or whatsoe'er this half-drown'd noble
May be), for whom this desolate village, and
Its lone inhabitants, show more respect
Than did the elements, is come.

IDENSTEIN (*without*).

This way—
This way, your excellency;—have a care,
The staircase is a little gloomy, and
Somewhat decay'd; but if we had expected
So high a guest—pray take my arm, my lord!

Enter STRALENHEIM, IDENSTEIN, *and Attendants, partly his own, and partly retainers of the domain, of which* IDENSTEIN *is Intendant.*

STRALENHEIM.

I 'll rest me here a moment.

IDENSTEIN (*to the servants*).

Oh! a chair!
Instantly, knaves! [STRALENHEIM *sits down.*

WERNER (*aside*).

'T is he!

STRALENHEIM.

I 'm better now.
Who are these strangers?

IDENSTEIN.

Please you, my good lord,
One says he is no stranger.

WERNER (*aloud and hastily*).

Who says that?

[*They look at him with surprise.*

IDENSTEIN.

Why, no one spoke *of you*, or *to you!*—but
Here 's one his excellency may be pleased
To recognise. [*Pointing to* GABOR.

GABOR.

I seek not to disturb
His noble memory.

STRALENHEIM.

I apprehend
This is one of the strangers to whose aid
I owe my rescue. Is not that the other?
[*Pointing to* WERNER.
My state, when I was succour'd, must excuse
My uncertainty to whom I owe so much.

IDENSTEIN.

He!—no, my lord! he rather wants for rescue
Than can afford it. 'T is a poor sick man,
Travel-tired, and lately risen from a bed
From whence he never dream'd to rise.

STRALENHEIM.

Methought
That there were two.

GABOR.

There were, in company;
But, in the service render'd to your lordship,
I needs must say but *one*, and he is absent.
The chief part of whatever aid was render'd,
Was *his:* it was his fortune to be first.
My will was not inferior, but his strength
And youth outstripp'd me; therefore do not waste
Your thanks on me. I was but a glad second
Unto a nobler principal.

STRALENHEIM.

Where is he?

AN ATTENDANT.

My lord, he tarried in the cottage, where
Your excellency rested for an hour,
And said he would be here to-morrow.

STRALENHEIM.

Till
That hour arrives, I can but offer thanks,
And then——

GABOR.

I seek no more, and scarce deserve
So much. My comrade may speak for himself.

STRALENHEIM (*fixing his eyes upon* WERNER, *then aside*).

It cannot be! and yet he must be look'd to.
'T is twenty years since I beheld him with
These eyes; and, though my agents still have kept
Theirs on him, policy has held aloof
My own from his, not to alarm him into
Suspicion of my plan. Why did I leave
At Hamburgh those who would have made assurance
If this be he or no? I thought, ere now,
To have been lord of Siegendorf, and parted
In haste, though even the elements appear
To fight against me, and this sudden flood
May keep me prisoner here till——
[*He pauses and looks at* WERNER; *then resumes.*
This man must
Be watch'd. If it is he, he is so changed,
His father, rising from his grave again,
Would pass him by unknown. I must be wary;
An error would spoil all.

IDENSTEIN.

Your lordship seems
Pensive. Will it not please you to pass on?

STRALENHEIM.

'T is past fatigue which gives my weigh'd-down spirit
An outward show of thought. I will to rest.

IDENSTEIN.

The prince's chamber is prepared, with all
The very furniture the prince used when
Last here, in its full splendour.
(*Aside*). Somewhat tatter'd,
And devilish damp, but fine enough by torch-light;
And that 's enough for your right noble blood
Of twenty quarterings upon a hatchment;
So let their bearer sleep 'neath something like one
Now, as he one day will for ever lie.

STRALENHEIM (*rising, and turning to* GABOR).

Good night, good people! Sir, I trust to-morrow
Will find me apter to requite your service.
In the mean time, I crave your company
A moment in my chamber.

GABOR.

I attend you.

STRALENHEIM.

(*After a few steps, pauses, and calls* WERNER).
Friend!

WERNER.

Sir!

IDENSTEIN.

Sir! Lord!—oh, Lord! Why don't you say
His lordship, or his excellency? Pray,
My lord, excuse this poor man's want of breeding:
He hath not been accustom'd to admission
To such a presence.

STRALENHEIM (*to* IDENSTEIN).

Peace, intendant!

IDENSTEIN.

Oh!
I am dumb.

STRALENHEIM (*to* WERNER).

Have you been long here?

WERNER.

Long?

STRALENHEIM.

I sought
An answer, not an echo.

WERNER.

You may seek
Both from the walls. I am not used to answer
Those whom I know not.

STRALENHEIM.

Indeed! ne'er the less,
You might reply with courtesy, to what
Is ask'd in kindness.

WERNER.

When I know it such,
I will requite—that is, *reply*—in unison.

STRALENHEIM.

The intendant said, you had been detain'd by sickness——
If I could aid you—journeying the same way?

WERNER (*quickly*).

I am not journeying the same way.

STRALENHEIM.

How know ye
That, ere you know my route?

WERNER.

Because there is
But one way that the rich and poor must tread

Together. You diverged from that dread path
Some hours ago, and I some days; henceforth
Our roads must lie asunder, though they tend
All to one home.

STRALENHEIM.

Your language is above
Your station.

WERNER (*bitterly*).

Is it?

STRALENHEIM.

Or, at least, beyond
Your garb.

WERNER.

'T is well that it is not beneath it,
As sometimes happens to the better clad.
But, in a word, what would you with me?

STRALENHEIM (*startled*).

I?

WERNER.

Yes—you? You know me not, and question me,
And wonder that I answer not—not knowing
My inquisitor. Explain what you would have,
And then I 'll satisfy yourself, or me.

STRALENHEIM.

I knew not that you had reasons for reserve.

WERNER.

Many have such:—Have you none?

STRALENHEIM.

None which can
Interest a mere stranger.

WERNER.

Then forgive
The same unknown and humble stranger, if
He wishes to remain so to the man
Who can have nought in common with him.

STRALENHEIM.

Sir,
I will not balk your humour, though untoward:
I only meant you service—but, good night!
Intendant, show the way!
(*to* GABOR). Sir, you will with me?

[*Exeunt* STRALENHEIM *and Attendants,* IDENSTEIN *and* GABOR.

WERNER (*solus*).

'T is he! I am taken in the toils. Before
I quitted Hamburgh, Giulio, his late steward,
Inform'd me, that he had obtain'd an order
From Brandenburgh's elector, for the arrest
Of Kruitzner (such the name I then bore), when
I came upon the frontier; the free city
Alone preserved my freedom—till I left
Its walls—fool that I was to quit them! But
I deem'd this humble garb, and route obscure,
Had baffled the slow hounds in their pursuit.
What 's to be done? He knows me not by person;
Nor could aught, save the eye of apprehension,
Have recognised *him,* after twenty years,
We met so rarely and so coldly in
Our youth. But those about him! Now I can
Divine the frankness of the Hungarian, who,
No doubt, is a mere tool and spy of Stralenheim's
To sound and to secure me. Without means!
Sick, poor—begirt too with the flooding rivers,
Impassable even to the wealthy, with
All the appliances which purchase modes
Of overpowering peril with men's lives,—
How can I hope? An hour ago methought
My state beyond despair; and now, 't is such,
The past seems paradise. Another day,
And I 'm detected,—on the very eve
Of honours, rights, and my inheritance,
When a few drops of gold might save me still
In favouring an escape.

Enter IDENSTEIN *and* FRITZ *in conversation.*

FRITZ.

Immediately.

IDENSTEIN.

I tell you, 't is impossible.

FRITZ.

It must
Be tried, however; and if one express
Fail, you must send on others, till the answer
Arrives from Frankfort, from the commandant.

IDENSTEIN.

I will do what I can.

FRITZ.

And recollect
To spare no trouble; you will be repaid
Tenfold.

IDENSTEIN.

The baron is retired to rest?

FRITZ.

He hath thrown himself into an easy chair
Beside the fire, and slumbers; and has order'd
He may not be disturb'd until eleven,
When he will take himself to bed.

IDENSTEIN.

Before
An hour is past I 'll do my best to serve him.

FRITZ.

Remember! [*Exit* FRITZ.

IDENSTEIN.

The devil take these great men! they
Think all things made for them. Now here must I
Rouse up some half a dozen shivering vassals
From their scant pallets, and, at peril of
Their lives, despatch them o'er the river towards
Frankfort. Methinks the baron's own experience
Some hours ago might teach him fellow-feeling:
But no, «it *must,*» and there 's an end. How now?
Are you there, Mynheer Werner?

WERNER.

You have left
Your noble guest right quickly.

IDENSTEIN.

Yes—he 's dozing,
And seems to like that none should sleep besides.
Here is a packet for the commandant
Of Frankfort, at all risks and all expenses;
But I must not lose time: good night!

[*Exit* IDENSTEIN.

WERNER.

«To Frankfort!»
So, so, it thickens! Ay, «the commandant.»
This tallies well with all the prior steps
Of this cool calculating fiend, who walks
Between me and my father's house. No doubt
He writes for a detachment to convey me
Into some secret fortress.—Sooner than
This——

[WERNER *looks around, and snatches up a knife lying on a table in a recess.*

Now I am master of myself at least.
Hark!—footsteps! How do I know that Stralenheim
Will wait for even the show of that authority
Which is to overshadow usurpation?
That he suspects me 's certain. I 'm alone;
He with a numerous train. I weak; he strong
In gold, in numbers, rank, authority.
I nameless, or involving in my name
Destruction, till I reach my own domain;
He full blown with his titles, which impose
Still further on these obscure petty burghers
Than they could do elsewhere. Hark! nearer still!
I 'll to the secret passage, which communicates
With the——No! all is silent—'t was my fancy!—
Still as the breathless interval between
The flash and thunder:—I must hush my soul
Amidst its perils. Yet I will retire,
To see if still be unexplored the passage
I wot of: it will serve me as a den
Of secrecy for some hours, at the worst.

[WERNER *draws a pannel and exit, closing it after him.*

Enter GABOR *and* JOSEPHINE.

GABOR.

Where is your husband?

JOSEPHINE.

Here, I thought: I left him
Not long since in his chamber. But these rooms
Have many outlets, and he may be gone
To accompany the intendant.

GABOR.

Baron Stralenheim
Put many questions to the intendant on
The subject of your lord, and, to be plain,
I have my doubts if he means well.

JOSEPHINE.

Alas!
What can there be in common with the proud
And wealthy baron and the unknown Werner?

GABOR.

That you know best.

JOSEPHINE.

Or, if it were so, how
Come you to stir yourself in his behalf,
Rather than that of him whose life you saved?

GABOR.

I help'd to save him, as in peril; but
I did not pledge myself to serve him in
Oppression. I know well these nobles, and
Their thousand modes of trampling on the poor.
I have proved them; and my spirit boils up when
I find them practising against the weak:—
This is my only motive.

JOSEPHINE.

It would be
Not easy to persuade my consort of
Your good intentions.

GABOR.

Is he so suspicious?

JOSEPHINE.

He was not once; but time and troubles have
Made him what you beheld.

GABOR.

I 'm sorry for it.
Suspicion is a heavy armour, and
With its own weight impedes more than protects.
Good night. I trust to meet with him at daybreak.

[*Exit* GABOR.

Re-enter IDENSTEIN *and some peasants.* JOSEPHINE *retires up the Hall.*

FIRST PEASANT.

But if I 'm drown'd?

IDENSTEIN.

Why, you 'll be well paid for 't,
And have risk'd more than drowning for as much,
I doubt not.

SECOND PEASANT.

But our wives and families?

IDENSTEIN.

Cannot be worse off than they are, and may
Be better.

THIRD PEASANT.

I have neither, and will venture.

IDENSTEIN.

That 's right. A gallant carle, and fit to be
A soldier. I 'll promote you to the ranks
In the prince's body guard—if you succeed;
And you shall have besides in sparkling coin
Two thalers.

THIRD PEASANT.

No more?

IDENSTEIN.

Out upon your avarice!
Can that low vice alloy so much ambition?
I tell thee, fellow, that two thalers in
Small change will subdivide into a treasure.
Do not five hundred thousand heroes daily
Risk lives and souls for the tithe of one thaler?
When had you half the sum?

THIRD PEASANT.

Never—but ne'er
The less I must have three.

IDENSTEIN.

Have you forgot
Whose vassal you were born, knave?

THIRD PEASANT.

No—the prince's,
And not the stranger's.

IDENSTEIN.

Sirrah! in the prince's
Absence, I 'm sovereign; and the baron is
My intimate connexion;—«Cousin Idenstein!
(Quoth he) you 'll order out a dozen villains.»
And so, you villains! troop—march—march, I say:
And if a single dog's ear of this packet
Be sprinkled by the Oder—look to it!
For every page of paper, shall a hide
Of yours be stretch'd as parchment on a drum,
Like Ziska's skin, to beat alarm to all
Refractory vassals, who can not effect
Impossibilities—Away, ye earth-worms!

[*Exit, driving them out.*

JOSEPHINE (*coming forward*).

I fain would shun these scenes, too oft repeated,
Of feudal tyranny o'er petty victims;
I cannot aid, and will not witness such.
Even here, in this remote, unnamed, dull spot,
The dimmest in the district's map, exist
The insolence of wealth in poverty
O'er something poorer still—the pride of rank

In servitude, o'er something still more servile;
And vice in misery affecting still
A tatter'd splendour. What a state of being!
In Tuscany, my own dear sunny land,
Our nobles were but citizens and merchants,
Like Cosmo. We had evils, but not such
As these; and our all-ripe and gushing valleys
Made poverty more cheerful, where each herb
Was in itself a meal, and every vine
Rain'd, as it were, the beverage which makes glad
The heart of man; and the ne'er unfelt sun
(But rarely clouded, and when clouded, leaving
His warmth behind in memory of his beams),
Makes the worn mantle, and the thin robe, less
Oppressive than an emperor's jewell'd purple.
But, here! the despots of the north appear
To imitate the ice-wind of their clime,
Searching the shivering vassal through his rags,
To wring his soul—as the bleak elements
His form. And 't is to be amongst these sovereigns
My husband pants! and such his pride of birth—
That twenty years of usage, such as no
Father, born in a humble state, could nerve
His soul to persecute a son withal,
Hath changed no atom of his early nature;
But I, born nobly also, from my father'
Kindness was taught a different lesson. Father!
May thy long-tried, and now rewarded spirit,
Look down on us and our so long desired
Ulric! I love my son, as thou didst me!
What 's that? Thou, Werner! can it be: and thus.

Enter WERNER *hastily, with the knife in his hand, by the secret pannel, which he closes hurriedly after him.*

WERNER (*not at first recognising her*).
Discovered! then I 'll stab——(*recognising her.*)
Ah! Josephine,
Why art thou not at rest?

JOSEPHINE.
What rest? My God!
What doth this mean?

WERNER (*showing a rouleau*).
Here 's *gold—gold,* Josephine,
Will rescue us from this detested dungeon.

JOSEPHINE.
And how obtain'd?—that knife!

WERNER.
'T is bloodless—*yet.*
Away—we must to our chamber.

JOSEPHINE.
But whence com'st thou?

WERNER.
Ask not! but let us think where we shall go—
This—this will make us way (*showing the gold.*)—
I 'll fit them now.

JOSEPHINE.
I dare not think thee guilty of dishonour.

WERNER.
Dishonour!

JOSEPHINE.
I have said it.

WERNER.
Let us hence:
'T is the last night, I trust, that we need pass here.

JOSEPHINE.
And not the worst, I hope.

WERNER.
Hope! I make *sure.*
But let us to our chamber.

JOSEPHINE.
Yet one question—
What hast thou *done*?

WERNER. (*fiercely*).
Left one thing *undone,* which
Had made all well: let me not think of it!
Away!

JOSEPHINE.
Alas, that I should doubt of thee!

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the same Palace.

Enter IDENSTEIN *and others.*

IDENSTEIN.
Fine doings! goodly doings! honest doings!
A baron pillaged in a prince's palace!
Where, till this hour, such a sin ne'er was heard of.

FRITZ.
It hardly could, unless the rats despoil'd
The mice of a few shreds of tapestry.

IDENSTEIN.
Oh! that I ere should live to see this day!
The honour of our city 's gone for ever.

FRITZ.
Well, but now to discover the delinquent:
The baron is determined not to lose
This sum without a search.

IDENSTEIN.
And so am I.

FRITZ.
But whom do you suspect?

IDENSTEIN.
Suspect! all people
Without—within—above—below—Heaven help me!

FRITZ.
Is there no other entrance to the chamber?

IDENSTEIN.
None whatever.

FRITZ.
Are you sure of that?

IDENSTEIN.
Certain. I have lived and served here since my birth,
And if there were such, must have heard of such,
Or seen it.

FRITZ.
Then it must be some one who
Had access to the antechamber.

IDENSTEIN.
Doubtless.

FRITZ.
The man call'd *Werner* 's poor!

IDENSTEIN.
Poor as a miser,
But lodged so far off, in the other wing,
By which there 's no communication with
The baron's chamber, that it can't be he:
Besides, I bade him «good night» in the hall,
Almost a mile off, and which only leads
To his own apartment, about the same time
When this burglarious, larcenous felony
Appears to have been committed.

FRITZ.

There 's another—
The stranger—

IDENSTEIN.

The Hungarian?

FRITZ.

He who help'd
To fish the baron from the Oder.

IDENSTEIN.

Not
Unlikely. But, hold—might it not have been
One of the suite?

FRITZ.

How? *We*, Sir!

IDENSTEIN.

No—not *you*,
But some of the inferior knaves. You say
The baron was asleep in the great chair—
The velvet chair—in his embroider'd night-gown;
His toilet spread before him, and upon it
A cabinet with letters, papers, and
Several rouleaux of gold; of which *one* only
Has disappear'd:—the door unbolted, with
No difficult access to any.

FRITZ.

Good sir,
Be not so quick: the honour of the corps,
Which forms the baron's household, 's unimpeach'd,
From steward to scullion, save in the fair way
Of peculation; such as in accompts,
Weights, measures, larder, cellar, buttery,
Where all men take their prey; as also in
Postage of letters, gathering of rents,
Purveying feasts, and understanding with
The honest trades who furnish noble masters:
But for your petty, picking, downright thievery,
We scorn it as we do board-wages: then
Had one of our folks done it, he would not
Have been so poor a spirit as to hazard
His neck for *one* rouleau, but have swoop'd all;
Also the cabinet, if portable.

IDENSTEIN.

There is some sense in that——

FRITZ.

No, Sir; be sure
T was none of our corps; but some petty, trivial
Picker and stealer, without art or genius.
The only question is—Who else could have
Access, save the Hungarian and yourself?

IDENSTEIN.

You don't mean me?

FRITZ.

No, sir; I honour more
Your talents——

IDENSTEIN.

And my principles, I hope.

FRITZ.

Of course. But to the point: What 's to be done?

IDENSTEIN.

Nothing—but there 's a good deal to be said.
We 'll offer a reward; move heaven and earth,
And the police (though there 's none nearer than
Frankfort); post notices in manuscript
(For we 've no printer); and set by my clerk
To read them (for few can, save he and I).
We 'll send out villains to strip beggars, and
Search empty pockets; also, to arrest
All gipsies, and ill-clothed and sallow people.
Prisoners we 'll have at least, if not the culprit;
And for the baron's gold—if 't is not found,
At least he shall have the full satisfaction
Of melting twice its substance in the raising
The ghost of this rouleau. Here 's alchymy
For your lord's losses!

FRITZ.

He hath found a better.

IDENSTEIN.

Where?

FRITZ.

In a most immense inheritance.
The late Count Siegendorf, his distant kinsman,
Is dead near Prague, in his castle, and my lord
Is on his way to take possession.

IDENSTEIN.

Was there
No heir?

FRITZ.

Oh, yes; but he has disappear'd
Long from the world's eye, and perhaps the world.
A prodigal son, beneath his father's ban
For the last twenty years; for whom his sire
Refused to kill the fatted calf; and, therefore,
If living, he must chew the husks still. But
The baron would find means to silence him,
Were he to re-appear: he 's politic,
And has much influence with a certain court.

IDENSTEIN.

He 's fortunate.

FRITZ.

T is true, there is a grandson,
Whom the late count reclaim'd from his son's hands,
And educated as his heir; but then
His birth is doubtful.

IDENSTEIN.

How so?

FRITZ.

His sire made
A left-hand, love, imprudent sort of marriage,
With an Italian exile 's dark-eyed daughter:
Noble, they say, too; but no match for such
A house as Siegendorf's. The grandsire ill
Could brook the alliance; and could ne'er be brought
To see the parents, though he took the son.

IDENSTEIN.

If he 's a lad of mettle, he may yet
Dispute your claim, and weave a web that may
Puzzle your baron to unravel.

FRITZ.

Why,
For mettle, he has quite enough: they say,
He forms a happy mixture of his sire
And grandsire's qualities,—impetuous as
The former, and deep as the latter; but
The strangest is, that he too disappear'd
Some months ago.

IDENSTEIN.

The devil he did!

FRITZ.

Why, yes;
It must have been at his suggestion, at
An hour so critical as was the eve
Of the old man's death, whose heart was broken by it.

IDENSTEIN.

Was there no cause assign'd?

FRITZ.

Plenty, no doubt,
And none perhaps the true one. Some averr'd
It was to seek his parents; some, because
The old man held his spirit in so strictly
(But that could scarce be, for he doted on him):
A third believed he wish'd to serve in war,
But peace being made soon after his departure,
He might have since return'd, were that the motive;
A fourth set charitably have surmised,
As there was something strange and mystic in him,
That in the wild exuberance of his nature,
He had join'd the black bands, who lay waste Lusatia,
The mountains of Bohemia and Silesia,
Since the last years of war had dwindled into
A kind of general condottiero system
Of bandit warfare; each troop with its chief,
And all against mankind.

IDENSTEIN.

That cannot be.
A young heir, bred to wealth and luxury,
To risk his life and honours with disbanded
Soldiers and desperadoes!

FRITZ.

Heaven best knows!
But there are human natures so allied
Unto the savage love of enterprise,
That they will seek for peril as a pleasure.
I 've heard that nothing can reclaim your Indian,
Or tame the tiger, though their infancy
Were fed on milk and honey. After all,
Your Wallenstein, your Tilly and Gustavus,
Your Bannier, and your Torstenson and Weimar,
Were but the same thing upon a grand scale;
And now that they are gone, and peace proclaim'd,
They who would follow the same pastime must
Pursue it on their own account. Here comes
The baron, and the Saxon stranger, who
Was his chief aid in yesterday's escape,
But did not leave the cottage by the Oder
Until this morning.

Enter STRALENHEIM *and* ULRIC.

STRALENHEIM.

Since you have refused
All compensation, gentle stranger, save
Inadequate thanks, you almost check even them,
Making me feel the worthlessness of words,
And blush at my own barren gratitude,
They seem so niggardly, compared with what
Your courteous courage did in my behalf.

ULRIC.

I pray you press the theme no further.

STRALENHEIM.

But
Can I not serve you? You are young, and of
That mould which throws out heroes; fair in favour;
Brave, I know, by my living now to say so,
And, doubtlessly, with such a form and heart,
Would look into the fiery eyes of war,
As ardently for glory as you dared
An obscure death to save an unknown stranger
In an as perilous but opposite element.
You are made for the service: I have served;
Have rank by birth and soldiership, and friends
Who shall be yours. 'T is true, this pause of peace
Favours such views at present scantily;
But 't will not last, men 's spirits are too stirring;
And, after thirty years of conflict, peace
Is but a petty war, as the times show us
In every forest, or a mere arm'd truce.
War will reclaim his own; and, in the mean time,
You might obtain a post, which would ensure
A higher soon, and, by my influence, fail not
To rise. I speak of Brandenburgh, wherein
I stand well with the elector; in Bohemia,
Like you, I am a stranger, and we are now
Upon its frontier.

ULRIC.

You perceive my garb
Is Saxon, and of course my service due
To my own sovereign. If I must decline
Your offer, 't is with the same feeling which
Induced it.

STRALENHEIM.

Why, this is mere usury!
I owe my life to you, and you refuse
The acquittance of the interest of the debt,
To heap more obligations on me, till
I bow beneath them.

ULRIC.

You shall say so when
I claim the payment.

STRALENHEIM.

Well, sir, since you will not—
You are nobly born?

ULRIC.

I 've heard my kinsmen say so.

STRALENHEIM.

Your actions show it. Might I ask your name?

ULRIC.

Ulric.

STRALENHEIM.

Your house's?

ULRIC.

When I 'm worthy of it,
I 'll answer you.

STRALENHEIM (*aside*).

Most probably an Austrian,
Whom these unsettled times forbid to boast
His lineage on these wild and dangerous frontiers,
Where the name of his country is abhorr'd.
[*Aloud to* FRITZ *and* IDENSTEIN.
So, sirs! how have ye sped in your researches?

IDENSTEIN.

Indifferent well, your excellency.

STRALENHEIM.

Then
I am to deem the plunderer is caught?

IDENSTEIN.

Humph!—not exactly.

STRALENHEIM.

Or at least suspected.

IDENSTEIM.

Oh! for that matter, very much suspected.

STRALENHEIM.

Who may he be?

IDENSTEIN.

Why, don't *you* know, my lord?

STRALENHEIM.

How should I? I was fast asleep.

IDENSTEIN.

And so
Was I, and that 's the cause I know no more
Than does your excellency.

STRALENHEIM.

Dolt!

IDENSTEIN.

Why, if
Your lordship, being robb'd, don't recognise
The rogue; how should I, not being robb'd, identify
The thief among so many? In the crowd,
May it please your excellency, your thief looks
Exactly like the rest, or rather better:
'T is only at the bar and in the dungeon
That wise men know your felon by his features;
But I 'll engage, that if seen there but once,
Whether he be found criminal or no,
His face shall be so.

STRALENHEIM (*to* FRITZ).

Prithee, Fritz, inform me
What hath been done to trace the fellow?

FRITZ.

Faith!
My lord, not much as yet, except conjecture.

STRALENHEIM.

Besides the loss (which, I must own, affects me
Just now materially), I needs would find
The villain out of public motives; for
So dexterous a spoiler, who could creep
Through my attendants, and so many peopled
And lighted chambers, on my rest, and snatch
The gold before my scarce closed eyes, would soon
Leave bare your borough, Sir Intendant!

IDENSTEIN.

True;
If there were aught to carry off, my lord.

ULRIC.

What is all this?

STRALENHEIM.

You join'd us but this morning,
And have not heard that I was robb'd last night.

ULRIC.

Some rumour of it reach'd me as I pass'd
The outer chambers of the palace, but
I know no further.

STRALENHEIM.

It is a strange business:
The intendant can inform you of the facts.

IDENSTEIN.

Most willingly. You see——

STRALENHEIM (*impatiently*).

Defer your tale,
Till certain of the hearer's patience.

IDENSTEIN.

That
Can only be approved by proofs. You see——

STRALENHEIM (*again interrupting him, and addressing* ULRIC.

In short, I was asleep upon a chair,
My cabinet before me, with some gold
Upon it (more than I much like to lose,
Though in part only): some ingenious person
Contrived to glide through all my own attendants,
Besides those of the place, and bore away
An hundred golden ducats, which to find
I would be fain, and there 's an end; perhaps
You (as I still am rather faint), would add
To yesterday's great obligation, this,
Though slighter, yet not slight, to aid these men
(Who seem but lukewarm) in recovering it?

ULRIC.

Most willingly, and without loss of time—
(*To* IDENSTEIN). Come hither, Mynheer!

IDENSTEIN.

But so much haste bodes
Right little speed, and——

ULRIC.

Standing motionless,
None; so let 's march, we 'll talk as we go on.

IDENSTEIN.

But——

ULRIC.

Show the spot, and then I 'll answer you.

FRITZ.

I will, sir, with his excellency's leave.

STRALENHEIM.

Do so, and take yon old ass with you.

FRITZ.

Hence!

ULRIC.

Come on, old oracle, expound thy riddle!

[*Exit with* IDENSTEIN *and* FRITZ.

STRALENHEIM (*solus*).

A stalwart, active, soldier-looking stripling,
Handsome as Hercules ere his first labour,
And with a brow of thought beyond his years
When in repose, till his eye kindles up
In answering yours. I wish I could engage him;
I have need of some such spirits near me now,
For this inheritance is worth a struggle.
And though I am not the man to yield without one,
Neither are they who now rise up between me
And my desire. The boy, they say, 's a bold one:
But he hath play'd the truant in some hour
Of freakish folly, leaving fortune to
Champion his claims: that 's well. The father, whom
For years I 've track'd, as does the blood-hound, never
In sight, but constantly in scent, had put me
To fault, but *here* I *have* him, and that 's better.
It must be *he!* All circumstance proclaims it;
And careless voices, knowing not the cause
Of my inquiries, still confirm it—Yes!
The man, his bearing, and the mystery
Of his arrival and the time; the account, too,
The intendant gave (for I have not beheld her)
Of his wife's dignified but foreign aspect:
Besides the antipathy with which we met,
As snakes and lions shrink back from each other
By secret instinct both must be foes
Deadly, without being natural prey to either;
All—all—confirm it to my mind: however,
We 'll grapple, ne'ertheless. In a few hours
The order comes from Frankfort, if these waters'
Rise not the higher (and the weather favours
Their quick abatement), and I 'll have him safe
Within a dungeon, where he may avouch
His real estate and name; and there 's no harm done,
Should he prove other than I deem. This robbery
(Save for the actual loss), is lucky also:
He 's poor, and that 's suspicious—he 's unknown,

And that 's defenceless,—true, we have no proofs
Of guilt, but what hath he of innocence?
Were he a man indifferent to my prospects,
In other bearings, I should rather lay
The inculpation on the Hungarian, who
Hath something which I like not; and alone
Of all around, except the intendant, and
The prince's household and my own, had ingress
Familiar to the chamber.

Enter GABOR.

Friend, how fare you?

GABOR.

As those who fare well every where, when they
Have supp'd and slumber'd, no great matter how—
And you, my lord?

STRALENHEIM.

Better in rest than purse:
Mine inn is like to cost me dear.

GABOR.

I heard
Of your late loss: but 't is a trifle to
One of your order.

STRALENHEIM.

You would hardly think so
Were the loss yours.

GABOR.

I never had so much
(At once) in my whole life, and therefore am not
Fit to decide. But I came here to seek you.
Your couriers are turn'd back—I have outstript them,
In my return.

STRALENHEIM.

You!—Why?

GABOR.

I went at day-break,
To watch for the abatement of the river,
As being anxious to resume my journey.
Your messengers were all check'd like myself;
And, seeing the case hopeless, I await
The current's pleasure.

STRALENHEIM.

Would the dogs were in it!
Why did they not, at least, attempt the passage?
I order'd this at all risks.

GABOR.

Could you order
The Oder to divide, as Moses did
The Red Sea (scarcely redder than the flood
Of the swoln stream), and be obey'd, perhaps
They might have ventured.

STRALENHEIM.

I must see to it:
The knaves! the slaves!—but they shall smart for this.
[*Exit* STRALENHEIM.

GABOR (*solus*).

There goes my noble, feudal, self-will'd baron!
Epitome of what brave chivalry
The preux chevaliers of the good old times
Have left us. Yesterday he would have given
His lands (if he hath any), and, still dearer,
His sixteen quarterings, for as much fresh air
As would have filled a bladder, while he lay
Gurgling and foaming half way through the window
Of his o'erset and water-logg'd conveyance;
And now he storms at half a dozen wretches
Because they love their lives too! Yet he 's right:
'T is strange they should, when such as he may put them
To hazard at his pleasure. Oh! thou world!
Thou art indeed a melancholy jest! [*Exit* GABOR.

SCENE II.

The Apartment of WERNER, *in the Palace.*

Enter JOSEPHINE *and* ULRIC.

JOSEPHINE.

Stand back, and let me look on thee again!
My Ulric!—my beloved!—can it be—
After twelve years?

ULRIC.

My dearest mother!

JOSEPHINE.

Yes!
My dream is realized—how beautiful—
How more than all I sigh'd for! Heaven receive
A mother's thanks!—a mother's tears of joy!
This is indeed thy work!—At such an hour, too,
He comes not only as a son but saviour.

ULRIC.

If such joy await me, it must double
What I now feel, and lighten, from my heart,
A part of the long debt of duty, not
Of love (for that was ne'er withheld)—forgive me!
This long delay was not my fault.

JOSEPHINE.

I know it,
But cannot think of sorrow now, and doubt
If I e'er felt it, 't is so dazzled from
My memory, by this oblivious transport!—
My son!

Enter WERNER.

WERNER.

What have we here, more strangers?

JOSEPHINE.

No!
Look upon him! What do you see?

WERNER.

A stripling,
For the first time——

ULRIC (*kneeling*).

For twelve long years, my father!

WERNER.

Oh, God!

JOSEPHINE.

He faints!

WERNER.

No—I am better now—
Ulric! (*Embraces him.*)

ULRIC.

My father, Siegendorf!

WERNER (*starting*).

Hush! boy—
The walls may hear that name!

ULRIC.

What then?

WERNER.

Why, then—
But we will talk of that anon, Remember,
I must be known here but as Werner. Come!
Come to my arms again! Why, thou look'st all

I should have been, and was not. Josephine!
Sure 't is no father's fondness dazzles me;
But had I seen that form amid ten thousand
Youth of the choicest, my heart would have chosen
This for my son!

ULRIC.

And yet you knew me not!

WERNER.

Alas! I have had that upon my soul
Which makes me look on all men with an eye
That only knows the evil at first glance.

ULRIC.

My memory served me far more fondly: I
Have not forgotten aught; and ofttimes in
The proud and princely halls of—(I 'll not name them,
As you say that 't is perilous), but i' the pomp
Of your sire's feudal mansion, I look'd back
To the Bohemian mountains many a sunset,
And wept to see another day go down
O'er thee and me, with those huge hills between us.
They shall not part us more.

WERNER.

I know not that.
Are you aware my father is no more?

ULRIC.

Oh heavens! I left him in a green old age,
And looking like the oak, worn, but still steady
Amidst the elements, whilst younger trees
Fell fast around him. 'T was scarce three months since.

WERNER.

Why did you leave him?

JOSEPHINE (*embracing* ULRIC).

Can you ask that question?
Is he not *here*?

WERNER.

True; he hath sought his parents,
And found them; but, oh! *how*, and in what state!

ULRIC.

All shall be better'd. What we have to do
Is to proceed, and to assert our rights,
Or rather yours; for I waive all, unless
Your father has disposed in such a sort
Of his broad lands as to make mine the foremost,
So that I must prefer my claim for form:
But I trust better, and that all is yours.

WERNER.

Have you not heard of Stralenheim?

ULRIC.

I saved
His life but yesterday: he 's here.

WERNER.

You saved
The serpent who will sting us all!

ULRIC.

You speak
Riddles: what is this *Stralenheim* to us?

WERNER.

Every thing. One who claims our fathers' lands:
Our distant kinsman, and our nearest foe.

ULRIC.

I never heard his name till now. The count,
Indeed, spoke sometimes of a kinsman, who,
If his own line should fail, might be remotely
Involved in the succession; but his titles
Were never named before me—and what then?
His right must yield to ours.

WERNER.

Ay, if at Prague:
But here he is all powerful: and has spread
Snares for thy father, which, if hitherto
He hath escaped them, is by fortune, not
By favour.

ULRIC.

Doth he personally know you?

WERNER.

No; but he guesses shrewdly at my person,
As he betray'd last night; and I, perhaps,
But owe my temporary liberty
To his uncertainty.

ULRIC.

I think you wrong him
(Excuse me for the phrase); but Stralenheim
Is not what you prejudge him, or, if so,
He owes me something both for past and present;
I saved his life. he therefore trusts in me;
He hath been plunder'd too, since he came hither;
Is sick; a stranger; and as such not now
Able to trace the villain who hath robb'd him;
I have pledged myself to do so; and the business
Which brought me here was chiefly that: but I
Have found, in searching for another's dross,
My own whole treasure—you, my parents!

WERNER (*agitatedly*).

Who
Taught you to mouth that name of «villain?»

ULRIC.

What
More noble name belongs to common thieves?

WERNER.

Who taught you thus to brand an unknown being
With an infernal stigma?

ULRIC.

My own feelings
Taught me to name a ruffian from his deeds.

WERNER.

Who taught you, long-sought, and ill-found boy! that
It would be safe for my own son to insult me?

ULRIC.

I named a villain. What is there in common
With such a being and my father?

WERNER.

Every thing!
That ruffian is thy father!

JOSEPHINE.

Oh, my son!
Believe him not—and yet!——(*Her voice falters.*)

ULRIC (*starts, looks earnestly at* WERNER, *and then says slowly*)

And you avow it?

WERNER.

Ulric! before you dare despise your father,
Learn to divine and judge his actions. *Young*,
Rash, new to life, and rear'd in luxury 's lap,
Is it for you to measure passion's force,
Or misery's temptation? Wait—(not long,
It cometh like the night, and quickly)—Wait!—
Wait till, like me, your hopes are blighted—till
Sorrow and shame are handmaids of your cabin;
Famine and poverty your guests at table;
Despair your bed-fellow—then rise, but not
From sleep, and judge! Should that day e'er arrive—
Should you see then the serpent, who hath coil'd

Himself around all that is dear and noble
Of you and yours, lie slumbering in your path,
With but *his* folds between your steps and happiness,
When *he*, who lives but to tear from you name,
Lands, life itself, lies at your mercy, with
Chance your conductor; midnight for your mantle;
The bare knife in your hand, and earth asleep,
Even to your deadliest foe; and he as 't were
Inviting death, by looking like it, while
His death alone can save you:—Thank your God!
If then, like me, content with petty plunder,
You turn aside——I did so.

ULRIC.

But——

WERNER (*abruptly*).

Hear me!
I will not brook a human voice—scarce dare
Listen to my own (if that be human still)—
Hear me! you do not know this man—I do.
He 's mean, deceitful, avaricious. You
Deem yourself safe, as young and brave; but learn
None are secure from desperation, few
From subtilty. My worst foe, Stralenheim,
Housed in a prince's palace, couch'd within
A prince's chamber, lay below my knife!
An instant—a mere motion—the least impulse—
Had swept him and all fears of mine from earth.
He was within my power—my knife was raised—
Withdrawn—and I 'm in his: are you not so?
Who tells you that he knows you *not*? Who says
He hath not lured you here to end you? or
To plunge you, with your parents, in a dungeon?
[*He pauses.*

ULRIC.

Proceed—proceed!

WERNER.

Me he hath ever known,
And hunted through each change of time—name—fortune—
And why not *you*? Are you more versed in men?
He wound snares round me; flung along my path
Reptiles, whom, in my youth, I would have spurn'd
Even from my presence; but, in spurning now,
Fill only with fresh venom. Will you be
More patient? Ulric!—Ulric!—there are crimes
Made venial by the occasion, and temptations
Which nature cannot master or forbear.

ULRIC (*looks first at him, and then at* JOSEPHINE).

My mother!

WERNER.

Ay! I thought so: you have now
Only one parent. I have lost alike
Father and son, and stand alone.

ULRIC.

But stay!

[WERNER *rushes out of the chamber.*

JOSEPHINE (*to* ULRIC).

Follow him not, until this storm of passion
Abates. Think 'st thou that were it well for him
I had not follow'd?

ULRIC.

I obey you, mother,
Although reluctantly. My first act shall not
Be one of disobedience.

JOSEPHINE.

Oh! he is good!
Condemn him not from his own mouth, but trust
To me who have borne so much with him, and for him,
That this is but the surface of his soul,
And that the depth is rich in better things.

ULRIC.

These then are but my father's principles?
My mother thinks not with him?

JOSEPHINE.

Nor doth he
Think as he speaks. Alas! long years of grief
Have made him sometimes thus.

ULRIC.

Explain to me
More clearly, then, these claims of Stralenheim,
That, when I see the subject in its bearings,
I may prepare to face him, or at least
To extricate you from your present perils.
I pledge myself to accomplish this—but would
I had arrived a few hours sooner!

JOSEPHINE.

Ay!
Hadst thou but done so!

[*Enter* GABOR *and* IDENSTEIN *with Attendants.*

GABOR (*to* ULRIC).

I have sought you, comrade.
So this is my reward!

ULRIC.

What do you mean?

GABOR.

'S death! have I lived to these years, and for this?
(*To* IDENSTEIN.) But for your age and folly, I would—

IDENSTEIN.

Help!
Hands off! touch an intendant!

GABOR.

Do not think
I 'll honour you so much as save your throat
From the Ravenstone,[1] by choking you myself.

IDENSTEIN.

I thank you for the respite; but there are
Those who have greater need of it than me.

ULRIC.

Unriddle this vile wrangling, or—

GABOR.

At once, then,
The baron has been robb'd, and upon me
This worthy personage has deign'd to fix
His kind suspicions—me! whom he ne'er saw
Till yester' evening.

IDENSTEIN.

Wouldst have me suspect
My own acquaintances? You have to learn
That I keep better company.

GABOR.

You shall
Keep the best shortly, and the last for all men—
The worms! you hound of malice!

[GABOR *seizes on him.*

ULRIC (*interfering*).

Nay, no violence:
He 's old, unarm'd—be temperate, Gabor!

GABOR (*letting go* IDENSTEIN).

True:

[1] The Ravenstone, «Rabenstein,» is the *stone gibbet* of Germany, and so called from the ravens perching on it.

I am a fool to lose myself because
Fools deem me knave: it is their homage.

ULRIC (*to* IDENSTEIN).

How
Fare you?

IDENSTEIN.

Help!

ULRIC.

I *have* help'd you.

IDENSTEIN.

Kill him! then
I 'll say so.

GABOR.

I am calm—live on!

IDENSTEIN.

That 's more
Than you shall do, if there be judge or judgment
In Germany. The baron shall decide!

GABOR.

Does *he* abet you in your accusation?

IDENSTEIN.

Does he not?

GABOR.

Then next time let him go sink
Ere I go hang for snatching him from drowning.
But here he comes!

Enter STRALENHEIM.

GABOR (*goes up to him*).

My noble lord, I 'm here!

STRALENHEIM.

Well, sir!

GABOR.

Have you aught with me?

STRALENHEIM.

What should I
Have with you?

GABOR.

You know best, if yesterday's
Flood has not wash'd away your memory;
But that 's a trifle. I stand here accused,
In phrases not equivocal, by you
Intendant, of the pillage of your person,
Or chamber—is the charge your own, or his?

STRALENHEIM.

I accuse no man.

GABOR.

Then you acquit me, baron?

STRALENHEIM.

I know not whom to accuse, or to acquit,
Or scarcely to suspect.

GABOR.

But you at least
Should know whom *not* to suspect. I am insulted—
Oppress'd here by these menials, and I look
To you for remedy—teach them their duty!
To look for thieves at home were part of it,
If duly taught: but, in one word, if I
Have an accuser, let it be a man
Worthy to be so of a man like me.
I am your equal.

STRALENHEIM.

You!

GABOR.

Ay, sir; and for
Aught that you know, superior; but proceed—
I do not ask for hints, and surmises,
And circumstance, and proofs; I know enough
Of what I have done for you, and what you owe me,
To have at least waited your payment rather
Than paid myself, had I been eager of
Your gold. I also know that were I even
The villain I am deem'd, the service render'd
So recently would not permit you to
Pursue me to the death, except through shame,
Such as would leave your scutcheon but a blank.
But this is nothing; I demand of you
Justice upon your unjust servants, and
From your own lips a disavowal of
All sanction of their insolence: thus much
You owe to the unknown, who asks no more,
And never thought to have ask'd so much.

STRALENHEIM.

This tone
May be of innocence.

GABOR.

'S death! who dare doubt it,
Except such villains as ne'er had it?

STRALENHEIM.

You
Are hot, sir.

GABOR.

Must I turn an icicle
Before the breath of menials, and their master?

STRALENHEIM.

Ulric! you know this man; I found him in
Your company.

GABOR.

We found *you* in the Oder:
Would we had left you there!

STRALENHEIM.

I give you thanks, sir.

GABOR.

I 've earn'd them; but might have earn'd more from others,
Perchance, if I had left you to your fate.

STRALENHEIM.

Ulric! you know this man?

GABOR.

No more than you do,
If he avouches not my honour.

ULRIC.

I
Can vouch your courage, and, as far as my
Own brief connexion led me, honour.

STRALENHEIM.

Then
I 'm satisfied.

GABOR (*ironically*).

Right easily, methinks.
What is the spell in his asseveration
More than in mine?

STRALENHEIM.

I merely said that *I*
Was satisfied—not that you were absolved.

GABOR.

Again! Am I accused or no?

STRALENHEIM.

Go to!
You wax too insolent: if circumstance
And general suspicion be against you,
Is the fault mine? Is 't not enough that I

Decline all question of your guilt or innocence?

GABOR.

My lord, my lord, this is mere cozenage;
A vile equivocation: you well know
Your doubts are certainties to all around you—
Your looks, a voice—your frowns, a sentence; you
Are practising your power on me—because
You have it; but beware, you know not whom
You strive to tread on.

STRALENHEIM.

Threat'st thou?

GABOR.

Not so much
As you accuse. You hint the basest injury,
And I retort it with an open warning.

STRALENHEIM.

As you have said, 't is true I owe you something,
For which you seem disposed to pay yourself.

GABOR.

Not with your gold.

STRALENHEIM.

With bootless insolence.
[*To his Attendants and* IDENSTEIN.
You need not further to molest this man,
But let him go his way. Ulric, good morrow!

[*Exit* STRALENHEIM, IDENSTEIN, *and Attendants.*

GABOR (*following*).

I 'll after him, and——

ULRIC (*stopping him*).

Not a step.

GABOR.

Who shall
Oppose me?

ULRIC.

Your own reason, with a moment's
Thought.

GABOR.

Must I bear this?

ULRIC.

Pshaw! we all must bear
The arrogance of something higher than
Ourselves—the highest cannot temper Satan,
Nor the lowest his vicegerents upon earth.
I 've seen you brave the elements, and bear
Things which had made this silk-worm cast his skin—
And shrink you from a few sharp sneers and words?

GABOR.

Must I bear to be deem'd a thief? If 't were
A bandit of the woods, I could have borne it—
There 's something daring in it—but to steal
The monies of a slumbering man!—

ULRIC.

It seems, then,
You are *not* guilty?

GABOR.

Do I hear aright?
You, too!

ULRIC.

I merely ask'd a simple question.

GABOR.

If the judge ask'd me—I would answer «No»—
To you I answer *thus.* [*He draws.*

ULRIC (*drawing*).

With all my heart!

JOSEPHINE.

Without there! Ho! help! help!—Oh, God! here 's murder!
[*Exit* JOSEPHINE, *shrieking.*

GABOR *and* ULRIC *fight.* GABOR *is disarmed just as* STRALENHEIM, JOSEPHINE, IDENSTEIN, *etc. re-enter.*

JOSEPHINE.

Oh! glorious Heaven! he 's safe!

STRALENHEIM (*to* JOSEPHINE).

Who 's safe?

JOSEPHINE.

My——

ULRIC (*interrupting her with a stern look, and turning afterwards to* STRALENHEIM).

Both!
Here 's no great harm done.

STRALENHEIM.

What hath caused all this?

ULRIC.

You, baron, I believe; but as the effect
Is harmless, let it not disturb you.—Gabor!
There is your sword; and when you bare it next,
Let it not be against your *friends.*

[ULRIC *pronounces the last words slowly and emphatically in a low voice to* GABOR.

GABOR.

I thank you
Less for my life than for your counsel.

STRALENHEIM.

These
Brawls must end here.

GABOR (*taking his sword*).

They *shall.* You have wrong'd me, Ulric,
More with your unkind thoughts than sword; I would
The last were in my bosom rather than
The first in yours. I could have borne yon noble's
Absurd insinuations—Ignorance
And dull suspicion are a part of his
Intail will last him longer than his lands.—
But I may fit *him* yet:—you have vanquish'd me.
I was the fool of passion to conceive
That I could cope with you whom I had seen
Already proved by greater perils than
Rest in this arm. We may meet by and by,
However—but in friendship. [*Exit* GABOR.

STRALENHEIM.

I will brook
No more! This outrage following up his insults,
Perhaps his guilt, has cancell'd all the little
I owed him heretofore for the so vaunted
Aid which he added to your abler succour.
Ulric, you are not hurt?—

ULRIC.

Not even by a scratch.

STRALENHEIM (*to* IDENSTEIN).

Intendant! take your measures to secure
Yon fellow: I revoke my former lenity.
He shall be sent to Frankfort with an escort
The instant that the waters have abated.

IDENSTEIN.

Secure him! he hath got his sword again—
And seems to know the use on 't; 't is his trade,
Belike:—I 'm a civilian.

STRALENHEIM.

Fool! are not
Yon score of vassals dogging at your heels

Enough to seize a dozen such? Hence! after him!

ULRIC.

Baron, I do beseech you!

STRALENHEIM.

I must be
Obey'd. No words!

IDENSTEIN.

Well, if it must be so—
March, vassals! I 'm your leader—and will bring
The rear up: a wise general never should
Expose his precious life—on which all rests.
I like that article of war.

[*Exit* IDENSTEIN *and Attendants.*

STRALENHEIM.

Come hither,
Ulric:—what does that woman here? Oh! now
I recognise her, 't is the stranger's wife
Whom they *name* «Werner.»

ULRIC.

'T is his name.

STRALENHEIM.

Indeed!
Is not your husband visible, fair dame?

JOSEPHINE.

Who seeks him?

STRALENHEIM.

No one—for the present: but
I fain would parley, Ulric, with yourself
Alone.

ULRIC.

I will retire with you.

JOSEPHINE.

Not so.
You are the latest stranger, and command
All places here.
(*Aside to* ULRIC *as she goes out.*) Oh! Ulric, have a care—
Remember what depends on a rash word!

ULRIC (*to* JOSEPHINE).

Fear not!—
[*Exit* JOSEPHINE.

STRALENHEIM.

Ulric, I think that I may trust you?
You saved my life—and acts like these beget
Unbounded confidence.

ULRIC.

Say on.

STRALENHEIM.

Mysterious
And long engender'd circumstances (not
To be now fully enter'd on) have made
This man obnoxious—perhaps fatal to me.

ULRIC.

Who? Gabor, the Hungarian?

STRALENHEIM.

No—this «Werner»—
With the false name and habit.

ULRIC.

How can this be?
He is the poorest of the poor—and yellow
Sickness sits cavern'd in his hollow eye.
The man is helpless.

STRALENHEIM.

He is—'t is no matter—
But if he be the man I deem (and that
He is so, all around us here—and much
That is not here—confirm my apprehension).
He must be made secure, ere twelve hours further.

ULRIC.

And what have I to do with this?

STRALENHEIM.

I have sent
To Frankfort, to the governor, my friend—
(I have the authority to do so by
An order of the house of Brandenburgh)
For a fit escort—but this cursed flood
Bars all access, and may do for some hours.

ULRIC.

It is abating.

STRALENHEIM.

That is well.

ULRIC.

But how
Am I concern'd?

STRALENHEIM.

As one who did so much
For me, you cannot be indifferent to
That which is of more import to me than
The life you rescued.—Keep your eye on *him!*
The man avoids me, knows that I now know him.—
Watch him!—as you would watch the wild boar when
He makes against you in the hunter's gap—
Like him he must be spear'd.

ULRIC.

Why so?

STRALENHEIM.

He stands
Between me and a brave inheritance.
Oh! could you see it! But you shall.

ULRIC.

I hope so.

STRALENHEIM.

It is the richest of the rich Bohemia,
Unscathed by scorching war. It lies so near
The strongest city, Prague, that fire and sword
Have skimm'd it lightly: so that now, besides
Its own exuberance, it bears double value
Confronted with whole realms afar and near
Made deserts.

ULRIC.

You describe it faithfully.

STRALENHEIM.

Ay—could you see it, you would say so—but,
As I have said, you shall.

ULRIC.

I accept the omen.

STRALENHEIM.

Then claim a recompense from it and me,
Such as *both* may make worthy your acceptance
And services to me and mine for ever.

ULRIC.

And this sole, sick, and miserable wretch—
This way-worn stranger—stands between you and
This paradise?—(As Adam did between
The devil and his.)—[*Aside.*]

STRALENHEIM.

He doth.

ULRIC.

Hath he no right?

STRALENHEIM.

Right! none. A disinherited prodigal,
Who for these twenty years disgraced his lineage
In all his acts—but chiefly by his marriage,

And living amidst commerce-fetching burghers,
And dabbling merchants, in a mart of Jews.

ULRIC.

He has a wife, then?

STRALENHEIM.

You 'd be sorry to
Call such your mother. You have seen the woman
He *calls* his wife.

ULRIC.

Is she not so?

STRALENHEIM.

No more
Than he 's your father:—an Italian girl,
The daughter of a banish'd man, who lives
On love and poverty with this same Werner.

ULRIC.

They are childless, then?

STRALENHEIM.

There is or was a bastard,
Whom the old man—the grandsire (as old age
Is ever doting) took to warm his bosom,
As it went chilly downward to the grave:
But the imp stands not in my path—he has fled,
No one knows whither; and if he had not,
His claims alone were too contemptible
To stand.—Why do you smile?

ULRIC.

At your vain fears:
A poor man almost in his grasp—a child
Of doubtful birth—can startle a grandee!

STRALENHEIM.

All 's to be fear'd, where all is to be gain'd.

ULRIC.

True; and aught done to save or to obtain it.

STRALENHEIM.

You have harp'd the very string next to my heart.
I may depend upon you?

ULRIC.

'T were too late
To doubt it.

STRALENHEIM.

Let no foolish pity shake
Your bosom (for the appearance of the man
Is pitiful)—he is a wretch, as likely
To have robb'd me as the fellow more suspected,
Except that circumstance is less against him;
He being lodged far off, and in a chamber
Without approach to mine; and, to say truth,
I think too well of blood allied to mine,
To deem he would descend to such an act;
Besides, he was a soldier, and a brave one
Once—though too rash.

ULRIC.

And they, my lord, we know
By our experience, never plunder till
They knock the brains out first—which makes them heirs,
Not thieves. The dead, who feel nought, can lose nothing,
Nor e'er be robb'd: their spoils are a bequest—
No more.

STRALENHEIM.

Go to! you are a wag. But say
I may be sure you 'll keep an eye on this man,
And let me know his slightest movement towards
Concealment or escape?

ULRIC.

You may be sure
You yourself could not watch him more than I
Will be his sentinel.

STRALENHEIM.

By this you make me
Yours, and for ever.

ULRIC.

Such is my intention.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A Hall in the same Palace, from whence the secret Passage leads.

Enter WERNER *and* GABOR.

GABOR.

Sir, I have told my tale; if it so please you
To give me refuge for a few hours, well—
If not—I 'll try my fortune elsewhere.

WERNER.

How
Can I, so wretched, give to misery
A shelter?—wanting such myself as much
As e'er the hunted deer a covert——

GABOR.

Or
The wounded lion his cool cave. Methinks
You rather look like one would turn at bay,
And rip the hunter's entrails.

WERNER.

Ah!

GABOR.

I care not
If it be so, being much disposed to do
The same myself; but will you shelter me?
I am oppress'd like you—and poor like you—
Disgraced——

WERNER (*abruptly*).

Who told you that I was disgraced?

GABOR.

No one; nor did I say *you* were so: with
Your poverty my likeness ended; but
I said *I* was so—and would add, with truth,
As undeservedly as *you*.

WERNER.

Again!
As *I*?

GABOR.

Or any other honest man.
What the devil would you have? You don't believe me
Guilty of this base theft?

WERNER

No, no—I cannot.

GABOR.

Why, that 's my heart of honour! yon young gallant—
Your miserly intendant, and dense noble—
All—all suspected me; and why? because
I am the worst-clothed and least named amongst them,
Although, were Momus' lattice in our breasts,
My soul might brook to open it more widely
Than theirs; but thus it is—you poor and helpless—
Both still more than myself.

WERNER.

How know you that?

GABOR.

You 're right; I ask for shelter at the hand
Which I call helpless; if you now deny it,
I were well paid. But you, who seem to have proved
The wholesome bitterness of life, know well,
By sympathy, that all the outspread gold
Of the New World, the Spaniard boasts about,
Could never tempt the man who knows its worth,
Weigh'd at its proper value in the balance,
Save in such guise (and there I grant its power,
Because I feel it) as may leave no night-mare
Upon his heart o' nights.

WERNER.

What do you mean?

GABOR.

Just what I say; I thought my speech was plain:
You are no thief—nor I—and, as true men,
Should aid each other.

WERNER.

It is a damn'd world, sir.

GABOR.

So is the nearest of the two next, as
The priests say (and no doubt they should know best),
Therefore I 'll stick by this—as being loth
To suffer martyrdom, at least with such
An epitaph as larceny upon my tomb.
It is but a night's lodging which I crave;
To-morrow I will try the waters, as
The dove did, trusting that they have abated.

WERNER.

Abated? Is there hope of that?

GABOR.

There was
At noontide.

WERNER.

Then we may be safe.

GABOR.

Are *you*
In peril?

WERNER.

Poverty is ever so.

GABOR.

That I know by long practice. Will you not
Promise to make mine less?

WERNER.

Your poverty?

GABOR.

No—you don't look a leech for that disorder;
I meant my peril only: you 've a roof,
And I have none; I merely seek a covert.

WERNER.

Rightly; for how should such a wretch a I
Have gold?

GABOR.

Scarce honestly, to say the truth on't,
Although I almost wish you had the baron's.

WERNER.

Dare you insinuate?

GABOR.

What?

WERNER.

Are you aware
To whom you speak?

GABOR.

No; and I am not used
Greatly to care. (*A noise heard without.*) But hark! they come!

WERNER.

Who come?

GABOR.

The intendant and his man-hounds after me:
I 'd face them—but it were in vain to expect
Justice at hands like theirs. Where shall I go?
But show me any place. I do assure you,
If there be faith in man, I am most guiltless:
Think if it were your own case!

WERNER (*aside*).

Oh, just God!
Thy hell is not hereafter! Am I dust still?

GABOR.

I see you 're moved; and it shows well in you:
I may live to requite it.

WERNER.

Are you not
A spy of Stralenheim's?

GABOR.

Not I! and if
I were, what is there to espy in you:
Although I recollect his frequent question
About you and your spouse, might lead to some
Suspicion; but you best know—what—and why:
I am his deadliest foe.

WERNER.

You?

GABOR.

After such
A treatment for the service which in part
I render'd him—I am his enemy;
If you are not his friend, you will assist me.

WERNER.

I will.

GABOR.

But how?

WERNER (*showing the pannel*).

There is a secret spring;
Remember, I discover'd it by chance,
And used it but for safety.

GABOR.

Open it,
And I will use it for the same.

WERNER.

I found it,
As I have said: it leads through winding walls,
(So thick as to bear paths within their ribs,
Yet lose no jot of strength or stateliness,
And hollow cells, and obscure niches, to
I know not whither; you must not advance:
Give me your word.

GABOR.

It is unnecessary:
How should I make my way in darkness, through
A Gothic labyrinth of unknown windings?

WERNER.

Yes, but who knows to what place it may lead?
I know not—'mark you!,—but who knows it might not
Lead even into the chambers of your foe?
So strangely were contrived these galleries
By our Teutonic fathers in old days,
When man built less against the elements

Than his next neighbour. You must not advance
Beyond the two first windings; if you do
(Albeit I never pass'd them), I 'll not answer
For what you may be led to.

GABOR.

But I will.
A thousand thanks!

WERNER.

You 'll find the spring more obvious
On the other side; and, when you would return,
It yields to the least touch.

GABOR.

I 'll in—farewell!

[GABOR *goes in by the secret pannel.*

WERNER (*solus*).

What have I done? Alas! what *had* I done
Before to make this fearful? Let it be
Still some atonement that I save the man,
Whose sacrifice had saved perhaps my own—
They come! to seek elsewhere what is before them!

Enter IDENSTEIN, *and others.*

IDENSTEIN.

Is he not here? He must have vanish'd then
Through the dim Gothic glass by pious aid
Of pictured saints, upon the red and yellow
Casements, through which the sunset streams like sunrise
On long pearl-colour'd beards and crimson crosses,
And gilded crosiers, and cross'd arms, and cowls,
And helms, and twisted armour, and long swords,
All the fantastic furniture of windows,
Dim with brave knights and holy hermits, whose
Likeness and fame alike rest on some panes
Of crystal, which each rattling wind proclaims
As frail as any other life or glory.
He 's gone, however.

WERNER.

Whom do you seek?

IDENSTEIN.

A villain!

WERNER.

Why need you come so far, then?

IDENSTEIN.

In the search
Of him who robb'd the baron.

WERNER.

Are you sure
You have divined the man?

IDENSTEIN.

As sure as you
Stand there; but where 's he gone?

WERNER.

Who?

IDENSTEIN.

He we sought.

WERNER.

You see he is not here.

IDENSTEIN.

And yet we traced him
Up to this hall: are you accomplices,
Or deal you in the black art?

WERNER.

I deal plainly,
To many men the blackest.

IDENSTEIN.

It may be
I have a question or two for yourself
Hereafter; but we must continue now
Our search for t' other.

WERNER.

You had best begin
Your inquisition now; I may not be
So patient always.

IDENSTEIN.

I should like to know,
In good sooth, if you really are the man
That Stralenheim 's in quest of?

WERNER.

Insolent!
Said you not that he was not here?

IDENSTEIN.

Yes, *one;*
But there 's another whom he tracks more keenly,
And soon, it may be, with authority
Both paramount to his and mine. But, come!
Bustle, my boys! we are at fault.

[*Exit* IDENSTEIN *and Attendants.*

WERNER.

In what
A maze hath my dim destiny involved me!
And one base sin hath done me less ill than
The leaving undone one far greater. Down,
Thou busy devil! rising in my heart!
Thou art too late! I 'll nought to do with blood.

Enter ULRIC.

ULRIC.

I sought you, father.

WERNER.

Is 't not dangerous?

ULRIC.

No; Stralenheim is ignorant of all
Or any of the ties between us: more—
He sends me here a spy upon your actions,
Deeming me wholly his.

WERNER.

I cannot think it:
'Tis but a snare he winds about us both,
To swoop the sire and son at once.

ULRIC.

I cannot
Pause in each petty fear, and stumble at
The doubts that rise like briars in our path,
But must break through them, as an unarm'd carle
Would, though with naked limbs, were the wolf rustling
In the same thicket where he hew'd for bread:
Nets are for thrushes, eagles are not caught so;
We 'll overfly, or rend them.

WERNER.

Show me how?

ULRIC.

Can you not guess?

WERNER.

I cannot.

ULRIC.

That is strange.
Came the thought ne'er into your mind *last night.*?

WERNER.

I understand you not.

ULRIC.

Then we shall never
More understand each other. But to change
The topic——

WERNER.

You mean, to *pursue* it, as
'Tis of our safety.

ULRIC.

Right; I stand corrected.
I see the subject now more clearly, and
Our general situation in its bearings.
The waters are abating; a few hours
Will bring his summon'd myrmidons from Frankfort,
When you will be a prisoner, perhaps worse,
And I an outcast, bastardized by practice
Of this same baron, to make way for him.

WERNER.

And now your remedy! I thought to escape
By means of this accursed gold, but now
I dare not use it, show it, scarce look on it.
Methinks it wears upon its face my guilt
For motto, not the mintage of the state;
And, for the sovereign's head, my own begirt
With hissing snakes, which curl around my temples,
And cry to all beholders—lo! a villain!

ULRIC.

You must not use it, at least, now; but take
This ring. [*He gives* WERNER *a jewel.*

WERNER.

A gem! It was my father's!

ULRIC.

And
As such is now your own. With this you must
Bribe the intendant for his old calèche
And horses to pursue your route at sunrise,
Together with my mother.

WERNER.

And leave you,
So lately found, in peril too?

ULRIC.

Fear nothing!
The only fear were if we fled together,
For that would make our ties beyond all doubt.
The waters only lie in flood between
This burgh and Frankfort; so far's in our favour.
The route on to Bohemia, though encumber'd,
Is not impassable; and when you gain,
A few hours' start, the difficulties will be
The same to your pursuers. Once beyond
The frontier, and you're safe.

WERNER.

My noble boy!

ULRIC.

Hush! hush! no transports: we'll indulge in them
In Castle Siegendorf! Display no gold:
Show Idenstein the gem (I know the man,
And have look'd through him), it will answer thus
A double purpose. Stralenheim lost *gold*—
No jewel, therefore, it could *not* be his;
And then, the man who was possess'd of this
Can hardly be suspected of abstracting
The baron's coin, when he could thus convert
This ring to more than Stralenheim has lost
By his last night's slumber. Be not over timid
In your address, nor yet too arrogant,
And Idenstein will serve you.

WERNER.

I will follow
In all things your direction.

ULRIC.

I would have
Spared you the trouble; but had I appear'd
To take an interest in you, and still more
By dabbling with a jewel in your favour,
All had been known at once.

WERNER.

My guardian angel!
This overpays the past. But how wilt thou
Fare in our absence?

ULRIC.

Stralenheim knows nothing
Of me as aught of kindred with yourself.
I will but wait a day or two with him
To lull all doubts, and then rejoin my father.

WERNER.

To part no more!

ULRIC.

I know not that; but at
The least we'll meet again once more.

WERNER.

My boy!
My friend—my only child, and sole preserver!
Oh, do not hate me!

ULRIC.

Hate my father!

WERNER,

Ay,
My father hated me: why not my son?

ULRIC.

Your father knew you not as I do.

WERNER.

Scorpions
Are in thy words! Thou know me? In this guise
Thou canst not know me, I am not myself,
Yet (hate me not) I will be soon.

ULRIC.

I'll *wait!*
In the mean time be sure that all a son
Can do for parents shall be done for mine.

WERNER.

I see it, and I feel it; yet I feel
Further—that you despise me.

ULRIC.

Wherefore should I?

WERNER.

Must I repeat my humiliation?

ULRIC.

No!
I have fathom'd it and you. But let us talk
Of this no more. Or if it must be ever,
Not *now*; your error has redoubled all
The present difficulties of our house,
At secret war with that of Stralenheim;
All we have now to think of, is to baffle
HIM. I have shown *one* way.

WERNER.

The only one,
And I embrace it, as I did my son,
Who show'd *himself* and father's *safety* in
One day.

ULRIC.

You *shall* be safe: let that suffice.
Would Stralenheim's appearance in Bohemia
Disturb your right, or mine, if once we were
Admitted to our lands?

WERNER.

Assuredly,
Situate as we are now, although the first
Possessor might, as usual, prove the strongest,
Especially the next in blood.

ULRIC.

Blood! 't is
A word of many meanings; in the veins
And out of them it is a different thing—
And so it should be, when the same in blood
(As it is call'd) are aliens to each other,
Like Theban brethren: when a part is bad,
A few spilt ounces purify the rest.

WERNER.

I do not apprehend you.

ULRIC.

That may be—
And should, perhaps,—and yet—but get ye ready;
You and my mother must away to-night.
Here comes the intendant; sound him with the gem,
'T will sink into his venal soul like lead
Into the deep, and bring up slime, and mud,
And ooze, too, from the bottom, as the lead doth
With its greased understratum; but no less
Will serve to warn our vessels through these shoals.
The freight is rich, so heave the line in time!
Farewell! I scarce have time, but yet your *hand*,
My father!——

WERNER.

Let me embrace thee!

ULRIC.

We may be
Observed: subdue your nature to the hour!
Keep off from me as from your foe!

WERNER.

Accursed
Be he, who is the stifling cause, which smothers
The best and sweetest feeling of our hearts,
At such an hour too!

ULRIC.

Yes, curse—it will ease you!
Here is the Intendant.

Enter IDENSTEIN.

Master Idenstein,
How fare you in your purpose? Have you caught
The rogue?

IDENSTEIN.

No, faith!

ULRIC.

Well, there are plenty more:
You may have better luck another chase.
Where is the baron?

IDENSTEIN.

Gone back to his chamber:
And now I think on 't, asking after you
With nobly-born impatience.

ULRIC.

Your great men
Must be answer'd on the instant, as the bound
Of the stung steed replies unto the spur:
'T is well they have horses, too; for if they had not,
I fear that men must draw their chariots, as
They say kings did Sesostris.

IDENSTEIN.

Who was he?

ULRIC.

An old Bohemian—an imperial gipsy.

IDENSTEIN.

A gipsy or Bohemian, 't is the same,
For they pass by both names. And was he one?

ULRIC.

I've heard so; but I must take leave. Intendant,
Your servant!—Werner (*to* WERNER, *slightly*), if that
be your name,
Yours. [*Exit* ULRIC.

IDENSTEIN.

A well-spoken, pretty faced young man!
And prettily behaved! He knows his station,
You see, sir: how he gave to each his due
Precedence!

WERNER.

I perceived it, and applaud
His just discernment and your own.

IDENSTEIN.

That 's well—
That 's very well. You also know your place, too,
And yet I don't know that I know your place.

WERNER (*showing the ring*).

Would this assist your knowledge?

IDENSTEIN.

How!—What!—Eh!
A jewel!

WERNER.

'T is your own, on one condition.

IDENSTEIN.

Mine!—Name it!

WERNER.

That hereafter you permit me
At thrice its value to redeem it; 't is
A family ring.

IDENSTEIN.

A family! *yours!* a gem!
I'm breathless!

WERNER.

You must also furnish me,
An hour ere daybreak, with all means to quit
This place.

IDENSTEIN.

But is it real? let me look on it:
Diamond, by all that 's glorious!

WERNER.

Come, I'll trust you;
You have guess'd, no doubt, that I was born above
My present seeming.

IDENSTEIN.

I can 't say I did,
Though this looks like it; this is the true breeding
Of gentle blood!

WERNER.

I have important reasons
For wishing to continue privily
My journey hence.

IDENSTEIN.

So then *you are* the man
Whom Stralenheim 's in quest of?

WERNER.

I am not;
But being taken for him might conduct
So much embarrassment to me just now,
And to the baron's self hereafter—'t is
To spare both, that I would avoid all bustle.

IDENSTEIN.

Be you the man or no, 'tis not my business;
Besides, I never should obtain the half
From this proud, niggardly noble, who would raise
The country for some missing bits of coin,
And never offer a precise reward—
But *this!* Another look!

WERNER.

Gaze on it freely;
At day-dawn it is yours.

IDENSTEIN.

Oh, thou sweet sparkler!
Thou more than stone of the philosopher!
Thou touchstone of Philosophy herself!
Thou bright eye of the Mine! thou load-star of
The soul! the true magnetic pole to which
All hearts point duly north, like trembling needles!
Thou flaming spirit of the earth! which, sitting
High on the monarch's diadem, attractest
More worship than the majesty who sweats
Beneath the crown which makes his head ache, like
Millions of hearts which bleed to lend it lustre!
Shalt thou be mine? I am, methinks, already
A little king, a lucky alchymist!—
A wise magician, who has bound the devil
Without the forfeit of his soul. But come,
Werner, or what else?

WERNER.

Call me Werner still,
You may yet know me by a loftier title.

IDENSTEIN.

I do believe in thee! thou art the spirit
Of whom I long have dream'd, in a low garb.—
But come, I 'll serve thee; thou shalt be as free
As air, despite the waters: let us hence.
I 'll show thee I am honest—(oh, thou jewel!)
Thou shalt be furnished, Werner, with such means
Of flight, that if thou wert a snail, not birds
Should overtake thee.—Let me gaze again!
I have a foster-brother in the mart
Of Hamburg, skill'd in precious stones—how many
Carats may it weigh?—Come, Werner, I will wing thee.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

STRALENHEIM'S *Chamber.*

STRALENHEIM *and* FRITZ.

FRITZ.

All 's ready, my good lord!

STRALENHEIM.

I am not sleepy,
And yet I must to bed; I fain would say
To rest, but something heavy on my spirit,
Too dull for wakefulness, too quick for slumber,
Sits on me as a cloud along the sky,
Which will not let the sunbeams through, nor yet
Descend in rain and end, but spreads itself
'Twixt earth and heaven, like envy between man
And man, an everlasting mist;—I will
Unto my pillow.

FRITZ.

May you rest there well!

STRALENHEIM.

I feel, and fear, I shall.

FRITZ.

And wherefore fear?

STRALENHEIM.

I know not why, and therefore do fear more,
Because an undescribable——but 'tis
All folly. Were the locks (as I desired)
Changed to-day, of this chamber? for last night's
Adventure makes it needful.

FRITZ.

Certainly,
According to your order, and beneath
The inspection of myself and the young Saxon
Who saved your life. I think they call him «Ulric.»

STRALENHEIM.

You *think!* you supercilious slave! what right
Have you to *tax your* memory, which should be
Quick, proud, and happy to retain the *name*
Of him who saved your master, as a litany
Whose daily repetition marks your duty—
Get hence! «*you think,*» indeed! you, who stood still
Howling and dripping on the bank, whilst I
Lay dying, and the stranger dash'd aside
The roaring torrent, and restored me to
Thank him—and despise you. «*You think!*» and scarce
Can recollect his name! I will not waste
More words on you. Call me betimes.

FRITZ.

Good night!
I trust to-morrow will restore your lordship
To renovated strength and temper.

[*The scene closes.*

SCENE III.

The secret Passage.

GABOR, *solus.*

Four—
Five—six hours have I counted, like the guard
Of outposts, on the never-merry clock:
That hollow tongue of time, which, even when
It sounds for joy, takes something from enjoyment
With every clang. 'T is a perpetual knell,
Though for a marriage feast it rings: each stroke
Peals of a hope the less; the funeral note
Of love deep-buried without resurrection
In the grave of possession; while the knoll
Of long-lived parents finds a jovial echo
To triple time in the son's ear.
I 'm cold—
I 'm dark—I 've blown my fingers—number'd o'er
And o'er my steps—and knock'd my head against
Some fifty buttresses—and roused the rats
And bats in general insurrection, till
Their cursed pattering feet and whirring wings
Leave me scarce hearing for another sound.
A light! It is at distance (if I can
Measure in darkness distance): but it blinks
As through a crevice or a key-hole, in
The inhibited direction; I must on,
Nevertheless, from curiosity.
A distant lamp-light is an incident
In such a den as this. Pray Heaven it lead me
To nothing that may tempt me! Else Heaven aid me
To obtain or to escape it! Shining still!
Were it the star of Lucifer himself,

Or he himself girt with its beams, I could
Contain no longer. Softly! mighty well!
That corner 's turn'd—so—ah! no; right! it draws
Nearer. Here is a darksome angle—so,
That 's weather'd.—Let me pause.—Suppose it leads
Into some greater danger than that which
I have escaped?—no matter, 't is a new one;
And novel perils, like fresh mistresses,
Wear more magnetic aspects: I will on,
And be it where it may—I have my dagger,
Which may protect me at a pinch.—Burn still,
Thou little light! Thou art my *ignis fatuus!*
My stationary Will o' the wisp!—So! so!
He hears my invocation, and fails not.

[*The scene closes.*

SCENE IV.

A Garden.

Enter WERNER.

I could not sleep—and now the hour 's at hand;
All 's ready. Idenstein has kept his word:
And, station'd in the outskirts of the town,
Upon the forest's edge, the vehicle
Awaits us. Now the dwindling stars begin
To pale in heaven; and for the last time I
Look on these horrible walls. Oh! never, never
Shall I forget them. Here I came most poor,
But not dishonour'd: and I leave them with
A stain,—if not upon my name, yet in
My heart! A never-dying canker-worm,
Which all the coming splendour of the lands,
And rights, and sovereignty of Siegendorf,
Can scarcely lull a moment: I must find
Some means of restitution, which would ease
My soul in part; but how, without discovery?—
It must be done, however; and I 'll pause
Upon the method the first hour of safety.
The madness of my misery led to this
Base infamy; repentance must retrieve it:
I will have nought of Stralenheim's upon
My spirit, though he would grasp all of mine;
Lands, freedom, life,—and yet he sleeps! as soundly,
Perhaps, as infancy, with gorgeous curtains
Spread for his canopy, o'er silken pillows,
Such as when—Hark! what noise is that? Again!
The branches shake; and some loose stones have fallen
From yonder terrace.

[ULRIC *leaps down from the terrace.*

Ulric! ever welcome!
Thrice welcome now! this filial——

ULRIC.

Stop! before
We approach, tell me——

WERNER.

Why look you so?

ULRIC.

Do I
Behold my father, or——

WERNER.

What?

ULRIC.

An assassin!

WERNER.

Insane or insolent!

ULRIC.

Reply, sir, as
You prize your life, or mine!

WERNER.

To what must I
Answer?

ULRIC.

Are you or are you not the assassin
Of Stralenheim?

WERNER.

I never was as yet
The murderer of any man. What mean you?

ULRIC.

Did you not *this* night (as the night before)
Retrace the secret passage? Did you not
Again revisit Stralenheim's chamber? and—

[ULRIC *pauses.*

WERNER.

Proceed.

ULRIC.

Died he not by your hand?

WERNER.

Great God!

ULRIC.

You are innocent, then! my father 's innocent!
Embrace me! Yes,—your tone—your look—yes, yes,—
Yet *say* so!

WERNER.

If I e'er, in heart or mind,
Conceived deliberately such a thought,
But rather strove to trample back to hell
Such thoughts—if e'er they glared a moment through
The irritation of my oppress'd spirit—
May Heaven be shut for ever from my hopes
As from mine eyes!

ULRIC.

But Stralenheim is dead.

WERNER.

'T is horrible! 't is hideous, as 't is hateful!—
But what have I to do with this?

ULRIC.

No bolt
Is forced; no violence can be detected,
Save on his body. Part of his own household
Have been alarm'd; but as the Intendant is
Absent, I took upon myself the care
Of mustering the police. His chamber has,
Past doubt, been enter'd secretly. Excuse me,
If nature——

WERNER.

Oh, my boy! what unknown woes
Of dark fatality, like clouds, are gathering
Above our house!

ULRIC.

My father, I acquit you!
But will the world do so? Will even the judge,
If——but you must away this instant.

WERNER.

No!
I 'll face it. Who shall dare suspect me?

ULRIC.

Yet
You had *no* guests—*no* visitors—no life
Breathing around you, save my mother's?

WERNER.

Ah!

The Hungarian!

ULRIC.

He is gone! he disappear'd
Ere sunset.

WERNER.

No; I hid him in that very
Conceal'd and fatal gallery.

ULRIC.

There I 'll find him.

[ULRIC *is going.*

WERNER.

It is too late: he had left the palace ere
I quitted it. I found the secret pannel
Open, and the doors which lead from that hall
Which masks it: I but thought he had snatch'd the silent
And favourable moment to escape
The myrmidons of Idenstein, who were
Dogging him yester-even.

ULRIC.

You re-closed
The pannel?

WERNER.

Yes; and not without reproach
(And inner trembling for the avoided peril)
At his dull heedlessness, in leaving thus
His shelterer's asylum to the risk
Of a discovery.

ULRIC.

You are sure you closed it?

WERNER.

Certain.

ULRIC.

That 's well; but had been better if
You ne'er had turn'd it to a den for—[*He pauses.*

WERNER.

Thieves!
Thou wouldst say: I must bear it, and deserve it;
But not——

ULRIC.

No, father; do not speak of this;
This is no hour to think of petty crimes,
But to prevent the consequence of great ones.
Why would you shelter this man?

WERNER.

Could I shun it?
A man pursued by my chief foe; disgraced
For my own crime; a victim to *my* safety,
Imploring a few hours' concealment from
The very wretch who was the cause he needed
Such refuge. Had he been a wolf, I could not
Have, in such circumstances, thrust him forth.

ULRIC.

And like the wolf he hath repaid you. But
It is too late to ponder this: you must
Set out ere dawn. I will remain here to
Trace out the murderer, if 't is possible.

WERNER.

But this my sudden flight will give the Moloch
Suspicion: two new victims, in the lieu
Of one, if I remain. The fled Hungarian,
Who seems the culprit, and——

ULRIC.

Who *seems*! *Who* else
Can be so?

WERNER.

Not *I*, though just now you doubted—
You, my *son*!—doubted——

ULRIC.

And do you doubt of him
The fugitive?

WERNER.

Boy! since I fell into
The abyss of crime (though not of *such* crime), I
Having seen the innocent oppress'd for me,
May doubt even of the guilty's guilt. Your heart
Is free, and quick with virtuous wrath to accuse
Appearances; and views a criminal
In innocence's shadow, it may be,
Because 't is dusky.

ULRIC.

And if I do so,
What will mankind, who know you not, or knew
But to oppress? You must not stand the hazard.
Away!—I 'll make all easy. Idenstein
Will for his own sake and his jewel's hold
His peace—he also is a partner in
Your flight—moreover—

WERNER.

Fly! and leave my name
Link'd with the Hungarian's, or preferr'd, as poorest,
To bear the brand of bloodshed?

ULRIC.

Pshaw! leave any thing
Except our fathers' sovereignty and castles,
For which you have so long panted and in vain!
What *name*? You leave *no name*, since that you bear
Is feign'd.

WERNER.

Most true; but still I would not have it
Engraved in crimson in men's memories,
Though in this most obscure abode of men—
Besides, the search——

ULRIC.

I will provide against
Aught that can touch you. No one knows you here
As heir of Siegendorf: if Idenstein
Suspects, 't is *but suspicion*, and he is
A fool: his folly shall have such employment,
Too, that the unknown Werner shall give way
To nearer thoughts of self. The laws (if e'er
Laws reach'd this village) are all in abeyance
With the late general war of thirty years,
Or crush'd, or rising slowly from the dust,
To which the march of armies trampled them.
Stralenheim, although noble, is unheeded
Here, save as *such*—without lands, influence,
Save what hath perish'd with him; few prolong
A week beyond their funeral rites their sway
O'er men, unless by relatives, whose interest
Is roused: such is not here the case; he died
Alone, unknown,—a solitary grave,
Obscure as his deserts, without a scutcheon,
Is all he 'll have, or wants. If *I* discover
The assassin, 't will be well—if not, believe me
None else, though all the full-fed train of menials
May howl above his ashes, as they did
Around him in his danger on the Oder,
Will no more stir a finger *now* than *then*.
Hence! hence! I must not hear your answer—look!
The stars are almost faded, and the gray
Begins to grizzle the black hair of night.
You shall not answer—Pardon me, that I

Am peremptory; 't is your son that speaks,
Your long-lost, late-found son—Let 's call my mother!
Softly and swiftly step, and leave the rest
To me; I 'll answer for the event as far
As regards *you*, and that is the chief point,
As my first duty, which shall be observed.
We 'll meet in Castle Siegendorf—once more
Our banners shall be glorious! Think of that
Alone, and leave all other thoughts to me,
Whose youth may better battle with them—Hence!
And may your age be happy!—I will kiss
My mother once more, then Heaven's speed be with you!

WERNER.

This counsel 's safe—but is it honourable?

ULRIC.

To save a father is a child's chief honour.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf, near Prague.

Enter ERIC *and* HENRICK, *retainers of the Count.*

ERIC.

So, better times are come at last; to these
Old walls new masters and high wassail, both
A long desideratum.

HENRICK.

Yes, for *masters*,
It might be unto those who long for novelty,
Though made by a new grave: but as for wassail,
Methinks the old Count Siegendorf maintain'd
His feudal hospitality as high
As e'er another prince of the empire.

ERIC.

Why,
For the mere cup and trencher, we no doubt
Fared passing well; but as for merriment
And sport, without which salt and sauces season
The cheer but scantily, our sizings were
Even of the narrowest.

HENRICK.

The old count loved not
The roar of revel; are you sure that *this* does?

ERIC.

As yet he hath been courteous as he 's bounteous,
And we all love him.

HENRICK.

His reign is as yet
Hardly a year o'erpast its honey-moon,
And the first year of sovereigns is bridal;
Anon, we shall perceive his real sway
And moods of mind.

ERIC.

Pray Heaven he keep the present!
Then his brave son, Count Ulric—there 's a knight!
Pity the wars are o'er!

HENRICK.

Why so?

ERIC.

Look on him!
And answer that yourself.

HENRICK.

He 's very youthful,
And strong and beautiful as a young tiger.

ERIC.

That 's not a faithful vassal's likeness.

HENRICK.

But
Perhaps a true one.

ERIC.

Pity, as I said,
The wars are over: in the hall, who like
Count Ulric for a well-supported pride,
Which awes but yet offends not? in the field,
Who like him with his spear in hand, when, gnashing
His tusks, and ripping up from right to left
The howling hounds, the boar makes for the thicket?
Who backs a horse, or bears a hawk, or wears
A sword like him? Whose plume nods knightlier?

HENRICK.

No one's, I grant you: do not fear, if war
Be long in coming, he is of that kind
Will make it for himself, if he hath not
Already done as much.

ERIC.

What do you mean?

HENRICK.

You can't deny his train of followers
(But few our fellow native vassals born
On the domain) are such a sort of knaves
As——(*pauses*)

ERIC.

What?

HENRICK.

The war (you love so much) leaves living;
Like other parents, she spoils her worst children.

ERIC.

Nonsense! they are all brave iron-visaged fellows,
Such as old Tilly loved.

HENRICK.

And who loved Tilly?
Ask that at Magdebourgh—or, for that matter,
Wallenstein either—they are gone to——

ERIC.

Rest;
But what beyond, 't is not ours to pronounce.

HENRICK.

I wish they had left us something of their rest:
The country (nominally now at peace)
Is overrun with—God knows who—they fly
By night, and disappear with sunrise; but
Leave no less desolation, nay, even more
Than the most *open* warfare.

ERIC.

But Count Ulric—
What has all this to do with him?

HENRICK.

With *him!*
He——might prevent it. As you say he 's fond
Of war, why makes he it not on those marauders?

ERIC.

You 'd better ask himself.

HENRICK.

I would as soon
Ask of the lion why he laps not milk.

ERIC.

And here he comes!

HENRICK.

The devil! you 'll hold your tongue?

ERIC.

Why do you turn so pale?

HENRICK.

'T is nothing—but

Be silent!

ERIC.

I will upon what you have said.

HENRICK.

I assure you I meant nothing, a mere sport
Of words, no more; besides, had it been otherwise,
He is to espouse the gentle baroness,
Ida of Stralenheim, the late baron's heiress,
And she no doubt will soften whatsoever
Of fierceness the late long intestine wars
Have given all natures, and most unto those
Who were born in them, and bred up upon
The knees of homicide; sprinkled, as it were,
With blood even at their baptism. Prithee, peace,
On all that I have said!

Enter ULRIC *and* RODOLPH.

Good morrow, count!

ULRIC.

Good morrow, worthy Henrick. Eric, is
All ready for the chase?

ERIC.

The dogs are order'd
Down to the forest, and the vassals out
To beat the bushes, and the day looks promising.
Shall I call forth your excellency's suite?
What courser will you please to mount?

ULRIC.

The dun,
Walstein.

ERIC.

I fear he scarcely has recover'd
The toils of Monday: 'twas a noble chase,
You spear'd *four* with your own hand.

ULRIC.

True, good Eric,
I had forgotten—let it be the gray, then,
Old Ziska: he has not been out this fortnight.

ERIC.

He shall be straight caparison'd. How many
Of your immediate retainers shall
Escort you?

ULRIC.

I leave that to Weilburgh, our
Master of the horse. [*Exit* ERIC
Rodolph!

RODOLPH.

My lord!

ULRIC.

The news
Is awkward from the—(RODOLPH *points to* HENRICK).
How now, Henrick, why
Loiter you here?

HENRICK.

For your commands, my lord.

ULRIC.

Go to my father, and present my duty,
And learn if he would aught with me before
I mount. [*Exit* HENRICK.
Rodolph, our friends have had a check
Upon the frontiers of Franconia, and
'T is rumour'd that the column sent against them
Is to be strengthen'd. I must join them soon.

RODOLPH.

Best wait for further and more sure advices.

ULRIC.

I mean it—and indeed it could not well
Have fallen out at a time more opposite
To all my plans.

RODOLPH.

It will be difficult
To excuse your absence to the count, your father.

ULRIC.

Yes, but the unsettled state of our domain
In High Silesia will permit and cover
My journey. In the mean time, when we are
Engaged in the chase, draw off the eighty men
Whom Wolffe leads—keep the forests on your route:
You know it well?

RODOLPH.

As well as on that night
When we——

ULRIC.

We will not speak of that until
We can repeat the same with like success;
And when you have join'd, give Rosenberg this letter.
[*Gives a letter.*
Add further, that I have sent this slight addition
To our force with you and Wolffe, as herald of
My coming, though I could but spare them ill
At this time, as my father loves to keep
Full numbers of retainers round the castle,
Until this marriage, and its feasts and fooleries,
Are rung out with its peal of nuptial nonsense.

RODOLPH.

I thought you loved the lady Ida?

ULRIC.

Why,
I do so—but it follows not from that
I would bind in my youth and glorious years,
So brief and burning, with a lady's zone,
Although 't were that of Venus;—but I love her,
As woman should be loved, fairly and solely.

RODOLPH.

And constantly?

ULRIC.

I think so; for I love
Nought else.—But I have not the time to pause
Upon these gewgaws of the heart. Great things
We have to do ere long. Speed! speed! good Rodolph!

RODOLPH.

On my return, however, I shall find
The Baroness Ida lost in Countess Siegendorf?

ULRIC.

Perhaps: my father wishes it, and sooth,
'T is no bad policy; this union with
The last bud of the rival branch at once
Unites the future and destroys the past.

RODOLPH.

Adieu!

ULRIC.

Yet hold—we had better keep together
Until the chase begins; then draw thou off,
And do as I have said.

RODOLPH.

I will. But to
Return—'t was a most kind act in the count,
Your father, to send up to Konigsberg

For this fair orphan of the baron, and
To hail her as his daughter.

ULRIC.

Wondrous kind!
Especially as little kindness till
Then grew between them.

RODOLPH.

The late baron died
Of a fever, did he not?

ULRIC.

How should I know?

RODOLPH.

I have heard it whisper'd there was something strange
About his death—and even the place of it
Is scarcely known.

ULRIC.

Some obscure village on
The Saxon or Silesian frontier.

RODOLPH.

He
Has left no testament—no farewell words?

ULRIC.

I am neither confessor nor notary,
So cannot say.

RODOLPH.

Ah! here 's the lady Ida.

Enter IDA STRALENHEIM.

ULRIC.

You are early, my sweet cousin!

IDA.

Not *too* early,
Dear Ulric, if I do not interrupt you.
Why do you call me « *cousin* ?»

ULRIC (*smiling*).

Are we not so?

IDA.

Yes, but I do not like the name; methinks
It sounds so cold, as if you thought upon
Our pedigree, and only weigh'd our blood.

ULRIC (*starting*).

Blood!

IDA.

Why does yours start from your cheeks?

ULRIC.

Ay! doth it?

IDA.

It doth—but no! it rushes like a torrent
Even to your brow again.

ULRIC (*recovering himself*).

And if it fled,
It only was because your presence sent it
Back to my heart, which beats for you, sweet cousin!

IDA.

« Cousin» again!

ULRIC.

Nay, then I 'll call you sister.

IDA.

I like that name still worse—would we had ne'er
Been aught of kindred!

ULRIC (*gloomily*).

Would we never had!

IDA.

O Heaven! and can *you wish that*?

ULRIC.

Dearest Ida!
Did I not echo your own wish?

IDA.

Yes, Ulric,
But then I wish'd it not with such a glance,
And scarce knew what I said; but let me be
Sister, or cousin, what you will, so that
I still to you am something.

ULRIC.

You shall be
All—all——

IDA.

And you to *me are* so already;
But I can wait.

ULRIC.

Dear Ida!

IDA.

Call me Ida,
Your Ida, for I would be yours, none else's—
Indeed I have none else left, since my poor father—
[*She pauses.*

ULRIC.

You have *mine*—you have *me*.

IDA.

Dear Ulric! how I wish
My father could but view our happiness,
Which wants but this!

ULRIC.

Indeed!

IDA.

You would have loved him,
He you; for the brave ever love each other:
His manner was a little cold, his spirit
Proud (as is birth's prerogative), but under
This grave exterior—would you had known each other!
Had such as you been near him on his journey,
He had not died without a friend to soothe
His last and lonely moments.

ULRIC.

Who says *that*?

IDA.

What?

ULRIC.

That he *died alone*.

IDA.

The general rumour,
And disappearance of his servants, who
Have ne'er return'd: that fever was most deadly
Which swept them all away.

ULRIC.

If they were near him,
He could not die neglected or alone.

IDA.

Alas! what is a menial to a death-bed,
When the dim eye rolls vainly round for what
It loves?—they say he died of a fever.

ULRIC.

Say!
It *was* so.

IDA.

I sometimes dream otherwise.

ULRIC.

All dreams are false.

IDA.

And yet I see him as
I see you.

ULRIC.

Where?

IDA.

In sleep—I see him lie
Pale, bleeding, and a man with a raised knife
Beside him.

ULRIC.

But do you not see his *face*?

IDA (*looking at him*).

No! oh, my God! do *you*?

ULRIC.

Why do you ask?

IDA.

Because you look as if you saw a murderer!

ULRIC (*agitatedly*).

Ida, this is mere childishness; your weakness
Infects me, to my shame; but as all feelings
Of yours are common to me, it affects me.
Prithee, sweet child, change—

IDA.

Child, indeed! I have
Full fifteen summers! [*A bugle sounds.*

RODOLPH.

Hark, my lord, the bugle!

IDA (*peevishly to* RODOLPH).

Why need you tell him that? Can he not hear it
Without your echo?

RODOLPH.

Pardon me, fair baroness!

IDA.

I will not pardon you, unless you earn it
By aiding me in my dissuasion of
Count Ulric from the chase to-day.

RODOLPH.

You will not,
Lady, need aid of mine.

ULRIC.

I must not now
Forego it.

IDA.

But you shall!

ULRIC.

Shall!

IDA.

Yes, or be
No true knight.—Come, dear Ulric! yield to me
In this, for this one day; the day looks heavy,
And you are turn'd so pale and ill.

ULRIC.

You jest.

IDA.

Indeed I do not: ask of Rodolph.

RODOLPH.

Truly,
My lord, within this quarter of an hour
You have changed more than I e'er saw you change
In years.

ULRIC.

'T is nothing; but if 't were, the air
Would soon restore me. I 'm the true cameleon,
And live but on the atmosphere: your feasts
In castle halls, and social banquets, nurse not
My spirit—I 'm a forester and breather
Of the steep mountain-tops, where I love all
The eagle loves.

IDA.

Except his prey, I hope.

ULRIC.

Sweet Ida, wish me a fair chase, and I
Will bring you six boars' heads for trophies home.

IDA.

And will you not stay, then? You shall not go!
Come! I will sing to you.

ULRIC.

Ida, you scarcely
Will make a soldier's wife.

IDA.

I do not wish
To be so; for I trust these wars are over,
And you will live in peace on your domains.

Enter WERNER, *as* COUNT SIEGENDORF.

ULRIC.

My father, I salute you, and it grieves me
With such brief greeting.—You have heard our bugle;
The vassals wait.

SIEGENDORF.

So let them—you forget
To-morrow is the appointed festival
In Prague, for peace restored. You are apt to follow
The chase with such an ardour as will scarce
Permit you to return to-day, or if
Return'd, too much fatigued to join to-morrow
The nobles in our marshall'd ranks.

ULRIC.

You, count,
Will well supply the place of both—I am not
A lover of these pageantries.

SIEGENDORF.

No, Ulric;
It were not well that you alone of all
Our young nobility——

IDA.

And far the noblest
In aspect and demeanour.

SIEGENDORF (*to* IDA).

True, dear child,
Though somewhat frankly said for a fair damsel.—
But, Ulric, recollect too our position,
So lately reinstated in our honours.
Believe me, 't would be mark'd in any house,
But most in *ours*, that ONE should be found wanting
At such a time and place. Besides, the Heaven
Which gave us back our own, in the same moment
It spread its peace o'er all, hath double claims
On us for thanksgiving; first, for our country,
And next, that we are here to share its blessings.

ULRIC (*aside*).

Devout, too! Well, sir, I obey at once.
[*Then aloud to a servant.*
Ludwig, dismiss the train without!
[*Exit* LUDWIG.

IDA.

And so
You yield at once to him what I for hours
Might supplicate in vain.

SIEGENDORF (*smiling*).

You are not jealous
Of me, I trust, my pretty rebel! who
Would sanction disobedience against all

Except thyself? But fear not, thou shalt rule him
Hereafter with a fonder sway and firmer.

IDA.

But I should like to govern *now*.

SIEGENDORF.

You shall,
Your *harp*, which by the way awaits you with
The countess in her chamber. She complains
That you are a sad truant to your music:
She attends you.

IDA.

Then good morrow, my kind kinsmen!
Ulric, you 'll come and hear me?

ULRIC.

By and by.

IDA.

Be sure I 'll sound it better than your bugles;
Then pray you be as punctual to its notes:
I 'll play you King Gustavus' march.

ULRIC.

And why not
Old Tilly's?

IDA.

Not that monster's! I should think
My harp-strings rang with groans, and not with music;
Could aught of *his* sound on it;—but come quickly;
Your mother will be eager to receive you.

[*Exit* IDA.

SIEGENDORF.

Ulric, I wish to speak with you alone.

ULRIC.

My time's your vassal.— (*Aside to* RODOLPH.)
Rodolph, hence! and do
As I directed; and by his best speed
And readiest means let Rosenberg reply.

RODOLPH.

Count Siegendorf, command you aught? I am bound
Upon a journey past the frontier.

SIEGENDORF (*starts*).

Ah!—
Where? on *what* frontier?

RODOLPH.

The Silesian, on
My way—(*aside to* ULRIC). *Where* shall I say?

ULRIC (*aside to* RODOLPH).

To Hamburgh.
(*Aside to himself*). That
Word will I think put a firm padlock on
His further inquisition.

RODOLPH.

Count, to Hamburgh.

SIEGENDORF (*agitated*).

Hamburgh! no, I have nought to do there, nor
Am aught connected with that city. Then
God speed you!

RODOLPH.

Fare ye well, Count Siegendorf!

[*Exit* RODOLPH.

SIEGENDORF.

Ulric, this man, who has just departed, is
One of those strange companions, whom I fain
Would reason with you on.

ULRIC.

My lord, he is
Noble by birth, of one of the first houses
In Saxony.

SIEGENDORF.

I talk not of his birth,
But of his bearing. Men speak lightly of him.

ULRIC.

So they will do of most men. Even the monarch
Is not fenced from his chamberlain's slander, or
The sneer of the last courtier whom he has made
Great and ungrateful.

SIEGENDORF.

If I must be plain,
The world speaks more than lightly of this Rodolph;
They say he is leagued with the « black bands » who still
Ravage the frontier.

ULRIC.

And will you believe
The world?

SIEGENDORF.

In this case—yes.

ULRIC.

In *any* case,
I thought you knew it better than to take
An accusation for a sentence.

SIEGENDORF.

Son!
I understand you: you refer to——but
My destiny has so involved about me
Her spider web, that I can only flutter
Like the poor fly, but break it not. Take heed,
Ulric; you have seen to what the passions led me;
Twenty long years of misery and famine
Quench'd them not—twenty thousand more, perchance,
Hereafter (or even here in *moments* which
Might date for years, did anguish make the dial),
May not obliterate or expiate
The madness and dishonour of an instant.
Ulric, be warn'd by a father!—I was not
By mine, and you behold me!

ULRIC.

I behold
The prosperous and beloved Siegendorf,
Lord of a prince's appanage, and honour'd
By those he rules, and those he ranks with.

SIEGENDORF.

Ah!
Why wilt thou call me prosperous, while I fear
For thee? Beloved, when thou lovest me not!
All hearts but one may beat in kindness for me—
But if my son's is cold!——

ULRIC.

Who *dare* say that?

SIEGENDORF.

None else but I, who see it—*feel* it—keener
Than would your adversary, who dared say so,
Your sabre in his heart! But mine survives
The wound.

ULRIC.

You err. My nature is not given
To outward fondling; how should it be so,
After twelve years' divorcement from my parents?

SIEGENDORF.

And did not I too pass those twelve torn years
In a like absence? But 't is vain to urge you—
Nature was never call'd back by remonstrance.
Let 's change the theme. I wish you to consider
That these young violent nobles of high name,
But dark deeds (ay, the darkest, if all rumour

Reports be true), with whom thou consortest,
Will lead thee——

ULRIC (*impatiently*).

I 'll be *led* by no man.

SIEGENDORF.

Nor
Be leader of such, I would hope: at once
To wean thee from the perils of thy youth
And haughty spirit, I have thought it well
That thou should'st wed the lady Ida—more,
As thou appear'st to love her.

ULRIC.

I have said
I will obey your orders, were they to
Unite with Hecate—can a son say more?

SIEGENDORF.

He says too much in saying this. It is not
The nature of thine age, nor of thy blood,
Nor of thy temperament, to talk so coolly,
Or act so carelessly, in that which is
The bloom or blight of all men's happiness
(For glory's pillow is but restless if
Love lay not down his cheek there): some strong bias,
Some master fiend is in thy service, to
Misrule the mortal who believes him slave,
And makes his every thought subservient; else
Thou 'dst say at once, «I love young Ida, and
Will wed her,» or, «I love her not, and all
The powers of earth shall never make me.»—So
Would I have answer'd.

ULRIC.

Sir, *you wed* for love.

SIEGENDORF.

I did, and it has been my only refuge
In many miseries.

ULRIC.

Which miseries
Had never been but for this love-match.

SIEGENDORF.

Still
Against your age and nature! who at twenty
E'er answer'd thus till now?

ULRIC.

Did you not warn me
Against your own example?

SIEGENDORF.

Boyish sophist!
In a word, do you love, or love not, Ida?

ULRIC.

What matters it, if I am ready to
Obey you in espousing her?

SIEGENDORF.

As far
As you feel, nothing, but all life for her.
She 's young—all-beautiful—adores you—is
Endow'd with qualities to give happiness,
Such as rounds common life into a dream
Of something which your poets cannot paint,
And if it were not wisdom to love virtue,
For which philosophy might barter wisdom;
And giving so much happiness, deserves
A little in return. I would not have her
Break her heart for a man who has none to break,
Or wither on her stalk like some pale rose
Deserted by the bird she thought a nightingale,
According to the Orient tale. She is——

ULRIC.

The daughter of dead Stralenheim, your foe:
I 'll wed her, nevertheless; though, to say truth,
Just now I am not violently transported
In favour of such unions.

SIEGENDORF.

But she loves you.

ULRIC.

And I love her, and therefore would think *twice*.

SIEGENDORF.

Alas! Love never *did* so.

ULRIC.

Then 't is time
He should begin, and take the bandage from
His eyes, and look before he leaps: till now
He hath ta'en a jump i' the dark.

SIEGENDORF.

But you consent?

ULRIC.

I did and do.

SIEGENDORF.

Then fix the day.

ULRIC.

'T is usual,
And, certes, courteous, to leave that to the lady.

SIEGENDORF.

I will engage for *her*.

ULRIC.

So will not *I*
For any woman; and as what I fix,
I fain would see unshaken, when she gives
Her answer, I 'll give mine.

SIEGENDORF.

But 't is your office
To woo.

ULRIC.

Count, 't is a marriage of your making,
So be it of your wooing; but to please you
I will now pay my duty to my mother,
With whom, you know, the lady Ida is—
What would you have? You have forbid my stirring
For manly sports beyond the castle walls,
And I obey; you bid me turn a chamberer,
To pick up gloves, and fans, and knitting-needles,
And list to songs and tunes, and watch for smiles,
And smile at pretty prattle, and look into
The eyes of feminie, as though they were
The stars receding early to our wish
Upon the dawn of a world-winning battle—
What can a son or man do more? [*Exit* ULRIC.

SIEGENDORF (*solus*).

Too much!—
Too much of duty and too little love!
He pays me in the coin he owes me not:
For such hath been my wayward fate, I could not
Fulfil a parent's duties by his side
Till now; but love he owes me, for my thoughts
Ne'er left him, nor my eyes long'd without tears
To see my child again, and now I have found him!
But how! obedient, but with coldness; duteous
In my sight, but with carelessness; mysterious,
Abstracted—distant—much given to long absence,
And where—none know—in league with the most riotous
Of our young nobles; though, to do him justice,
He never stoops down to their vulgar pleasures;
Yet there 's some tie between them which I cannot

Unravel. They look up to him—consult him—
Throng round him as a leader: but with me
He hath no confidence! Ah! can I hope it
After—what! doth my father's curse descend
Even to my child? Or is the Hungarian near
To shed more blood, or—oh! if it should be!
Spirit of Stralenheim, dost thou walk these walls
To wither him and his—who, though they slew not,
Unlatch'd the door of death for thee? 'T was not
Our fault, nor is our sin: thou wert our foe,
And yet I spared thee when my own destruction
Slept with thee, to awake with thine awakening!
And only took—accursed gold! thou liest!
Like poison in my hands; I dare not use thee,
Nor part from thee; thou camest in such a guise,
Methinks thou wouldst contaminate all hands
Like mine. Yet I have done, to atone for thee,
Thou villanous gold! and thy dead master's doom,
Though he died not by me or mine, as much
As if he were my brother! I have ta'en
His orphan Ida—cherish'd her as one
Who will be mine.

Enter an ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT.

The abbot, if it please
Your excellency, whom you sent for, waits
Upon you. [*Exit* ATTENDANT.

Enter the PRIOR ALBERT.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Peace be with these walls, and all
Within them!

SIEGENDORF.

Welcome, welcome, holy father!
And may thy prayer be heard!—all men have need
Of such, and I——

PRIOR ALBERT.

Have the first claim to all
The prayers of our community. Our convent,
Erected by your ancestors, is still
Protected by their children.

SIEGENDORF.

Yes, good father;
Continue daily orisons for us
In these dim days of heresies and blood,
Though the schismatic Swede, Gustavus, is
Gone home.

PRIOR ALBERT.

To the endless home of unbelievers,
Where there is everlasting wail and woe,
Gnashing of teeth, and tears of blood, and fire
Eternal, and the worm which dieth not!

SIEGENDORF.

True, father: and to avert those pangs from one,
Who, though of our most faultless, holy church,
Yet died without its last and dearest offices,
Which smoothe the soul through purgatorial pains,
I have to offer humbly this donation
In masses for his spirit.

[SIEGENDORF *offers the gold which he had taken from* STRALENHEIM.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Count, if I
Receive it, 't is because I know too well
Refusal would offend you. Be assured
The largess shall be only dealt in alms,
And every mass no less sung for the dead.
Our house needs no donations, thanks to yours,
Which has of old endow'd it; but from you
And yours in all meet things 't is fit we obey.
For whom shall mass be said?

SIEGENDORF (*faltering*).

For—for—the dead.

PRIOR ALBERT.

His name?

SIEGENDORF.

'T is from a soul, and not a name,
I would avert perdition.

PRIOR ALBERT.

I meant not
To pry into your secret. We will pray
For one unknown, the same as for the proudest.

SIEGENDORF.

Secret! I have none; but, father, he who 's gone
Might *have* one; or, in short, he did bequeath—
No, not bequeath—but I bestow this sum
For pious purposes.

PRIOR ALBERT.

A proper deed
In the behalf of our departed friends.

SIEGENDORF.

But he, who 's gone, was not my friend, but foe,
The deadliest and the staunchest.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Better still!
To employ our means to obtain heaven for the souls
Of our dead enemies, is worthy those
Who can forgive them living.

SIEGENDORF.

But I did not
Forgive this man. I loathed him to the last,
As he did me. I do not love him now,
But——

PRIOR ALBERT.

Best of all! for this is pure religion!
You fain would rescue him you hate from hell—
An evangelical compassion!—with
Your own gold too!

SIEGENDORF.

Father, 't is not my gold.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Whose then? you said it was no legacy.

SIEGENDORF.

No matter whose—of this be sure, that he
Who own'd it never more will need it, save
In that which it may purchase from your altars:
'T is yours, or theirs.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Is there no blood upon it?

SIEGENDORF.

No: but there 's worse than blood—eternal shame!

PRIOR ALBERT.

Did he who own'd it die in his *bed*?

SIEGENDORF.

Alas!
He did.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Son! you relapse into revenge,
If you regret your enemy's bloodless death.

SIEGENDORF.

His death was fathomlessly deep in blood.

PRIOR ALBERT.

You said he died in his bed, not battle.

SIEGENDORF.

He
Died, I scarce know—but—he was stabb'd i' the dark,
And now you have it—perish'd on his pillow
By a cut-throat!—ay!—you may look upon me!
I am *not* the man. I 'll meet your eye on that point,
As I can one day God's.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Nor did he die
By means, or men, or instrument of yours?

SIEGENDORF

No! by the God who sees and strikes!

PRIOR ALBERT.

Nor know you
Who slew him?

SIEGENDORF.

I could only guess at *one*,
And he to me a stranger, unconnected,
As unemploy'd. Except by one day's knowledge,
I never saw the man who was suspected.

PRIOR ALBERT.

Then you are free from guilt.

SIEGENDORF (*eagerly*).

Oh! *am* I?—say!

PRIOR ALBERT.

You have said so, and know best.

SIEGENDORF.

Father! I have spoken
The truth, and nought but truth, if *not* the *whole:*
Yet say I am *not* guilty! for the blood
Of this man weighs on me, as if I shed it,
Though by the power who abhorreth human blood,
I did not!—nay, once spared it, when I might
And *could*—ay, perhaps, *should*—(if our self-safety
Be e'er excusable in such defences
Against the attacks of over-potent foes);
But pray for him, for me, and all my house;
For, as I said, though I be innocent,
I know not why, a like remorse is on me
As if he had fallen by me or mine. Pray for me,
Father! I have pray'd myself in vain.

PRIOR ALBERT.

I will.
Be comforted! You are innocent, and should
Be calm as innocence.

SIEGENDORF.

But calmness is not
Always the attribute of innocence:
I feel it is not.

PRIOR ALBERT.

But it will be so,
When the mind gathers up its truth within it.
Remember the great festival to-morrow,
In which you rank amidst our chiefest nobles,
As well as your brave son; and smoothe your aspect;
Nor in the general orison of thanks
For bloodshed stopt, let blood, you shed not, rise
A cloud upon your thoughts. This were to be
Too sensitive. Take comfort, and forget
Such things, and leave remorse unto the guilty.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A large and magnificent Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf, decorated with Trophies, Banners, and Arms of that Family.

Enter ARNHEIM *and* MEISTER, *Attendants of* COUNT SIEGENDORF.

ARNHEIM.

Be quick! the count will soon return: the ladies
Already are at the portal. Have you sent
The messengers in search of him he seeks for?

MEISTER.

I have, in all directions, over Prague,
As far as the man's dress and figure could
By your description track him. The devil take
These revels and processions! All the pleasure
(If such there be) must fall to the spectators.
I 'm sure none doth to us who make the show.

ARNHEIM.

Go to! my lady countess comes.

MEISTER.

I 'd rather
Ride a day's hunting on an outworn jade,
Than follow in the train of a great man
In these dull pageantries.

ARNHEIM.

Be gone! and rail
Within. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the COUNTESS JOSEPHINE SIEGENDORF *and* IDA STRALENHEIM.

JOSEPHINE.

Well, Heaven be praised, the show is over!

IDA.

How can you say so! Never have I dreamt
Of aught so beautiful. The flowers, the bouglis,
The banners, and the nobles, and the knights,
The gems, the robes, the plumes, the happy faces,
The coursers, and the incense, and the sun
Streaming through the stain'd windows, even the *tombs,*
Which look'd so calm, and the celestial hymns,
Which seem'd as if they rather came from heaven
Than mounted there. The bursting organ's peal
Rolling on high like an harmonious thunder;
The white robes, and the lifted eyes; the world
At peace! and all at peace with one another!
Oh, my sweet mother! [*Embracing* JOSEPHINE.

JOSEPHINE.

My beloved child!
For such, I trust, thou shalt be shortly.

IDA.

Oh!
I am so already. Feel how my heart beats!

JOSEPHINE.

It does, my love; and never may it throb
With aught more bitter!

IDA.

Never shall it do so!
How should it? What should make us grieve! I hate
To hear of sorrow: how can we be sad,
Who love each other so entirely? You,
The count, and Ulric, and your daughter, Ida.

JOSEPHINE.

Poor child!

IDA.

Do you pity me?

JOSEPHINE.

No; I but envy,
And that in sorrow, not in the world's sense
Of the universal vice, if one vice be
More general than another.

IDA.

I 'll not hear
A word against a world which still contains
You and my Ulric. Did you ever see
Aught like him? How he tower'd amongst them all!
How all eyes follow'd him! The flowers fell faster—
Rain'd from each lattice at his feet, methought,
Than before all the rest, and where he trod
I dare be sworn that they grow still, nor e'er
Will wither.

JOSEPHINE.

You will spoil him, little flatterer,
If he should hear you.

IDA.

But he never will.
I dare not say so much to him—I fear him.

JOSEPHINE.

Why so? he loves you well.

IDA.

But I can never
Shape my thoughts *of* him into words *to* him.
Besides, he sometimes frightens me.

JOSEPHINE.

How so?

IDA.

A cloud comes o'er his blue eyes suddenly,
Yet he says nothing.

JOSEPHINE.

It is nothing: all men,
Especially in these dark troublous times,
Have much to think of.

IDA.

But I cannot think
Of aught save him.

JOSEPHINE.

Yet there are other men,
In the world's eye, as goodly. There 's, for instance,
The young Count Waldorf, who scarce once withdrew
His eyes from yours to-day.

IDA.

I did not see him,
But Ulric. Did you not see at the moment
When all knelt, and I wept? and yet methought
Through my fast tears, though they were thick and warm,
I saw him smiling on me.

JOSEPHINE.

I could not
See aught save heaven, to which my eyes were raised
Together with the people's.

IDA.

I thought too
Of heaven, although I look'd on Ulric.

JOSEPHINE.

Come,
Let us retire; they will be here anon
Expectant of the banquet. We will lay
Aside these nodding plumes and dragging trains.

IDA.

And, above all, these stiff and heavy jewels,
Which make my head and heart ache, as both throb
Beneath their glitter o'er my brow and zone.
Dear mother, I am with you. [*Exeunt.*

Enter COUNT SIEGENDORF, *in full dress, from the solemnity, and* LUDWIG.

SIEGENDORF.

Is he not found?

LUDWIG.

Strict search is making every where; and if
The man be in Prague, be sure he will be found.

SIEGENDORF.

Where 's Ulric?

LUDWIG.

He rode round the other way,
With some young nobles; but he left them soon;
And, if I err not, not a minute since
I heard his excellency, with his train,
Gallop o'er the west drawbridge.

Enter ULRIC, *splendidly dressed.*

SIEGENDORF (*to* LUDWIG).

See they cease not
Their quest of him I have described. (*Exit* LUDWIG.)
Oh! Ulric,
How have I long'd for thee!

ULRIC.

Your wish is granted—
Behold me!

SIEGENDORF.

I have seen the murderer.

ULRIC.

Whom? Where?

SIEGENDORF.

The Hungarian, who slew Stralenheim.

ULRIC.

You dream.

SIEGENDORF.

I live! and as I live, I saw him—
Heard him! He dared to utter even my name.

ULRIC.

What name?

SIEGENDORF.

Werner! *'t was* mine.

ULRIC.

It must be so
No more: forget it.

SIEGENDORF.

Never! never! all
My destinies were woven in that name:
It will not be engraved upon my tomb,
But it may lead me there.

ULRIC.

To the point—the Hungarian?

SIEGENDORF.

Listen!—The church was throng'd; the hymn was raised!
« *Te Deum*» peal'd from nations, rather than
From choirs, in one great cry of « God be praised»
For one day's peace, after thrice ten dread years,
Each bloodier than the former: I arose,
With all the nobles, and as I look'd down
Along the lines of lifted faces,—from
Our banner'd and escutcheon'd gallery, I

Saw, like a flash of lightning (for I saw
A moment, and no more), what struck me sightless
To all else—the Hungarian's face; I grew
Sick; and when I recover'd from the mist
Which curl'd about my senses, and again
Look'd down, I saw him not. The thanksgiving
Was over, and we march'd back in procession.

ULRIC.

Continue.

SIEGENDORF.

When we reach'd the Muldau's bridge,
The joyous crowd above, the numberless
Barks mann'd with revellers in their best garbs,
Which shot along the glancing tide below,
The decorated street, the long array,
The clashing music, and the thundering
Of far artillery, which seem'd to bid
A long and loud farewell to its great doings,
The standards o'er me, and the tramplings round,
The roar of rushing thousands, all—all could not
Chase this man from my mind; although my senses
No longer held him palpable.

ULRIC.

You saw him
No more, then?

SIEGENDORF.

I look'd, as a dying soldier
Looks at a draught of water, for this man;
But still I saw him not; but in his stead—

ULRIC.

What in his stead?

SIEGENDORF.

My eye for ever fell
Upon your dancing crest; the loftiest,
As on the loftiest and the loveliest head
It rose the highest of the stream of plumes,
Which overflow'd the glittering streets of Prague.

ULRIC.

What 's this to the Hungarian?

SIEGENDORF.

Much; for I
Had almost then forgot him in my son,
When just as the artillery ceased, and paused
The music, and the crowd embraced in lieu
Of shouting, I heard in a deep, low voice,
Distinct and keener far upon my ear
Than the late cannon's volume, this word—«*Werner!*»

ULRIC.

Utter'd by——

SIEGENDORF.

HIM! I turn'd—and saw—and fell.

ULRIC.

And wherefore? Were you seen?

SIEGENDORF.

The officious care
Of those around me dragg'd me from the spot,
Seeing my faintness, ignorant of the cause;
You, too, were too remote in the procession
(The old nobles being divided from their children)
To aid me.

ULRIC.

But I 'll aid you now.

SIEGENDORF.

In what?

ULRIC.

In searching for this man, or——when he 's found,
What shall we do with him?

SIEGENDORF.

I know not that.

ULRIC.

Then wherefore seek?

SIEGENDORF.

Because I cannot rest
Till he is found. His fate, and Stralenheim's,
And ours, seem intertwisted; nor can be
Unravell'd, till——

Enter an ATTENDANT.

ATTENDANT.

A stranger, to wait on
Your excellency.

SIEGENDORF.

Who?

ATTENDANT.

He gave no name.

SIEGENDORF.

Admit him, ne'ertheless.

[*The* ATTENDANT *introduces* GABOR, *and afterwards exit.*

Ah!

GABOR.

'T is, then, Werner!

SIEGENDORF (*haughtily*).

The same you knew, sir, by that name; and *you!*

GABOR (*looking round*).

I recognise you both; father and son,
It seems. Count, I have heard that you, or yours,
Have lately been in search of me: I am here.

SIEGENDORF.

I have sought you, and have found you; you are charged
(Your own heart may inform you why) with such
A crime as—— [*He pauses.*

GABOR.

Give it utterance, and then
I 'll meet the consequences.

SIEGENDORF.

You shall do so—
Unless——

GABOR.

First, who accuses me?

SIEGENDORF.

All things,
If not all men: the universal rumour—
My own presence on the spot—the place—the time—
And every speck of circumstance unite
To fix the blot on you.

GABOR.

And on *me only*?
Pause ere you answer: is no other name,
Save mine, stain'd in this business?

SIEGENDORF.

Trifling villain!
Who play'st with thine own guilt! Of all that breathe
Thou best dost know the innocence of him
'Gainst whom thy breath would blow thy bloody slander.
But I will talk no further with a wretch,
Further than justice asks. Answer at once,
And without quibbling, to my charge.

GABOR.

'T is false!

SIEGENDORF.

Who says so?

GABOR.

I.

SIEGENDORF.

And how disprove it?

GABOR.

By
The presence of the murderer.

SIEGENDORF.

Name him!

GABOR.

He
May have more names than one. Your lordship had so
Once on a time.

SIEGENDORF.

If you mean me, I dare
Your utmost.

GABOR.

You may do so, and in safety:
I know the assassin.

SIEGENDORF.

Where is he?

GABOR (*pointing to* ULRIC).

Beside you!

[ULRIC *rushes forward to attack* GABOR; SIEGENDORF *interposes.*

SIEGENDORF.

Liar and fiend! but you shall not be slain;
These walls are mine, and you are safe within them.
[*He turns to* ULRIC.
Ulric, repel this calumny, as I
Will do. I avow it is a growth so monstrous,
I could not deem it earth-born: but, be calm;
It will refute itself. But touch him not.

[ULRIC *endeavours to compose himself.*

GABOR.

Look at *him,* count, and then *hear me.*

SIEGENDORF (*first to* GABOR, *and then looking at* ULRIC).

I hear thee.
My God! you look——

ULRIC.

How?

SIEGENDORF.

As on that dread night
When we met in the garden.

ULRIC (*composes himself*).

It is nothing.

GABOR.

Count, you are bound to hear me. I came hither
Not seeking you, but sought. When I knelt down
Amidst the people in the church, I dream'd not
To find the beggar'd Werner in the seat
Of senators and princes; but you have call'd me,
And we have met.

SIEGENDORF.

Go on, sir.

GABOR.

Ere I do so,
Allow me to inquire who profited
By Stralenheim's death? Was 't I—as poor as ever;
And poorer by suspicion on my name.
The baron lost in that last outrage neither
Jewels nor gold; his life alone was sought—
A life which stood between the claims of others
To honours and estates, scarce less than princely.

SIEGENDORF.

These hints, as vague as vain, attach no less
To me than to my son.

GABOR.

I can't help that.
But let the consequence alight on him
Who feels himself the guilty one amongst us.
I speak to you, Count Siegendorf, because
I know you innocent, and deem you just.
But ere I can proceed—*Dare* you protect me?—
Dare you command me?

[SIEGENDORF *first looks at the Hungarian, and then at* ULRIC, *who has unbuckled his sabre and is drawing lines with it on the floor—still in its sheath.*

ULRIC (*looks at his father and says*).

Let the man go on!

GABOR.

I am unarm'd, count—bid your son lay down
His sabre.

ULRIC (*offers it to him contemptuously*).

Take it.

GABOR.

No, sir; 'tis enough
That we are both unarm'd—I would not choose
To wear a steel which may be stain'd with more
Blood than came there in battle.

ULRIC (*casts the sabre from him in contempt*).

It—or some
Such other weapon, in my hands—spared yours
Once, when disarm'd and at my mercy.

GABOR.

True—
I have not forgotten it: you spared me for
Your own especial purpose—to sustain
An ignominy not my own.

ULRIC.

Proceed.
The tale is doubtless worthy the relater.
But is it of my father to hear further?
[*To* SIEGENDORF.

SIEGENDORF (*takes his son by the hand*).

My son! I know mine own innocence—and doubt not
Of yours—but I have promised this man patience;
Let him continue.

GABOR.

I will not detain you
By speaking of myself much; I began
Life early—and am what the world has made me.
At Frankfort, on the Oder, where I pass'd
A winter in obscurity, it was
My chance at several places of resort
(Which I frequented sometimes, but not often)
To hear related a strange circumstance,
In February last. A martial force,
Sent by the state, had, after strong resistance,
Secured a band of desperate men, supposed
Marauders from the hostile camp.—They proved,
However, not to be so—but banditti,
Whom either accident or enterprise
Had carried from their usual haunt—the forests
Which skirt Bohemia—even into Lusatia.
Many amongst them were reported of
High rank—and martial law slept for a time.
At last they were escorted o'er the frontiers,
And placed beneath the civil jurisdiction

Of the free town of Frankfort. Of *their* fate,
I know no more.

SIEGENDORF.

And what is this to Ulric?

GABOR.

Amongst them there was said to be one man
Of wonderful endowments:—birth and fortune,
Youth, strength, and beauty, almost superhuman,
And courage as unrivall'd, were proclaim'd
His by the public rumour; and his sway,
Not only over his associates but
His judges, was attributed to witchcraft.
Such was his influence:—I have no great faith
In any magic save that of the mine—
I therefore deem'd him wealthy.—But my soul
Was roused with various feelings to seek out
This prodigy, if only to behold him.

SIEGENDORF.

And did you so?

GABOR.

You'll hear. Chance favour'd me:
A popular affray in the public square
Drew crowds together—it was one of those
Occasions, where men's souls look out of them,
And show them as they are—even in their faces:
The moment my eye met his—I exclaim'd
«This is the man!» though he was then, as since,
With the nobles of the city. I felt sure
I had not err'd, and watch'd him long and nearly:
I noted down his form—his gesture—features,
Stature and bearing—and amidst them all,
'Midst every natural and acquir'd distinction,
I could discern, methought, the assassin's eye
And gladiator's heart.

ULRIC (*smiling*).

The tale sounds well.

GABOR.

And may sound better.—He appear'd to me
One of those beings to whom Fortune bends
As she doth to the daring—and on whom
The fates of others oft depend; besides,
An indescribable sensation drew me
Near to this man, as if my point of fortune
Was to be fix'd by him.—There I was wrong.

SIEGENDORF.

And may not be right now.

GABOR.

I follow'd him.
Solicited his notice—and obtain'd it—
Though not his friendship:—it was his intention
To leave the city privately—we left it
Together—and together we arriv'd
In the poor town where Werner was conceal'd,
And Stralenheim was succour'd——Now we are on
The verge—*dare* you hear further?

SIEGENDORF.

I must do so—
Or I have heard too much.

GABOR.

I saw in you
A man above his station—and if not
So high, as now I find you, in my then
Conceptions—'t was that I had rarely seen
Men such as you appear'd in height of mind,
In the most high of worldly rank; you were
Poor—even to all save rags—I would have shared
My purse, though slender, with you—you refused it.

SIEGENDORF.

Doth my refusal make a debt to you,
That thus you urge it?

GABOR.

Still you owe me something,
Though not for that—and I owed you my safety,
At least my seeming safety—when the slaves
Of Stralenheim pursued me on the grounds
That *I* had robb'd him.

SIEGENDORF.

I conceal'd you—I
Whom, and whose house, you arraign, reviving viper!

GABOR.

I accuse no man—save in my defence.
You, count! have made yourself accuser—judge—
Your hall 's my court, your heart is my tribunal.
Be just, and *I* 'll be merciful.

SIEGENDORF.

You merciful!
You! base calumniator!

GABOR.

I. 'T will rest
With me at last to be so. You conceal'd me—
In secret passages known to yourself,
You said, and to none else. At dead of night,
Weary with watching in the dark, and dubious
Of tracing back my way—I saw a glimmer
Through distant crannies of a twinkling light.
I follow'd it, and reach'd a door—a secret
Portal—which open'd to the chamber, where,
With cautious hand and slow, having first undone
As much as made a crevice of the fastening,
I look'd through, and beheld a purple bed,
And on it Stralenheim!—

SIEGENDORF.

Asleep! And yet
You slew him—wretch!

GABOR.

He was already slain,
And bleeding like a sacrifice. My own
Blood became ice.

SIEGENDORF.

But he was all alone!
You saw none else? You did not see the——

[*He pauses from agitation.*

GABOR.

No;
He, whom you dare not name—nor even I
Scarce dare to recollect—was not then in
The chamber.

SIEGENDORF (*to* ULRIC).

Then, my boy! thou art guiltless still—
Thou bad'st me say *I* was so once—Oh! now
Do thou as much!

GABOR.

Be patient! I can *not*
Recede now, though it shake the very walls
Which frown above us. You remember, or
If not, your son does,—that the locks were changed
Beneath *his* chief inspection—on the morn
Which led to this same night: how he had enter'd
He best knows—but within an antechamber,
The door of which was half ajar—I saw
A man who wash'd his bloody hands, and oft
With stern and anxious glance gazed back upon

The bleeding body—but it moved no more.

SIEGENDORF.

Oh! God of fathers!

GABOR.

I beheld his features
As I see yours—but yours they were not, though
Resembling them—behold them in Count Ulric's!
Distinct—as I beheld them—though the expression
Is not now what it then was;—but it was so
When I first charged him with the crime:—so lately.

SIEGENDORF.

This is so——

GABOR (*interrupting him*).

Nay—but hear me to the end!
Now you must do so.—I conceived myself
Betray'd by you and *him* (for now I saw
There was some tie between you) into this
Pretended den of refuge, to become
The victim of your guilt; and my first thought
Was vengeance: but though arm'd with a short poignard
(Having left my sword without), I was no match
For him at any time, as had been proved
That morning—either in address or force.
I turn'd, and fled—i' the dark: chance, rather than
Skill, made me gain the secret door of the hall,
And thence the chamber where you slept—if I
Had found you *waking*, Heaven alone can tell
What vengeance and suspicion might have prompted;
But ne'er slept guilt as Werner slept that night.

SIEGENDORF.

And yet I had horrid dreams! and such brief sleep—
The stars had not gone down when I awoke—
Why didst thou spare me? I dreamt of my father—
And now my dream is out!

GABOR.

'Tis not my fault,
If I have read it.—Well! I fled and hid me—
Chance led me here after so many moons—
And show'd me Werner in Count Siegendorf!
Werner, whom I had sought in huts in vain,
Inhabited the palace of a sovereign!
You sought me, and have found me—now you know
My secret, and may weigh its worth.

SIEGENDORF (*after a pause*).

Indeed!

GABOR.

Is it revenge or justice which inspires
Your meditation?

SIEGENDORF.

Neither—I was weighing
The value of your secret.

GABOR.

You shall know it
At once—when you were poor, and I, though poor,
Rich enough to relieve such poverty
As might have envied mine, I offer'd you
My purse—you would not share it:—I'll be franker
With you; you are wealthy, noble, trusted by
The imperial powers—you understand me?

SIEGENDORF.

Yes.—

GABOR.

Not quite. You think me venal, and scarce true:
'Tis no less true, however, that my fortunes
Have made me both at present; you shall aid me;
I would have aided you—and also have
Been somewhat damaged in my name to save
Yours and your son's. Weigh well what I have said.

SIEGENDORF.

Dare you await the event of a few minutes'
Deliberation?

GABOR (*casts his eyes on* ULRIC, *who is leaning against a pillar*).

If I should do so?

SIEGENDORF.

I pledge my life for yours. Withdraw into
This tower. [*Opens a turret door.*

GABOR (*hesitatingly*).

This is the second *safe* asylum
You have offer'd me.

SIEGENDORF.

And was not the first so?

GABOR.

I know not that even now—but will approve
The second. I have still a further shield.—
I did not enter Prague alone—and should I
Be put to rest with Stralenheim—there are
Some tongues without will wag in my behalf.
Be brief in your decision!

SIEGENDORF.

I will be so.—
My word is sacred and irrevocable
Within *these* walls, but it extends no further.

GABOR.

I 'll take it for so much.

SIEGENDORF (*points to* ULRIC'S *sabre, still upon the ground*).

Take also *that*—
I saw you eye it eagerly, and him
Distrustfully.

GABOR (*takes up the sabre*).

I will; and so provide
To sell my life—not cheaply.

[GABOR *goes into the turret, which* SIEGENDORF *closes.*

SIEGENDORF (*advances to* ULRIC).

Now, Count Ulric!
For son I dare not call thee—What say'st thou?

ULRIC.

His tale is true.

SIEGENDORF.

True, monster!

ULRIC.

Most true, father;
And you did well to listen to it: what
We know, we can provide against. He must
Be silenced.

SIEGENDORF.

Ay, with half of my domains;
And with the other half, could he and thou
Unsay this villany.

ULRIC.

It is no time
For trifling or dissembling. I have said
His story 's true; and he too must be silenced.

SIEGENDORF.

How so?

ULRIC.

As Stralenheim is. Are you so dull
As never to have hit on this before?
When we met in the garden, what except
Discovery in the act could make me know
His death? or had the prince's household been

Then summon'd, would the cry for the police
Been left to such a stranger? Or should I
Have loiter'd on the way? Or could *you, Werner,*
The object of the baron's hate and fears,
Have fled—unless by many an hour before
Suspicion woke? I sought and fathom'd you—
Doubting if you were false or feeble; I
Perceived you were the latter; and yet so
Confiding have I found you, that I doubted
At times your weakness.

SIEGENDORF.

Parricide! no less
Than common stabber! What deed of my life,
Or thought of mine, could make you deem me fit
For your accomplice?

ULRIC.

Father, do not raise
The devil you cannot lay between us. This
Is time for union and for action, not
For family disputes. While *you* were tortured
Could *I* be calm? Think you that I have heard
This fellow's tale without some feeling? you
Have taught me feeling for *you* and myself;
For whom or what else did you ever teach it?

SIEGENDORF.

Oh! my dead father's curse! 't is working now.

ULRIC.

Let it work on! the grave will keep it down!
Ashes are feeble foes: it is more easy
To baffle such, than countermine a mole,
Which winds its blind but living path beneath you.
Yet hear me still!—If *you* condemn me, yet
Remember *who* hath taught me once too often
To listen to him! *Who* proclaim'd to me
That *there were crimes* made venial by the occasion?
That passion was our nature? that the goods
Of heaven waited on the goods of fortune?
Who show'd me his humanity secured
By his *nerves* only? *Who* deprived me of
All power to vindicate myself and race
In open day? By his disgrace which stamp'd
(It might be) bastardy on me, and on
Himself—a *felon's* brand! The man who is
At once both warm and weak, invites to deeds
He longs to do, but dare not. Is it strange
That I should *act* what you could *think*? We have done
With right and wrong; and now must only ponder
Upon effects, not causes. Stralenheim,
Whose life I saved, from impulse, as, *unknown,*
I would have saved a peasant's or a dog's, I slew,
Known as our foe—but not from vengeance. He
Was a rock in our way, which I cut through,
As doth the bolt, because it stood between us
And our true destination—but not idly.
As stranger I preserved him, and he *owed me*
His *life;* when due, I but resumed the debt.
He, you, and I stood o'er a gulf, wherein
I have plunged our enemy. *You* kindled first
The torch—*you* show'd the path: now trace me that
Of safety—or let me!

SIEGENDORF.

I have done with life!

ULRIC.

Let us have done with that which cankers life—
Familiar feuds and vain recriminations
Of things which cannot be undone. We have
No more to learn or hide: I know no fear,
And have within these very walls men whom
(Although you know them not) dare venture all things.
You stand high with the state; what passes here
Will not excite her too great curiosity:
Keep your own secret, keep a steady eye,
Stir not, and speak not;—leave the rest to me:
We must have *no third* babblers thrust between us.

[*Exit* ULRIC.

SIEGENDORF (*solus*).

Am I awake? are these my father's halls?
And *yon*—my son? *My* son! *mine!* who have ever
Abhorr'd both mystery and blood, and yet
Am plunged into the deepest hell of both!
I must be speedy, or more will be shed—
The Hungarian's!—Ulric—he hath partisans,
It seems: I might have guess'd as much. Oh fool!
Wolves prowl in company. He hath the key
(As I too) of the opposite door which leads
Into the turret. Now then! or once more
To be the father of fresh crimes—no less
Than of the criminal! Ho! Gabor! Gabor!

[*Exit into the turret, closing the door after him.*

SCENE II.

The Interior of the Turret.

GABOR *and* SIEGENDORF.

GABOR.

Who calls?

SIEGENDORF.

I—Siegendorf! Take these, and fly!
Lose not a moment!

Tears off a diamond star and other jewels, and thrusts them into GABOR'S *hand.*

GABOR.

What am I to do
With these?

SIEGENDORF.

Whate'er you will: sell them, or hoard,
And prosper; but delay not—or you are lost!

GABOR.

You pledged your honour for my safety!

SIEGENDORF.

And
Must thus redeem it. Fly! I am not master,
It seems, of my own castle—of my own
Retainers—nay, even of these very walls,
Or I would bid them fall and crush me! Fly!
Or you will be slain by——

GABOR.

Is it even so?
Farewell, then! Recollect, however, count,
You sought this fatal interview!

SIEGENDORF.

I did:
Let it not be more fatal still:—Begone!

GABOR.

By the same path I enter'd?

SIEGENDORF.

Yes; that 's safe still:
But loiter not in Prague;—you do not know
With whom you have to deal.

GABOR.

I know too well—
And knew it ere yourself, unhappy sire!
Farewell! [*Exit* GABOR.

SIEGENDORF (*solus and listening*).

He hath clear'd the staircase. Ah! I hear
The door sound loud behind him! He is safe!
Safe!—Oh, my father 's spirit!—I am faint——

[*He leans down upon a stone seat, near the wall of the Tower, in a drooping posture.*

Enter ULRIC, *with others armed, and with weapons drawn.*

ULRIC.

Despatch!—he 's there!

LUDWIG.

The count, my lord!

ULRIC (*recognising* SIEGENDORF).

You here, sir!

SIEGENDORF.

Yes: if you want another victim, strike!

ULRIC (*seeing him stript of his jewels*).

Where is the ruffian who hath plunder'd you?
Vassals, despatch in search of him! You see
'T was as I said—the wretch hath stript my father
Of jewels which might form a prince's heirloom!
Away! I 'll follow you forthwith.

[*Exeunt all but* SIEGENDORF *and* ULRIC.

What 's this?
Where is the villain?

SIEGENDORF.

There are *two*, sir; which
Are you in quest of?

ULRIC.

Let us hear no more
Of this: he must be found. You have not let him
Escape?

SIEGENDORF.

He 's gone.

ULRIC.

With your connivance?

SIEGENDORF.

With
My fullest, freest aid.

ULRIC.

Then fare you well!

[ULRIC *is going.*

SIEGENDORF.

Stop! I command—entreat—implore! Oh, Ulric!
Will you then leave me?

ULRIC.

What! remain to be
Denounced—dragg'd, it may be, in chains; and all
By your inherent weakness, half-humanity,
Selfish remorse, and temporising pity,
That sacrifices your whole race to save
A wretch to profit by our ruin! No, count,
Henceforth you have no son!

SIEGENDORF.

I never had one;
And would you ne'er had borne the useless name!
Where will you go? I would not send you forth
Without protection.

ULRIC.

Leave that unto me.
I am not alone; nor merely the vain heir
Of your domains: a thousand, ay, ten thousand,
Swords, hearts, and hands, are mine.

SIEGENDORF.

The foresters!
With whom the Hungarian found you first at Frankfort?

ULRIC.

Yes—men—who are worthy of the name! Go tell
Your senators that they look well to Prague;
Their feast of peace was early for the times;
There are more spirits abroad than have been laid
With Wallenstein!

Enter JOSEPHINE *and* IDA.

JOSEPHINE.

What is 't we hear? My Siegendorf!
Thank Heaven, I see you safe!

SIEGENDORF.

Safe!

IDA.

Yes, dear father!

SIEGENDORF.

No, no; I have no children: never more
Call me by that worst name of parent.

JOSEPHINE.

What
Means my good lord?

SIEGENDORF.

That you have given birth
To a demon!

IDA (*taking* ULRIC'S *hand*).

Who shall dare say this of Ulric?

SIEGENDORF.

Ida, beware! there 's blood upon that hand.

IDA (*stooping to kiss it*).

I 'd kiss it off, though it were mine!

SIEGENDORF.

It is so!

ULRIC.

Away! it is your father's! [*Exit* ULRIC.

IDA.

Oh, great God!
And I have loved this man!

IDA *falls senseless*—JOSEPHINE *stands speechless with horror.*

SIEGENDORF.

The wretch hath slain
Them both!—my Josephine! we are now alone!
Would we had ever been so!—All is over
For me!—Now open wide, my sire, thy grave;
Thy curse hath dug it deeper for thy son
In mine!—The race of Siegendorf is past!

The Deformed Transformed,

A DRAMA.

ADVERTISEMENT.

This production is founded partly on the story of a Novel, called «The Three Brothers,» published many years ago, from which M. G. Lewis's «Wood Demon» was also taken—and partly on the «Faust» of the great Goethe. The present publication contains the first two Parts only, and the opening chorus of the third. The rest may perhaps appear hereafter.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

STRANGER, *afterwards* CÆSAR.
ARNOLD.
BOURBON.
PHILIBERT.
CELLINI.

WOMEN.

BERTHA.
OLIMPIA.

Spirits, Soldiers, Citizens of Rome, Priests, Peasants, etc.

THE

DEFORMED TRANSFORMED.

PART I.

SCENE I.—*A Forest.*

Enter ARNOLD *and his mother* BERTHA.

BERTHA.

Out, hunchback!

ARNOLD.

I was born so, mother!

BERTHA.

Out!
Thou incubus! Thou nightmare! Of seven sons
The sole abortion!

ARNOLD.

Would that I had been so,
And never seen the light!

BERTHA.

I would so too!
But as thou *hast*—hence, hence—and do thy best.
That back of thine may bear its burthen; 't is
More high, if not so broad as that of others.

ARNOLD.

It *bears* its burthen;—but, my heart! Will it
Sustain that which you lay upon it, mother?
I love, or at the least, I loved you: nothing,
Save you, in nature, can love aught like me.
You nursed me—do not kill me.

BERTHA.

Yes—I nursed thee,
Because thou wert my first-born, and I knew not
If there would be another unlike thee,
That monstrous sport of nature. But get hence,
And gather wood!

ARNOLD.

I will: but when I bring it,
Speak to me kindly. Though my brothers are
So beautiful and lusty, and as free
As the free chase they follow, do not spurn me:
Our milk has been the same.

BERTHA.

As is the hedgehog's,
Which sucks at midnight from the wholesome dam
Of the young bull, until the milkmaid finds
The nipple next day sore and udder dry.
Call not thy brothers brethren! Call me not
Mother; for if I brought thee forth, it was
As foolish hens at times hatch vipers, by
Sitting upon strange eggs. Out, urchin, out!

[*Exit* BERTHA.

ARNOLD (*solus*).

Oh mother!——She is gone, and I must do
Her bidding;—wearily but willingly
I would fulfil it, could I only hope
A kind word in return. What shall I do?

[ARNOLD *begins to cut wood: in doing this he wounds one of his hands.*

My labour for the day is over now.
Accursed be this blood that flows so fast;
For double curses will be my meed now
At home.—What home? I have no home, no kin,
No kind—not made like other creatures, or
To share their sports or pleasures. Must I bleed too
Like them? Oh that each drop which falls to earth
Would rise a snake to sting them, as they have stung me!
Or that the devil, to whom they liken me,
Would aid his likeness? If I must partake
His form, why not his power? Is it because
I have not his will too? For one kind word
From her who bore me would still reconcile me
Even to this hateful aspect. Let me wash
The wound.

[ARNOLD *goes to a spring and stoops to wash his hand: he starts back.*

They are right; and Nature's mirror shows me
What she hath made me. I will not look on it
Again, and scarce dare think on 't. Hideous wretch
That I am! The very waters mock me with
My horrid shadow—like a demon placed
Deep in the fountain to scare back the cattle
From drinking therein. [*He pauses.*
And shall I live on,

A burthen to the earth, myself, and shame
Unto what brought me into life? Thou blood,
Which flowest so freely from a scratch, let me
Try if thou wilt not in a fuller stream
Pour forth my woes for ever with thyself
On earth, to which I will restore at once
This hateful compound of her atoms, and
Resolve back to her elements, and take
The shape of any reptile save myself,
And make a world for myriads of new worms!
This knife! now let me prove if it will sever
This wither'd slip of nature's nightshade—my
Vile form—from the creation, as it hath
The green bough from the forest.

[ARNOLD *places the knife in the ground, with the point upwards.*

Now 't is set,
And I can fall upon it. Yet one glance
On the fair day, which sees no foul thing like
Myself, and the sweet sun, which warm'd me, but
In vain. The birds—how joyously they sing!
So let them, for I would not be lamented:
But let their merriest notes be Arnold's knell;
The falling leaves my monument; the murmur
Of the near fountain my sole elegy.
Now, knife, stand firmly, as I fain would fall!

[*As he rushes to throw himself upon the knife, his eye is suddenly caught by the fountain, which seems in motion.*

The fountain moves without a wind: but shall
The ripple of a spring change my resolve?
No. Yet it moves again! The waters stir,
Not as with air, but by some subterrane
And rocking power of the internal world.
What's here? A mist! No more?—

[*A cloud comes from the fountain. He stands gazing upon it: it is dispelled, and a tall black man comes towards him.*

ARNOLD.

What would you? Speak!
Spirit or man?

STRANGER.

As man is both, why not
Say both in one?

ARNOLD.

Your form is man's, and yet
You may be devil.

STRANGER.

So many men are that
Which is so called or thought, that you may add me
To which you please, without much wrong to either.
But come: you wish to kill yourself;—pursue
Your purpose.

ARNOLD.

You have interrupted me.

STRANGER.

What is that resolution which can e'er
Be interrupted? If I be the devil
You deem, a single moment would have made you
Mine, and for ever, by your suicide;
And yet my coming saves you.

ARNOLD.

I said not
You *were* the demon, but that your approach
Was like one.

STRANGER.

Unless you keep company
With him (and you seem scarce used to such high
Society) you can't tell how he approaches;
And for his aspect, look upon the fountain,
And then on me, and judge which of us twain
Look likest what the boors believe to be
Their cloven-footed terror.

ARNOLD.

Do you—dare *you*
To taunt me with my born deformity?

STRANGER.

Were I to taunt a buffalo with this
Cloven foot of thine, or the swift dromedary
With thy sublime of humps, the animals
Would revel in the compliment. And yet
Both beings are more swift, more strong, more mighty
In action and endurance than thyself,
And all the fierce and fair of the same kind
With thee. Thy form is natural: 't was only
Nature's mistaken largess to bestow
The gifts which are of others upon man.

ARNOLD.

Give me the strength then of the buffalo's foot,
When he spurns high the dust, beholding his
Near enemy; or let me have the long
And patient swiftness of the desert-ship,
The helmless dromedary;—and I'll bear
Thy fiendish sarcasm with a saintly patience.

STRANGER.

I will.

ARNOLD (*with surprise*).

Thou *canst*?

STRANGER.

Perhaps. Would you aught else?

ARNOLD.

Thou mockest me.

STRANGER.

Not I. Why should I mock
What all are mocking? That 's poor sport, methinks.
To talk to thee in human language (for
Thou canst not yet speak mine), the forester
Hunts not the wretched coney, but the boar,
Or wolf, or lion, leaving paltry game
To petty burghers, who leave once a-year
Their walls, to fill their household caldrons with
Such scullion prey. The meanest gibe at thee,—
Now *I* can mock the mightiest.

ARNOLD.

Then waste not
Thy time on me: I seek thee not.

STRANGER.

Your thoughts
Are not far from me. Do not send me back:
I am not so easily recall'd to do
Good service.

ARNOLD.

What wilt thou do for me?

STRANGER.

Change
Shapes with you, if you will, since yours so irks you;
Or form you to your wish in any shape.

ARNOLD.

Oh! then you are indeed the demon, for
Nought else would wittingly wear mine.

STRANGER.

I 'll show thee
The brightest which the world e'er bore, and give thee
Thy choice.

ARNOLD.

On what condition?

STRANGER.

There 's a question!
An hour ago you would have given your soul
To look like other men, and now you pause
To wear the form of heroes.

ARNOLD.

No; I will not.
I must not compromise my soul.

STRANGER.

What soul,
Worth naming so, would dwell in such a carcass?

ARNOLD.

T is an aspiring one, whate'er the tenement
In which it is mislodged. But name your compact:
Must it be sign'd in blood?

STRANGER.

Not in your own.

ARNOLD.

Whose blood then?

STRANGER.

We will talk of that hereafter.
But I 'll be moderate with you, for I see
Great things within you. You shall have no bond
But your own will, no contract save your deeds.
Are you content?

ARNOLD.

I take thee at thy word.

STRANGER.

Now then!—

[*The Stranger approaches the fountain, and turns to* ARNOLD.

A little of your blood.

ARNOLD.

For what?

STRANGER.

To mingle with the magic of the waters,
And make the charm effective.

ARNOLD (*holding out his wounded arm*).

Take it all.

STRANGER.

Not now. A few drops will suffice for this.

[*The Stranger takes some of* ARNOLD'S *blood in his hand, and casts it into the fountain.*

Shadows of beauty!
Shadows of power!
Rise to your duty—
This is the hour!
Walk lovely and pliant
From the depth of this fountain,
As the cloud-shapen giant
Bestrides the Hartz mountain.*
Come as ye were,
That our eyes may behold
The model in air
Of the form I will mould,
Bright as the Iris
When ether is span'd;—
Such *his* desire is, [*Pointing to* ARNOLD.
Such my command!
Demons heroic—
Demons who wore
The form of the Stoic
Or Sophist of yore—
Or the shape of each victor,
From Macedon's boy
To each high Roman's picture,
Who breathed to destroy—
Shadows of beauty!
Shadows of power!
Up to your duty—
This is the hour!

[*Various Phantoms arise from the waters, and pass in succession before the Stranger and* ARNOLD.

ARNOLD.

What do I see?

STRANGER.

The black-eyed Roman, with
The eagle's beak between those eyes which ne'er
Beheld a conqueror, or look'd along
The land he made not Rome's, while Rome became
His, and all theirs who heir'd his very name.

ARNOLD.

The phantom 's bald; my quest is beauty. Could I
Inherit but his fame with his defects!

STRANGER.

His brow was girt with laurels more than hairs.
You see his aspect—choose it or reject.
I can but promise you his form; his fame
Must be long sought and fought for.

ARNOLD.

I will fight too,
But not as a mock Cæsar. Let him pass;
His aspect may be fair, but suits me not.

STRANGER.

Then you are far more difficult to please
Than Cato's sister, or than Brutus' mother,
Or Cleopatra at sixteen—an age
When love is not less in the eye than heart.
But be it so! Shadow, pass on!

[*The Phantom of Julius Cæsar disappears.*

ARNOLD.

And can it
Be, that the man who shook the earth is gone
And left no footstep?

STRANGER.

There you err. His substance
Left graves enough, and woes enough, and fame
More than enough to track his memory;
But for his shadow, 't is no more than yours,
Except a little longer and less crooked
I' the sun. Behold another!

[*A second Phantom passes.*

ARNOLD.

Who is he?

STRANGER.

He was the fairest and the bravest of
Athenians. Look upon him well.

ARNOLD.

He is
More lovely than the last. How beautiful!

STRANGER.

Such was the curled son of Clinias;—would'st thou

* This is a well-known German superstition—a gigantic shadow produced by reflection on the Brocken

Invest thee with his form?

ARNOLD.

Would that I had
Been born with it! But since I may choose further,
I will *look* further.

[*The Shade of Alcibiades disappears.*

STRANGER.

Lo! Behold again!

ARNOLD.

What! that low, swarthy, short-nosed, round-eyed satyr,
With the wide nostrils and Silenus' aspect,
The splay feet and low stature! I had better
Remain that which I am.

STRANGER.

And yet he was
The earth's perfection of all mental beauty,
And personification of all virtue.
But you reject him?

ARNOLD.

If his form could bring me
That which redeem'd it—no.

STRANGER.

I have no power
To promise that; but you may try, and find it
Easier in such a form, or in your own.

ARNOLD.

No. I was not born for philosophy.
Though I have that about me which has need on't.
Let him fleet on.

STRANGER.

Be air, thou hemlock-drinker!

[*The Shadow of Socrates disappears: another rises.*

ARNOLD.

What 's here? whose broad brow and whose curly beard
And manly aspect look like Hercules,
Save that his jocund eye hath more of Bacchus
Than the sad purger of the infernal world,
Leaning dejected on his club of conquest,
As if he knew the worthlessness of those
For whom he had fought.

STRANGER.

It was the man who lost
The ancient world for love.

ARNOLD.

I cannot blame him,
Since I have risk'd my soul because I find not
That which he exchanged the earth for.

STRANGER.

Since so far
You seem congenial, will you wear his features?

ARNOLD.

No. As you leave me choice, I am difficult,
If but to see the heroes I should ne'er
Have seen else on this side of the dim shore
Whence they float back before us.

STRANGER.

Hence, Triumvir!
Thy Cleopatra 's waiting.

[*The Shade of Anthony disappears: another rises.*

ARNOLD.

Who is this?
Who truly looketh like a demigod,
Blooming and bright, with golden hair, and stature,
If not more high than mortal, yet immortal
In all that nameless bearing of his limbs,
Which he wears as the sun his rays—a something
Which shines from him, and yet is but the flashing
Emanation of a thing more glorious still.
Was *he e'er human only?*

STRANGER.

Let the earth speak,
If there be atoms of him left, or even
Of the more solid gold that form'd his urn.

ARNOLD.

Who was this glory of mankind?

STRANGER.

The shame
Of Greece in peace, her thunderbolt in war—
Demetrius the Macedonian, and
Taker of cities.

ARNOLD.

Yet one shadow more.

STRANGER (*addressing the Shadow*).

Get thee to Lamia's lap!

[*The Shade of Demetrius Poliorcetes vanishes: another rises.*

STRANGER.

I 'll fit you still,
Fear not, my hunchback. If the shadow of
That which existed please not your nice taste,
I 'll animate the ideal marble, till
Your soul be reconciled to her new garment.

ARNOLD.

Content! I will fix here.

STRANGER.

I must commend
Your choice. The god-like son of the sea-goddess,
The unshorn boy of Peleus, with his locks
As beautiful and clear as the amber waves
Of rich Pactolus rolled o'er sands of gold,
Softened by intervening crystal, and
Rippled like flowing waters by the wind,
All vow'd to Sperchius as they were—behold them!
And *him*—as he stood by Polyxena,
With sanction'd and with soften'd love, before
The altar, gazing on his Trojan bride,
With some remorse within for Hector slain
And Priam weeping, mingled with deep passion
For the sweet downcast virgin, whose young hand
Trembled in *his* who slew her brother. So
He stood i' the temple! Look upon him as
Greece look'd her last upon her best, the instant
Ere Paris' arrow flew.

ARNOLD.

I gaze upon him
As if I were his soul, whose form shall soon
Envelop mine.

STRANGER.

You have done well. The greatest
Deformity should only barter with
The extremest beauty, if the proverb 's true
Of mortals, that extremes meet.

ARNOLD.

Come! Be quick!
I am impatient.

STRANGER.

As a youthful beauty
Before her glass. *You both* see what is not,
But dream it is what must be.

ARNOLD.

Must I wait?

STRANGER.

No; that were pity. But a word or two:

His stature is twelve cubits: would you so far
Outstep these times, and be a Titan? Or
(To talk canonically) wax a son
Of Anak?

ARNOLD.

Why not?

STRANGER.

Glorious ambition!
I love thee most in dwarfs! A mortal of
Philistine stature would have gladly pared
His own Goliath down to a slight David;
But thou, my manikin, would'st soar a show
Rather than hero. Thou shalt be indulged,
If such be thy desire; and yet, by being
A little less removed from present men
In figure, thou canst sway them more; for all
Would rise against thee now, as if to hunt
A new found mammoth; and their cursed engines,
Their culverins and sō forth, would find way
Through our friend's armour there, with greater ease
Than the adulterer's arrow through his heel
Which Thetis had forgotten to baptise
In Styx.

ARNOLD.

Then let it be as thou deem'st best.

STRANGER.

Thou shalt be beauteous as the thing thou see'st,
And strong as what it was, and—

ARNOLD.

I ask not
For valour, since deformity is daring.
It is its essence to o'ertake mankind
By heart and soul, and make itself the equal—
Ay, the superior of the rest. There is
A spur in its halt movements, to become
All that the others cannot, in such things
As still are free to both, to compensate
For stepdame Nature's avarice at first.
They woo with fearless deeds the smiles of fortune,
And oft, like Timour the lame Tartar, win them.

STRANGER.

Well spoken! And thou doubtless wilt remain
Form'd as thou art. I may dismiss the mould
Of shadow, which must turn to flesh, to encase
This daring soul, which could achieve no less
Without it?

ARNOLD.

Had no power presented me
The possibility of change, I would
Have done the best which spirit may, to make
Its way, with all deformity's dull, deadly,
Discouraging weight upon me, like a mountain,
In feeling, on my heart as on my shoulders—
A hateful and unsightly molehill to
The eyes of happier man. I would have look'd
On beauty in that sex which is the type
Of all we know or dream of beautiful
Beyond the world they brighten, with a sigh—
Not of love but despair; nor sought to win,
Though to a heart all love, what could not love me
In turn, because of this vile crooked clog,
Which makes me lonely. Nay, I could have borne
It all, had not my mother spurn'd me from her.
The she-bear licks her cubs into a sort
Of shape;—my dam beheld my shape was hopeless.
Had she exposed me, like the Spartan, ere
I knew the passionate part of life, I had
Been a clod of the valley—happier nothing
Than what I am. But even thus, the lowest,
Ugliest, and meanest of mankind, what courage
And perseverance could have done, perchance,
Had made me something—as it has made heroes
Of the same mould as mine. You lately saw me
Master of my own life, and quick to quit it;
And he who is so is the master of
Whatever dreads to die.

STRANGER.

Decide between
What you have been, or will be.

ARNOLD.

I have done so.
You have open'd brighter prospects to my eyes,
And sweeter to my heart. As I am now,
I might be fear'd, admired, respected, loved,
Of all save those next to me, of whom I
Would be beloved. As thou showest me
A choice of forms, I take the one I view,
Haste! haste!

STRANGER.

And what shall *I* wear?

ARNOLD.

Surely he
Who can command all forms, will choose the highest,
Something superior even to that which was
Pelides now before us. Perhaps *his*
Who slew him, that of Paris: or—still higher—
The poet's god, clothed in such limbs as are
Themselves a poetry.

STRANGER.

Less will content me;
For I too love a change.

ARNOLD.

Your aspect is
Dusky, but not uncomely.

STRANGER.

If I chose,
I might be whiter; but I have a penchant
For black—it is so honest, and besides
Can neither blush with shame nor pale with fear:
But I have worn it long enough of late,
And now I 'll take your figure.

ARNOLD.

Mine!

STRANGER.

Yes. You
Shall change with Thetis' son, and I with Bertha
Your mother's offspring. People have their tastes;
You have yours—I mine.

ARNOLD.

Dispatch! dispatch!

STRANGER.

Even so.

[*The Stranger takes some earth and moulds it along the turf; and then addresses the Phantom of Achilles.*

Beautiful shadow
Of Thetis's boy!
Who sleeps in the meadow
Whose grass grows o'er Troy:

From the red earth, like Adam,[1],
Thy likeness I shape,
As the Being who made him,
Whose actions I ape.
Thou clay, be all glowing,
Till the rose in his cheek
Be as fair as, when blowing,
It wears its first streak!
Ye violets, I scatter,
Now turn into eyes!
And thou sunshiny water,
Of blood take the guise!
Let these hyacinth boughs
Be his long, flowing hair,
And wave o'er his brows,
As thou wavest in air!
Let his heart be this marble
I tear from the rock!
But his voice as the warble
Of birds on yon oak!
Let his flesh be the purest
Of mould, in which grew
The lily-root surest,
And drank the best dew!
Let his limbs be the lightest
Which clay can compound!
And his aspect the brightest
On earth to be found!
Elements, near me,
Be mingled and stirr'd,
Know me and hear me,
And leap to my word!
Sunbeams, awaken
This earth's animation!
'Tis done! He hath taken
His stand in creation!

ARNOLD *falls senseless; his soul passes into the shape of Achilles, which rises from the ground; while the phantom has disappeared, part by part, as the figure was formed from the earth.*

ARNOLD (*in his new form*).
I love, and I shall be beloved! Oh life!
At last I feel thee! Glorious spirit!

STRANGER.
Stop!
What shall become of your abandon'd garment,
Your hump, and lump, and clod of ugliness,
Which late you wore, or were?

ARNOLD.
Who cares! Let wolves
And vultures take it, if they will.

STRANGER.
And if
They do, and are not scared by it, you 'll say
It must be peace-time, and no better fare
Abroad i' the fields.

ARNOLD.
Let us but leave it there,
No matter what becomes on 't.

STRANGER.
That 's ungracious,
If not ungrateful. Whatsoe'er it be,
It hath sustain'd your soul full many a day.

ARNOLD.
Ay, as the dunghill may conceal a gem
Which is now set in gold, as jewels should be.

STRANGER.
But if I give another form, it must be
By fair exchange, not robbery. For they
Who make men without women's aid, have long
Had patents for the same, and do not love
Your interlopers. The devil may take men,
Not make them,—though he reap the benefit
Of the original workmanship:—and therefore
Some one must be found to assume the shape
You have quitted.

ARNOLD.
Who would do so?

STRANGER.
That I know not,
And therefore I must.

ARNOLD.
You!

STRANGER.
I said it ere
You inhabited your present dome of beauty.

ARNOLD.
True. I forget all things in the new joy
Of this immortal change.

STRANGER.
In a few moments
I will be as you were, and you shall see
Yourself for ever by you, as your shadow.

ARNOLD.
I would be spared this.

STRANGER.
But it cannot be.
What! shrink already, being what you are,
From seeing what you were?

ARNOLD.
Do as thou wilt.

STRANGER (to *the late form of* ARNOLD, *extended on the earth*).
Clay! not dead, but soul-less!
Though no man would choose thee,
An immortal no less
Designs not to refuse thee.
Clay thou art; and unto spirit
All clay is of equal merit.

Fire! *without* which nought can live;
Fire! but *in* which nought can live,
Save the fabled salamander,
Or immortal souls which wander,
Praying what doth not forgive,
Howling for a drop of water,
Burning in a quenchless lot:
Fire! the only element
Where nor fish, beast, bird, nor worm,
Save the worm which dieth not,
Can preserve a moment's form,
But must with thyself be blent:
Fire! man's safeguard and his slaughter:
Fire! creation's first-born daughter,
And destruction's threaten'd son,
When Heaven with the world hath done:
Fire! assist me to renew
Life in what lies in my view

[1] Adam means "red earth," from which the first man was formed.

Stiff and cold!
His resurrection rests with me and you!
One little, marshy spark of flame—
And he again shall seem the same;
But I his spirit's place shall hold!

[*An ignis-fatuus flits through the wood, and rests on the brow of the body. The Stranger disappears: the body rises.*

ARNOLD (*in his new form*).
Oh! horrible!

STRANGER (*in* ARNOLD'S *late shape*).
What! tremblest thou?

ARNOLD.
Not so—
I merely shudder. Where is fled the shape
Thou lately worest!

STRANGER.
To the world of shadows.
But let us thread the present. Whither wilt thou?

ARNOLD.
Must thou be my companion?

STRANGER.
Wherefore not?
Your betters keep worse company.

ARNOLD.
My betters!

STRANGER.
Oh! you wax proud, I see, of your new form:
I 'm glad of that. Ungrateful too! That 's well;
You improve apace:—two changes in an instant,
And you are old in the world's ways already.
But bear with me: indeed you 'll find me useful
Upon your pilgrimage. But come, pronounce
Where shall we now be errant?

ARNOLD.
Where the world
Is thickest, that I may behold it in
Its workings.

STRANGER.
That 's to say, where there is war
And woman in activity. Let 's see!
Spain—Italy—the new Atlantic world—
Afric with all its Moors. In very truth,
There is small choice: the whole race are just now
Tugging as usual at each other's hearts.

ARNOLD.
I have heard great things of Rome.

STRANGER.
A goodly choice—
And scarce a better to be found on earth,
Since Sodom was put out. The field is wide too;
For now the Frank, and Hun, and Spanish scion
Of the old Vandals are at play along
The sunny shores of the world's garden.

ARNOLD.
How
Shall we proceed?

STRANGER.
Like gallants on good coursers.
What ho! my chargers! Never yet were better,
Since Phaeton was upset into the Po.
Our pages too!

Enter two Pages, with four coal-black Horses.

ARNOLD.
A noble sight!

STRANGER.
And of
A nobler breed. Match me in Barbary,
Or your Kochlani race of Araby,
With these!

ARNOLD.
The mighty stream, which volumes high,
From their proud nostrils, burns the very air;
And sparks of flame, like dancing fire-flies, wheel
Around their manes, as common insects swarm
Round common steeds towards sunset.

STRANGER.
Mount, my lord!
They and I are your servitors.

ARNOLD.
And these,
Our dark-eyed pages—what may be their names!

STRANGER.
You shall baptise them.

ARNOLD.
What! in holy water!

STRANGER.
Why not! The deeper sinner, better saint.

ARNOLD.
They are beautiful, and cannot, sure, be demons?

STRANGER.
True; the devil 's always ugly; and your beauty
Is never diabolical.

ARNOLD.
I 'll call him
Who bears the golden horn, and wears such bright
And blooming aspect, *Huon;* for he looks
Like to the lovely boy lost in the forest,
And never found till now. And for the other
And darker, and more thoughtful, who smiles not,
But looks as serious though serene as night,
He shall be *Memnon,* from the Ethiop king
Whose statue turns a harper once a-day.
And you?

STRANGER.
I have ten thousand names, and twice
As many attributes; but as I wear
A human shape, will take a human name.

ARNOLD.
More human than the shape (though it was mine once)
I trust.

STRANGER.
Then call me Cæsar.

ARNOLD.
Why, that name
Belongs to empires, and has been but borne
By the world's lords.

STRANGER.
And therefore fittest for
The devil in disguise—since so you deem me,
Unless you call me pope instead.

ARNOLD.
Well then,
Cæsar thou shalt be. For myself, my name
Shall be plain Arnold still.

CÆSAR.
We 'll add a title—
«Count Arnold:» it hath no ungracious sound,
And will look well upon a billet-doux.

ARNOLD.
Or in an order for a battle-field.

CÆSAR *sings.*

To horse! to horse! my coal-black steed
Paws the ground and snuffs the air!
There 's not a foal of Arab's breed
More knows whom he must bear!
On the hill he will not tire,
Swifter as it waxes higher;
In the marsh he will not slacken,
On the plain be overtaken;
In the wave he will not sink,
Nor pause at the brook's side to drink;
In the race he will not pant,
In the combat he 'll not faint;
On the stones he will not stumble,
Time nor toil shall make him humble:
In the stall he will not stiffen,
But be winged as a griffin,
Only flying with his feet:
And will not such a voyage be sweet?
Merrily! merrily! never unsound,
Shall our bonny black horses skim over the ground!
From the Alps to the Caucasus, ride we, or fly!
For we 'll leave them behind in the glance of an eye.

[*They mount their horses, and disappear.*

SCENE II.

A Camp before the Walls of Rome.

ARNOLD *and* CÆSAR.

CÆSAR.

You are well enter'd now.

ARNOLD.

Ay; but my path
Has been o'er carcases: mine eyes are full
Of blood.

CÆSAR.

Then wipe them, and see clearly. Why!
Thou art a conqueror; the chosen knight
And free companion of the gallant Bourbon,
Late constable of France; and now to be
Lord of the city which hath been earth's lord
Under its emperors, and—changing sex,
Not sceptre, an hermaphrodite of empire—
Lady of the old world.

ARNOLD.

How *old*? What! are there
New worlds?

CÆSAR.

To *you*. You 'll find there are such shortly,
By its rich harvests, new disease, and gold;
From one *half* of the world named a *whole* new one,
Because you know no better than the dull
And dubious notice of your eyes and ears.

ARNOLD.

I 'll trust them.

CÆSAR.

Do! They will deceive you sweetly,
And that is better than the bitter truth!

ARNOLD.

Dog!

CÆSAR.

Man!

ARNOLD.

Devil!

CÆSAR.

Your obedient, humble servant.

ARNOLD.

Say *master* rather. Thou hast lured me on,
Through scenes of blood and lust, till I am here.

CÆSAR.

And where would'st *thou* be?

ARNOLD.

Oh, at peace—in peace!

CÆSAR.

And where is that which is so? From the star
To the winding worm, all life is motion, and
In life *commotion* is the extremest point
Of life. The planet wheels till it becomes
A comet, and destroying as it sweeps
The stars, goes out. The poor worm winds its way,
Living upon the death of other things,
But still, like them, must live and die, the subject
Of something which has made it live and die.
You must obey what all obey, the rule
Of fixed necessity: against her edict
Rebellion prospers not.

ARNOLD.

And when it prospers——

CÆSAR.

'T is no rebellion.

ARNOLD.

Will it prosper now?

CÆSAR.

The Bourbon hath given orders for the assault,
And by the dawn there will be work.

ARNOLD.

Alas!
And shall the city yield? I see the giant
Abode of the true God, and his true saint,
Saint Peter, rear its dome and cross into
That sky whence Christ ascended from the cross,
Which his blood made a badge of glory and
Of joy (as once of torture unto him
God and God's Son, man's sole and only refuge).

CÆSAR.

'Tis there, and shall be.

ARNOLD.

What?

CÆSAR.

The crucifix
Above, and many altar shrines below.
Also some culverins upon the walls,
And harquebusses, and what not, besides
The men who are to kindle them to death
Of other men.

ARNOLD.

And those scarce mortal arches,
Pile above pile of everlasting wall,
The theatre where emperors and their subjects
(Those subjects *Romans*) stood at gaze upon
The battles of the monarchs of the wild
And wood, the lion and his tusky rebels
Of the then untamed desert, brought to joust
In the arena (as right well they might,
When they had left no human foe unconquer'd)
Made even the forest pay its tribute of
Life to their amphitheatre, as well
As Dacia men to die the eternal death
For a sole instant's pastime, and "Pass on
To a new gladiator!"—Must it fall?

CÆSAR.

The city or the amphitheatre?
The church, or one, or all? for you confound
Both them and me.

ARNOLD.

To-morrow sounds the assault
With the first cock-crow.

CÆSAR.

Which, if it end with
The evening's first nightingale, will be
Something new in the annals of great sieges:
For men must have their prey after long toil.

ARNOLD.

The sun goes down as calmly, and perhaps
More beautifully, than he did on Rome
On the day Remus leapt her wall.

CÆSAR.

I saw him.

ARNOLD.

You!

CÆSAR.

Yes, sir. You forget I am or was
Spirit, till I took up with your cast shape
And a worse name. I'm Cæsar and a hunch-back.
Now. Well! the first of Cæsars was a bald-head,
And loved his laurels better as a wig
(So history says) than as glory. Thus
The world runs on, but we'll be merry still.
I saw your Romulus (simple as I am)
Slay his own twin, quick-born of the same womb,
Because he leapt a ditch ('t was then no wall,
Whate'er it now be); and Rome's earliest cement
Was brother's blood; and if its native blood
Be spilt till the choked Tiber be as red
As e'er 't was yellow, it will never wear
The deep hue of the ocean and the earth,
Which the great robber sons of Fratricide
Have made their never-ceasing scene of slaughter
For ages.

ARNOLD.

But what have these done, their far
Remote descendants, who have lived in peace,
The peace of heaven, and in her sunshine of
Piety?

CÆSAR.

And what had *they* done, whom the old
Romans o'erswept?—Hark!

ARNOLD.

They are soldiers singing
A reckless roundelay, upon the eve
Of many deaths, it may be of their own.

CÆSAR.

And why should they not sing as well as swans?
They are black ones, to be sure.

ARNOLD.

So, you are learn'd,
I see, too.

CÆSAR.

In my grammar, certes. I
Was educated for a monk of all times,
And once I was well versed in the forgotten
Etruscan letters, and—were I so minded—
Could make their hieroglyphics plainer than
Your alphabet.

ARNOLD.

And wherefore do you not?

CÆSAR.

It answers better to resolve the alphabet
Back into hieroglyphics. Like your statesman,
And prophet, pontiff, doctor, alchymist,
Philosopher, and what not, they have built
More Babels without new dispersion, than
The stammering young ones of the flood's dull ooze,
Who fail'd and fled each other. Why? why, marry,
Because no man could understand his neighbour.
They are wiser now, and will not separate
For nonsense. Nay, it is their brotherhood,
Their Shibboleth, their Koran, Talmud, their
Cabala; their best brick-work wherewithal
They build more—

ARNOLD (*interrupting him*).

Oh, thou everlasting sneerer!
Be silent! How the soldiers' rough strain seems
Soften'd by distance to a hymn-like cadence!
Listen!

CÆSAR.

Yes. I have heard the angels sing.

ARNOLD.

And demons howl.

CÆSAR.

And man too. Let us listen:
I love all music.

Song of the Soldiers within.

The Black Bands came over
The Alps and their snow,
With Bourbon, the rover,
They past the broad Po.
We have beaten all foemen,
We have captured a king,
We have turned back on no men,
And so let us sing!
Here's the Bourbon for ever!
Though penniless all,
We'll have one more endeavour
At yonder old wall.
With the Bourbon we'll gather
At day-dawn before
The gates, and together
Or break or climb o'er
The wall: on the ladder,
As mounts each firm foot,
Our shout shall grow gladder,
And death only be mute.
With the Bourbon we'll mount o'er
The walls of old Rome,
And who then shall count o'er
The spoils of each dome?
Up! up! with the lily!
And down with the keys!
In old Rome, the Seven-hilly,
We'll revel at ease:
Her streets shall be gory,
Her Tiber all red,
And her temples so hoary
Shall clang with our tread.
Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!
The Bourbon for aye!
Of our song bear the burthen!
And fire, fire away!
With Spain for the vanguard,
Our varied host comes;

And next to the Spaniard
Beat Germany's drums;
And Italy's lances
Are couch'd at their mother;
But our leader from France is,
Who warr'd with his brother.
Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!
Sans country or home,
We 'll follow the Bourbon,
To plunder old Rome.

CÆSAR.

An indifferent song
For those within the walls, methinks, to hear.

ARNOLD.

Yes, if they keep to their chorus. But here comes
The general with his chiefs and men of trust.
A goodly rebel!

Enter the Constable BOURBON, «*cum suis,*» *etc. etc. etc.*

PHILIBERT.

How now, noble prince,
You are not cheerful?

BOURBON.

Why should I be so?

PHILIBERT.

Upon the eve of conquest, such as ours,
Most men would be so.

BOURBON.

If I were secure!

PHILIBERT.

Doubt not our soldiers. Were the walls of adamant,
They 'd crack them. Hunger is a sharp artillery.

BOURBON.

That they will falter is my least of fears.
That they will be repulsed, with Bourbon for
Their chief, and all their kindled appetites
To marshal them on—were those hoary walls
Mountains, and those who guard them like the gods
Of the old fables, I would trust my Titans;—
But now—

PHILIBERT.

They are but men who war with mortals.

BOURBON.

True: but those walls have girded in great ages,
And sent forth mighty spirits. The past earth
And present phantom of imperious Rome
Is peopled with those warriors; and methinks
They flit along the eternal city's rampart,
And stretch their glorious, gory, shadowy hands,
And beckon me away!

PHILIBERT.

So let them! Wilt thou
Turn back from shadowy menaces of shadows?

BOURBON.

They do not menace me. I could have faced,
Methinks, a Sylla's menace; but they clasp
And raise, and wring their dim and deathlike hands,
And with their thin aspen faces and fixed eyes
Fascinate mine. Look there!

PHILIBERT.

I look upon
A lofty battlement.

BOURBON.

And there!

PHILIBERT.

Not even
A guard in sight; they wisely keep below,
Shelter'd by the gray parapet, from some
Stray bullet of our lansquenets, who might
Practise in the cool twilight.

BOURBON.

You are blind.

PHILIBERT.

If seeing nothing more than may be seen
Be so.

BOURBON.

A thousand years have mann'd the walls
With all their heroes,—the last Cato stands
And tears his bowels, rather than survive
The liberty of that I would enslave.
And the first Cæsar with his triumphs flits
From battlement to battlement.

PHILIBERT.

Then conquer
The walls for which he conquer'd, and be greater!

BOURBON.

True: so I will, or perish.

PHILIBERT.

You can *not*.
In such an enterprise to die is rather
The dawn of an eternal day, than death.

Count ARNOLD *and* CÆSAR *advance.*

CÆSAR.

And the mere men—do they too sweat beneath
The noon of this same ever-scorching glory?

BOURBON.

Ah!
Welcome the bitter hunchback! and his master,
The beauty of our host, and brave as beauteous,
And generous as lovely. We shall find
Work for you both ere morning.

CÆSAR.

You will find,
So please your highness, no less for yourself.

BOURBON.

And if I do, there will not be a labourer
More forward, hunchback!

CÆSAR.

You may well say so,
For *you* have seen that back—as general,
Placed in the rear in action—but your foes
Have never seen it.

BOURBON.

That 's a fair retort,
For I provoked it:—but the Bourbon's breast
Has been, and ever shall be, far advanced
In danger's face as yours, were you the *devil*.

CÆSAR.

And if I were, I might have saved myself
The toil of coming here.

PHILIBERT.

Why so?

CÆSAR.

One half
Of your brave bands of their own bold accord
Will go to him, the other half be sent,
More swiftly, not less surely.

BOURBON.

Arnold, your
Slight crooked friend 's as snake-like in his words
As his deeds.

CÆSAR.

Your highness much mistakes me.
The first snake was a flatterer—I am none;
And for my deeds, I only sting when stung.

BOURBON.

You are brave, and that 's enough for me: and quick
In speech as sharp in action—and that 's more.
I am not alone a soldier, but the soldiers'
Comrade.

CÆSAR.

They are but bad company, your highness;
And worse even for their friends than foes, as being
More permanent acquaintance.

PHILIBERT.

How now, fellow!
Thou waxest insolent, beyond the privilege
Of a buffoon.

CÆSAR.

You mean, I speak the truth.
I 'll lie—it is as easy: then you 'll praise me
For calling you a hero.

BOURBON.

Philibert!
Let him alone; he 's brave, and ever has
Been first with that swart face and mountain shoulder
In field or storm; and patient in starvation;
And for his tongue, the camp is full of licence,
And the sharp stinging of a lively rogue
Is, to my mind, far preferable to
The gross, dull, heavy, gloomy execration
Of a mere famish'd, sullen, grumbling slave,
Whom nothing can convince save a full meal,
And wine, and sleep, and a few maravedis,
With which he deems him rich.

CÆSAR.

It would be well
If the earth's princes ask'd no more.

BOURBON.

Be silent!

CÆSAR.

Ay, but not idle. Work yourself with words!
You have few to speak.

PHILIBERT.

What means the audacious prater?

CÆSAR.

To prate, like other prophets.

BOURBON.

Philibert!
Why will you vex him? Have we not enough
To think on? Arnold! I will lead the attack
To-morrow.

ARNOLD.

I have heard as much, my lord.

BOURBON.

And you will follow?

ARNOLD.

Since I must not lead.

BOURBON.

'T is necessary for the further daring
Of our too needy army, that their chief
Plant the first foot upon the foremost ladder's
First step.

CÆSAR.

Upon its topmost, let us hope:
So shall he have his full deserts.

BOURBON.

The world's
Great capital perchance is ours to-morrow.
Through every change the seven-hill'd city hath
Retain'd her sway o'er nations, and the Cæsars
But yielded to the Alarics, the Alarics
Unto the pontiffs. Roman, Goth, or priest,
Still the world's masters! Civilized, barbarian,
Or saintly, still the walls of Romulus
Have been the circus of an empire. Well!
'T was *their* turn—now 't is ours; and let us hope
That we will fight as well, and rule much better.

CÆSAR.

No doubt, the camp 's the school of civic rights.
What would you make of Rome?

BOURBON.

That which it was.

CÆSAR.

In Alaric's time?

BOURBON.

No, slave! In the first Cæsar's,
Whose name you bear like other curs.

CÆSAR.

And kings.
'T is a great name for bloodhounds.

BOURBON.

There 's a demon
In that fierce rattle-snake thy tongue. Wilt never
Be serious?

CÆSAR.

On the eve of battle, no;—
That were not soldier-like. 'T is for the general
To be more pensive: we adventurers
Must be more cheerful. Wherefore should we think?
Our tutelar deity, in a leader's shape,
Takes care of us. Keep thought aloof from hosts!
If the knaves take to thinking, you will have
To crack those walls alone.

BOURBON.

You may sneer, since
'T is lucky for you that you fight no worse for 't.

CÆSAR.

I thank you for the freedom; 't is the only
Pay I have taken in your highness' service.

BOURBON.

Well, sir, to-morrow you shall pay yourself.
Look on those towers; they hold my treasury.
But, Philibert, we 'll in to council. Arnold!
We would request your presence.

ARNOLD.

Prince! my service
Is yours, as in the field.

BOURBON.

In both, we prize it,
And yours will be a post of trust at day-break.

CÆSAR.

And mine?

BOURBON.

To follow glory with the Bourbon.
Good night!

ARNOLD (*to* CÆSAR).

Prepare our armour for the assault,
And wait within my tent.

[*Exeunt* BOURBON, ARNOLD, PHILIBERT, *etc.*

CÆSAR (*solus*).

Within thy tent!

Think'st thou that I pass from thee with my presence?
Or that this crooked coffer, which contain'd
Thy principle of life, is aught to me
Except a mask? And these are men, forsooth!
Heroes and chiefs, the flower of Adam's bastards!
This is the consequence of giving matter
The power of thought. It is a stubborn substance,
And thinks chaotically, as it acts,
Ever relapsing into its first elements.
Well! I must play with these poor puppets: 't is
The spirit's pastime in his idler hours.
When I grow weary of it, I have business
Amongst the stars, which these poor creatures deem
Were made for them to look at. 'T were a jest now
To bring one down amongst them, and set fire
Unto their ant hill: how the pismires then
Would scamper o'er the scalding soil, and, ceasing
From tearing down each others' nests, pipe forth
One universal orison! Ha! ha! [*Exit* CÆSAR.

PART II.

SCENE I.

Before the Walls of Rome. The assault; the army in motion, with ladders to scale the walls; BOURBON, *with a white scarf over his armour, foremost.*

Chorus of Spirits in the air.

1.

'T is the morn, but dim and dark.
Whither flies the silent lark?
Whither shrinks the clouded sun?
Is the day indeed begun?
Nature's eye is melancholy
O'er the city high and holy;
But without there is a din
Should arouse the saints within,
And revive the heroic ashes
Round which yellow Tiber dashes.
Oh ye seven hills! awaken,
Ere your very base be shaken!

2.

Hearken to the steady stamp!
Mars is in their every tramp!
Not a step is out of tune,
As the tides obey the moon!
On they march, though to self-slaughter,
Regular as rolling water,
Whose high waves o'ersweep the border
Of huge moles, but keep their order,
Breaking only rank by rank.
Hearken to the armour's clank!
Look down o'er each frowning warrior,
How he glares upon the barrier:
Look on each step of each ladder,
As the stripes that streak an adder.

3.

Look upon the bristling wall,
Mann'd without an interval!
Round and round, and tier on tier,
Cannon's black mouth, shining spear,
Lit match, bell-mouth'd musquetoon,
Gaping to be murderous soon.
All the warlike gear of old,
Mix'd with what we now behold,
In this strife 'twixt old and new,
Gather like a locust's crew.
Shade of Remus! 't is a time
Awful as thy brother's crime!
Christians war against Christ's shrine:—
Must its lot be like to thine?

4.

Near—and near—nearer still,
As the earthquake saps the hill,
First with trembling, hollow motion,
Like a scarce-awaken'd ocean,
Then with stronger shock and louder,
Till the rocks are crush'd to powder,—
Onward sweeps the rolling host!
Heroes of the immortal boast!
Mighty chiefs! Eternal shadows!
First flowers of the bloody meadows
Which encompass Rome, the mother
Of a people without brother!
Will you sleep when nations' quarrels
Plough the root up of your laurels?
Ye who wept o'er Carthage burning,
Weep not—*strike!* for Rome is mourning![1]

5.

Onward sweep the varied nations!
Famine long hath dealt their rations.
To the wall, with hate and hunger,
Numerous as wolves, and stronger,
On they sweep. Oh! glorious city,
Must thou be a theme for pity!
Fight, like your first sire, each Roman!
Alaric was a gentle foeman,
Match'd with Bourbon's black banditti!
Rouse thee, thou eternal city!
Rouse thee! Rather give the porch
With thy own hand to thy torch,
Than behold such hosts pollute
Your worst dwelling with their foot.

6.

Ah! behold yon bleeding spectre!
Ilion's children find no Hector;
Priam's offspring loved their brother;
Roma's sire forgot his mother,
When he slew his gallant twin,
With inexpiable sin.
See the giant shadow stride
O'er the ramparts high and wide!
When he first o'erleapt thy wall,
Its foundation mourn'd thy fall.
Now, though towering like a Babel,
Who to stop his steps are able?
Stalking o'er thy highest dome,
Remus claims his vengeance, Rome!

7.

Now they reach thee in their anger:
Fire, and smoke, and hellish clangor
Are around thee, thou world's wonder!
Death is in thy walls and under.

[1] Scipio, the second Africanus, is said to have repeated a verse of Homer, and wept over the burning of Carthage. He had better have granted it a capitulation.

Now the meeting steel first clashes;
Downward then the ladder crashes,
With its iron load all gleaming,
Lying at its foot blaspheming!
Up again! for every warrior
Slain, another climbs the barrier.
Thicker grows the strife: thy ditches
Europe's mingling gore enriches.
Rome! Although thy wall may perish,
Such manure thy fields will cherish,
Making gay the harvest-home;
But thy hearths, alas! oh, Rome!—
Yet be Rome amidst thine anguish,
Fight as thou wast wont to vanquish!

8.

Yet once more, ye old Penates!
Let not your quench'd hearths be Atè's!
Yet again, ye shadowy heroes,
Yield not to these stranger Neroes!
Though the son who slew his mother,
Shed Rome's blood, he was your brother:
'Twas the Roman curb'd the Roman:—
Brennus was a baffled foeman.
Yet again, ye saints and martys,
Rise, for yours are holier charters.
Mighty gods of temples falling,
Yet in ruin still appalling!
Mightier founders of those altars,
True and Christian,—strike the assaulters!
Tiber! Tiber! let thy torrent
Show even nature's self abhorrent.
Let each breathing heart dilated
Turn, as doth the lion baited!
Rome be crush'd to one wide tomb,
But be still the Roman's Rome!

BOURBON, ARNOLD, CÆSAR, *and others; arrive at the foot of the wall.* ARNOLD *is about to plant his ladder.*

BOURBON.

Hold, Arnold! I am first.

ARNOLD.

Not so, my lord.

BOURBON.

Hold, sir, I charge you! Follow! I am proud
Of such a follower, but will brook no leader.

[BOURBON *plants his ladder, and begins to mount.*

Now, boys! On! on!

[*A shot strikes him, and* BOURBON *falls.*

CÆSAR.

And off!

ARNOLD.

Eternal powers!
The host will be appall'd.—But vengeance! vengeance!

BOURBON.

'T is nothing—lend me your hand.

[BOURBON *takes* ARNOLD *by the hand and rises; but, as he puts his foot on the step, falls again.*

Arnold! I am sped.
Conceal my fall—all will go well—conceal it!
Fling my cloak o'er what will be dust anon;
Let not the soldiers see it.

ARNOLD.

You must be
Removed; the aid of——

BOURBON.

No, my gallant boy;
Death is upon me. But what is *one* life?
The Bourbon's spirit shall command them still.
Keep them yet ignorant that I am but clay,
Till they are conquerors,—then do as you may.

CÆSAR.

Would not your highness choose to kiss the cross?
We have no priest here, but the hilt of sword
May serve instead:—it did the same for Bayard.

BOURBON.

Thou bitter slave! to name *him* at this time!
But I deserve it.

ARNOLD (*to* CÆSAR).

Villain, hold your peace!

CÆSAR.

What, when a christian dies? Shall I not offer
A christian « Vade in pace?»

ARNOLD.

Silence! Oh!
Those eyes are glazing, which o'erlook'd the world,
And saw no equal.

BOURBON.

Arnold, should'st thou see
France—But hark! hark! the assault grows warmer—
Oh!
For but an hour, a minute more of life,
To die within the wall! Hence, Arnold! hence!
You lose time—they will conquer Rome without thee.

ARNOLD.

And without *thee!*

BOURBON.

Not so; I 'll lead them still
In spirit. Cover up my dust, and breathe not
That I have ceased to breathe. Away! and be
Victorious!

ARNOLD.

But I must not leave thee thus.

BOURBON.

You must—farewell—Up! up! the world is winning.

[BOURBON *dies.*

CÆSAR (*to* ARNOLD).

Come, count, to business.

ARNOLD.

True. I 'll weep hereafter.

[ARNOLD *covers* BOURBON'S *body with a mantle, and mounts the ladder, crying.*

The Bourbon! Bourbon! On boys! Rome is ours!

CÆSAR.

Good night, Lord Constable! thou wert a man.

[CÆSAR *follows* ARNOLD; *they reach the battlement;* ARNOLD *and* CÆSAR *are struck down.*

A precious somerset! Is your countship injured?

ARNOLD.

No.

[*Remounts the ladder.*

CÆSAR.

A rare blood-hound, when his own is heated!
And 't is no boy's play. Now he strikes them down!
His hand is on the battlement—he grasps it
As though it were an altar; now his foot
Is on it, and——What have we here, a Roman?

[*A man falls.*

The first bird of the covey! he has fall'n
On the outside of the nest. Why, how now, fellow?

THE WOUNDED MAN.

A drop of water!

CÆSAR.

Blood 's the only liquid
Nearer than Tiber.

WOUNDED MAN.

I have died for Rome. [*Dies.*

CÆSAR.

And so did Bourbon, in another sense.
Oh these immortal men! and their great motives!
But I must after my young charge. He is
By this time i' the forum. Charge! charge!

[CÆSAR *mounts the ladder; the scene closes.*

SCENE II.

The City.—Combats between the Besiegers and Besieged in the streets. Inhabitants flying in confusion.

Enter CÆSAR.

CÆSAR.

I cannot find my hero; he is mix'd
With the heroic crowd that now pursue
The fugitives, or battle with the desperate.
What have we here? A cardinal or two
That do not seem in love with martyrdom.
How the old red-shanks scamper! Could they doff
Their hose as they have doff'd their hats, 't would be
A blessing, as a mark the less for plunder.
But let them fly, the crimson kennels now
Will not much stain their stockings, since the mire
Is of the self-same purple hue.

Enter a party fighting—ARNOLD *at the head of the Besiegers.*

He comes,
Hand in hand with the mild twins—Gore and Glory.
Holla! hold, count!

ARNOLD.

Away! they must not rally.

CÆSAR.

I tell thee, be not rash; a golden bridge
Is for a flying enemy. I gave thee
A form of beauty, and an
Exemption from some maladies of body,
But not of mind, which is not mine to give.
But though I gave the form of Thetis' son,
I dipt thee not in Styx; and 'gainst a foe
I would not warrant thy chivalric heart
More than Pelides' heel; why then, be cautious,
And know thyself a mortal still.

ARNOLD.

And who
With aught of soul would combat if he were
Invulnerable? That were pretty sport.
Think'st thou I beat for hares when lions roar?

[ARNOLD *rushes into the combat.*

CÆSAR.

A precious sample of humanity!
Well, his blood 's up, and if a little 's shed,
'T will serve to curb his fever.

[ARNOLD *engages with a Roman, who retires towards a portico.*

ARNOLD.

Yield thee, slave!
I promise quarter.

ROMAN.

That 's soon said.

ARNOLD.

And done—
My word is known.

ROMAN.

So shall be my deeds.

[*They re-engage.* CÆSAR *comes forward.*

CÆSAR.

Why, Arnold! Hold thine own; thou hast in hand
A famous artizan, a cunning sculptor;
Also a dealer in the sword and dagger.
Not so, my musqueteer; 't was he who slew
The Bourbon from the wall.

ARNOLD.

Ay, did he so?
Then he hath carved his monument.

ROMAN.

I yet
May live to carve your betters.

CÆSAR.

Well said, my man of marble! Benvenuto,
Thou hast some practice in both ways; and he
Who slays Cellini, will have work'd as hard
As e'er thou didst upon Carrara's blocks.

[ARNOLD *disarms and wounds* CELLINI, *but slightly; the latter draws a pistol and fires; then retires and disappears through the portico.*

CÆSAR.

How farest thou? Thou hast a taste, methinks,
Of red Bellona 's banquet.

ARNOLD (*staggers*).

'T is a scratch.
Lend me thy scarf. He shall not 'scape me thus.

CÆSAR.

Where is it?

ARNOLD.

In the shoulder, not the sword arm—
And that 's enough. I am thirsty: would I had
A helm of water!

CÆSAR.

That 's a liquid now
In requisition, but by no means easiest
To come at.

ARNOLD.

And my thirst increases;—but
I 'll find a way to quench it.

CÆSAR.

Or be quench'd
Thyself?

ARNOLD.

The chance is even; we will throw
The dice thereon. But I lose time in prating;
Prithee be quick. [CÆSAR *binds on the scarf.*
And what dost thou so idly?
Why dost not strike?

CÆSAR.

Your old philosophers
Beheld mankind, as mere spectators of
The Olympic games. When I behold a prize
Worth wrestling for, I may be found a Milo.

ARNOLD.

Ay, 'gainst an oak.

CÆSAR.

A forest, when it suits me.
I combat with a mass, or not at all.
Meantime, pursue thy sport as I do mine:

Which is just now to gaze, since all these labourers
Will reap my harvest gratis.

ARNOLD.

Thou art still
A fiend!

CÆSAR.

And thou—a man.

ARNOLD.

Why, such I fain would show me.

CÆSAR.

True—as men are.

ARNOLD.

And what is that?

CÆSAR.

Thou feelest and thou seest.

[*Exit* ARNOLD, *joining in the combat which still continues between detached parties. The scene closes.*

SCENE III.

St. Peter's. The Interior of the Church. The Pope at the Altar. Priests, etc. crowding in confusion, and Citizens flying for refuge, pursued by Soldiery.

Enter CÆSAR.

A SPANISH SOLDIER.

Down with them, comrades! seize upon those lamps!
Cleave yon bald-pated shaveling to the chine!
His rosary 's of gold!

LUTHERAN SOLDIER.

Revenge! Revenge!
Plunder hereafter, but for vengeance now—
Yonder stands Anti-Christ!

CÆSAR (*interposing*).

How now, schismatic!
What would'st thou?

LUTHERAN SOLDIER.

In the holy name of Christ,
Destroy proud Anti-Christ. I am a Christian.

CÆSAR.

Yea, a disciple that would make the founder
Of your belief renounce it, could he see
Such proselytes. Best stint thyself to plunder.

LUTHERAN SOLDIER.

I say he is the devil.

CÆSAR.

Hush! keep that secret,
Lest he should recognize you for his own.

LUTHERAN SOLDIER.

Why would you save him? I repeat he is
The devil, or the devil's vicar upon earth.

CÆSAR.

And that 's the reason; would you make a quarrel
With your best friends? You had far best be quiet;
His hour is not yet come.

LUTHERAN SOLDIER.

That shall be seen!

[*The Lutheran Soldier rushes forward; a shot strikes him from one of the Pope 's Guards, and he falls at the foot of the Altar.*

CÆSAR (*to the* LUTHERAN).

I told you so.

LUTHERAN SOLDIER.

And will you not avenge me?

CÆSAR.

Not I! You know that « vengeance is the Lord's :»
You see he loves no interlopers.

LUTHERAN (*dying*).

Oh!
Had I but slain him, I had gone on high,
Crown'd with eternal glory! Heaven, forgive
My feebleness of arm that reach'd him not,
And take thy servant to thy mercy. 'T is
A glorious triumph still; proud Babylon 's
No more; the Harlot of the Seven Hills
Hath changed her scarlet raiment for sackcloth
And ashes! [*The Lutheran dies.*

CÆSAR.

Yes, thine own amidst the rest.
Well done, old Babel!

[*The Guards defend themselves desperately, while the Pontiff escapes, by a private passage, to the Vatican and the Castle of St Angelo.*

CÆSAR.

Ha! right nobly battled!
Now, priest! now, soldier! the two great professions,
Together by the ears and hearts! I have not
Seen a more comic pantomime since Titus
Took Jewry. But the Romans had the best then;
Now they must take their turn.

SOLDIERS.

He hath escaped!
Follow!

ANOTHER SOLDIER.

They have barr'd the narrow passage up,
And it is clogg'd with dead even to the door.

CÆSAR.

I am glad he hath escaped: may he thank me for 't
In part. I would not have his bulls abolish'd—
'T were worth one half our empire: his indulgences
Demand some in return;—no, no, he must not
Fall; and besides, his now escape may furnish
A future miracle, in future proof
Of his infallibility. [*To the Spanish Soldiery.*
Well, cut-throats!
What do you pause for? If you make not haste,
There will not be a link of pious gold left.
And *you* too, catholics! Would ye return
From such a pilgrimage without a relic?
The very Lutherans have more true devotion:
See how they strip the shrines!

SOLDIERS.

By holy Peter!
He speaks the truth; the heretics will bear
The best way.

CÆSAR.

And that were shame! Go to!
Assist in their conversion.

[*The Soldiers disperse; many quit the Church, others enter.*

CÆSAR.

They are gone,
And others come: so flows the wave on wave
Of what these creatures call eternity,
Deeming themselves the breakers of the ocean,

While they are but its bubbles, ignorant
That foam is their foundation. So, another!

Enter OLIMPIA, *flying from the pursuit—She springs upon the Altar.*

SOLDIER.

She 's mine.

ANOTHER SOLDIER (*opposing the former*).

You lie, I track'd her first; and, were she
The pope's niece, I 'll not yield her. [*They fight.*

THIRD SOLDIER (*advancing towards* OLIMPIA).

You may settle
Your claims; I 'll make mine good.

OLIMPIA.

Infernal slave!
You touch me not alive.

THIRD SOLDIER.

Alive or dead!

OLIMPIA (*embracing a massive crucifix*).

Respect your God!

THIRD SOLDIER.

Yes, when he shines in gold.
Girl, you but grasp your dowry.

[*As he advances,* OLIMPIA, *with a strong and sudden effort, casts down the crucifix; it strikes the Soldier, who falls.*

THIRD SOLDIER.

Oh, great God!

OLIMPIA.

Ah! now you recognize him.

THIRD SOLDIER.

My brain 's crush'd!
Comrades, help, ho! All 's darkness! [*He dies.*

OTHER SOLDIERS (*coming up*).

Slay her, although she had a thousand lives:
She hath kill'd our comrade.

OLIMPIA.

Welcome such a death!
You have no life to give, which the worst slave
Would take. Great God! through thy redeeming Son,
And thy Son's Mother, now receive me as
I would approach thee, worthy her, and him, and thee!

Enter ARNOLD.

ARNOLD.

What do I see? Accursed jackalls!
Forbear!

CÆSAR (*aside, and laughing*).

Ha! ha! here 's equity! The dogs
Have as much right as he. But to the issue!

SOLDIERS.

Count, she hath slain our comrade.

ARNOLD.

With what weapon?

SOLDIER.

The cross, beneath which he is crush'd; behold him
Lie there, more like a worm than man; she cast it
Upon his head.

ARNOLD.

Even so; there is a woman
Worthy a brave man's liking. Were ye such,
Ye would have honour'd her. But get ye hence,
And thank your meanness, other God you have none,
For your existence. Had you touch'd a hair
Of those dishevell'd locks, I would have thinn'd
Your ranks more than the enemy. Away!
Ye jackalls! gnaw the bones the lion leaves,
But not even these till he permits.

A SOLDIER (*murmuring*).

The lion
Might conquer for himself then.

ARNOLD (*cuts him down*).

Mutineer!
Rebel in hell—you shall obey on earth!

[*The Soldiers assault* ARNOLD.

ARNOLD.

Come on! I 'm glad on 't! I will show you, slaves,
How you should be commanded, and who led you
First o'er the wall you were as shy to scale,
Until I waved my banners from its height,
As you are bold within it.

[ARNOLD *mows down the foremost; the rest throw down their arms.*

SOLDIERS.

Mercy! mercy!

ARNOLD.

Then learn to grant it. Have I taught you *who*
Led you o'er Rome's eternal battlements?

SOLDIERS.

We saw it, and we know it; yet forgive
A moment's error in the heat of conquest—
The conquest which you led to.

ARNOLD.

Get you hence!
Hence to your quarters! you will find them fix'd
In the Colonna palace.

OLIMPIA (*aside*).

In my father's
House!

ARNOLD (*to the Soldiers*).

Leave your arms; ye have no further need
Of such: the city 's render'd. And mark well
You keep your hands clean, or I 'll find out a stream,
As red as Tiber now runs, for your baptism.

SOLDIERS (*deposing their arms and departing*).

We obey!

ARNOLD (*to* OLIMPIA).

Lady! you are safe.

OLIMPIA.

I should be so,
Had I a knife even; but it matters not—
Death hath a thousand gates; and on the marble,
Even at the altar foot, whence I look down
Upon destruction, shall my head be dash'd,
Ere thou ascend it. God forgive thee, man!

ARNOLD.

I wish to merit his forgiveness, and
Thine own, although I have not injured thee.

OLIMPIA.

Go! Thou hast only sack'd my native land,—
No injury!—and made my father's house
A den of thieves—No injury!—this temple—
Slippery with Roman and holy gore.
No injury! And now thou would preserve me,
To be—but that shall never be!

[*She raises her eyes to heaven, folds her robe round her, and prepares to dash herself down on the side of the Altar opposite to that where* ARNOLD *stands.*

ARNOLD.

Hold! hold!
I swear.

OLIMPIA.

Spare thine already forfeit soul
A perjury for which even hell would loathe thee.
I know thee.

ARNOLD.

No, thou know'st me not; I am not
Of these men, though—

OLIMPIA.

I judge thee by thy mates;
It is for God to judge thee as thou art.
I see thee purple with the blood of Rome;
Take mine, 't is all thou e'er shalt have of me!
And here, upon the marble of this temple,
Where the baptismal font baptised me God's,
I offer him a blood less holy
But not less pure (pure as it left me then,
A redeem'd infant) than the holy water
The saints have sanctified!

[OLIMPIA *waves her hand to* ARNOLD *with disdain, and dashes herself on the pavement from the Altar.*

ARNOLD.

Eternal God!
I feel thee now! Help! help! She 's gone.

CÆSAR (*approaches*).

I am here.

ARNOLD.

Thou! but ho, save her!

CÆSAR (*assisting him to raise* OLIMPIA).

She hath done it well;
The leap was serious.

ARNOLD.

Oh! she is lifeless!

CÆSAR.

If
She be so, I have nought to do with that:
The resurrection is beyond me.

ARNOLD.

Slave!

CÆSAR.

Ay, slave or master, 'tis all one: methinks
Good words however are as well at times.

ARNOLD.

Words!—Canst thou aid her?

CÆSAR.

I will try. A sprinkling
Of that same holy water may be useful.

[*He brings some in his helmet from the font.*

ARNOLD.

T is mix'd with blood.

CÆSAR.

There is no cleaner now
In Rome.

ARNOLD.

How pale! how beautiful! how lifeless!
Alive or dead, thou essence of all beauty,
I love but thee!

CÆSAR.

Even so Achilles loved
Penthesilea; with his form it seems
You have his heart, and yet it was no soft one.

ARNOLD.

She breathes! But no, 't was nothing, or the last
Faint flutter life disputes with death.

CÆSAR.

She breathes.

ARNOLD.

Thou say'st it? Then 't is truth.

CÆSAR.

You do me right—
The devil speaks truth much oftener than he 's deem'd:
He hath an ignorant audience.

ARNOLD (*without attending to him*).

Yes! her heart beats.
Alas! that the first beat of the only heart
I ever wish'd to beat with mine, should vibrate
To an assassin's pulse.

CÆSAR.

A sage reflexion,
But somewhat late i' the day. Where shall we bear her?
I say she lives.

ARNOLD.

And will she live?

CÆSAR.

As much
As dust can.

ARNOLD.

Then she is dead!

CÆSAR.

Bah! bah! You are so,
And do not know it. She will come to life—
Such as you think so, such as you now are;
But we must work by human means.

ARNOLD.

We will
Convey her unto the Colonna palace,
Where I have pitch'd my banner.

CÆSAR.

Come then! raise her up!

ARNOLD.

Softly!

CÆSAR.

As softly as they bear the dead,
Perhaps because they cannot feel the jolting.

ARNOLD.

But doth she live indeed?

CÆSAR.

Nay, never fear!
But if you rue it after, blame not me.

ARNOLD.

Let her but live!

CÆSAR.

The spirit of her life
Is yet within her breast, and may revive.
Count! count! I am your servant in all things,
And this is a new office:—'t is not oft
I am employ'd in such; but you perceive
How staunch a friend is what you call a fiend.
On earth you have often only fiends for friends;
Now *I* desert not mine. Soft! bear her hence,
The beautiful half-clay, and nearly spirit!
I am almost enamour'd of her, as
Of old the angels of her earliest sex.

ARNOLD.

Thou!

CÆSAR.

I. But fear not. I'll not be your rival.

ARNOLD.

Rival!

CÆSAR.

I could be one right formidable;
But since I slew the seven husbands of
Tobia's future bride (and after all
'T was suck'd out but by some incense) I have laid
Aside intrigue: 't is rarely worth the trouble
Of gaining, or—what is more difficult—
Getting rid of your prize again; for there 's
The rub! at least to mortals.

ARNOLD.

Prithee, peace!
Softly! methinks her lips move, her eyes open!

CÆSAR.

Like stars, no doubt; for that 's a metaphor
For Lucifer and Venus.

ARNOLD.

To the palace
Colonna, as I told you!

CÆSAR.

Oh! I know
My way through Rome.

ARNOLD.

Now onward, onward! Gently!

[*Exeunt, bearing* OLIMPIA.—*The scene closes.*

PART III.

SCENE I.

A Castle in the Apennines, surrounded by a wild but smiling country. Chorus of Peasants singing before the Gates.

Chorus.

1.

The wars are over,
The spring is come;
The bride and her lover
Have sought their home:
They are happy, we rejoice,
Let their hearts have an echo in every voice!

2.

The spring is come; the violet 's gone,
The first-born child of the early sun;
With us she is but a winter's flower,
The snow on the hills cannot blast her bower,
And she lifts up her dewy eye of blue
To the youngest sky of the self-same hue.

3

And when the spring comes with her host
Of flowers, that flower beloved the most
Shrinks from the crowd that may confuse
Her heavenly odour and virgin hues.

4

Pluck the others, but still remember
Their herald out of dim December—
The morning-star of all the flowers,
The pledge of daylight's lengthen'd hours;
Nor, 'midst the roses, e'er forget
The virgin, virgin violet.

Enter CÆSAR.

CÆSAR (*singing*).

The wars are all over,
Our swords are all idle,
The steed bites the bridle,
The casque 's on the wall.
There 's rest for the rover;
But his armour is rusty,
And the veteran grows crusty,
As he yawns in the hall.
He drinks—but what 's drinking?
A mere pause from thinking!
No bugle awakes him with life-and-death-call.

Chorus.

But the hound bayeth loudly,
The boar 's in the wood,
And the falcon longs proudly
To spring from her hood.
On the wrist of the noble,
She sits like a crest,
And the air is in trouble
With birds from their nest.

CÆSAR.

Oh! shadow of glory!
Dim image of war!
But the chase hath no story,
Her hero no star;
Since Nimrod, the founder
Of empire and chase,
Who made the woods wonder,
And quake for their race.
When the lion was young,
In the pride of his might,
Then 't was sport for the strong
To embrace him in fight;
To go forth, with a pine
For a spear, 'gainst the mammoth,
Or strike through the ravine
At the foaming behemoth;
While man was in stature
As towers in our time,
The first-born of Nature,
And, like her, sublime!

Chorus.

But the wars are over,
The spring is come;
The bride and her lover
Have sought their home;
They are happy and we rejoice;
Let their hearts have an echo in every voice!

[*Exeunt the Peasantry, singing.*

Heaven and Earth,

A MYSTERY.

FOUNDED ON THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE IN GENESIS, CHAP. VI.

"And it came to pass..... that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

"And woman wailing for her demon lover."—COLERIDGE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ANGELS.

SAMIASA.
AZAZIEL.
RAPHAEL, *the Archangel.*

MEN.

NOAH, *and his Sons.*
IRAD.

WOMEN.

ANAH.
AHOLIBAMAH.

Chorus of Spirits of the Earth.—Chorus of Mortals.

HEAVEN AND EARTH.

SCENE I.

A woody and mountainous district near Mount Ararat.—TIME—*midnight.*

Enter ANAH *and* AHOLIBAMAH.

ANAH.

Our father sleeps: it is the hour when they
Who love us are accustom'd to descend
Through the deep clouds o'er rocky Ararat:—
How my heart beats!

AHOLIBAMAH.

Let us proceed upon
Our invocation.

ANAH.

But the stars are hidden.
I tremble.

AHOLIBAMAH.

So do I, but not with fear
Of aught save their delay.

ANAH.

My sister, though
I love Azaziel more than—oh, too much!
What was I going to say? my heart grows impious.

AHOLIBAMAH.

And where is the impiety of loving
Celestial natures?

ANAH.

But, Aholibamah,
I love our God less since his angel loved me:
This cannot be of good; and though I know not
That I do wrong, I feel a thousand fears
Which are not ominous of right.

AHOLIBAMAH.

Then wed thee
Unto some son of clay, and toil and spin!
There 's Japhet loves thee well, hath loved thee long;
Marry, and bring forth dust!

ANAH.

I should have loved
Azaziel not less were he mortal: yet
I am glad he is not. I cannot outlive him.
And when I think that his immortal wings
Will one day hover o'er the sepulchre
Of the poor child of clay which so adored him,
As he adores the Highest, death becomes
Less terrible; but yet I pity him;
His grief will be of ages, or at least
Mine would be such for him, were I the seraph,
And he the perishable.

AHOLIBAMAH.

Rather say,
That he will single forth some other daughter
Of earth, and love her as he once loved Anah.

ANAH.

And if it should be so, and she so loved him,
Better thus than that he should weep for me,

AHOLIBAMAH.

If I thought thus of Samiasa's love,
All seraph as he is, I 'd spurn him from me.
But to our invocation! 'T is the hour.

ANAH.

Seraph!
From thy sphere!
Whatever star contain thy glory;
In the eternal depths of heaven
Albeit thou watchest with "the seven,"[1]
Though through space infinite and hoary
Before thy bright wings worlds be driven,
Yet hear!
Oh! think of her who holds thee dear!
And though she nothing is to thee,
Yet think that thou art all to her.
Thou canst not tell,—and never be
Such pangs decreed to aught save me,—
The bitterness of tears.
Eternity is in thine years,
Unborn, undying beauty in thine eyes.
With me thou canst not sympathize,
Except in love, and there thou must
Acknowledge that more loving dust
Ne'er wept beneath the skies.
Thou walk'st thy many worlds, thou see'st
The face of Him who made thee great,

[1] The Archangels, said to be seven in number.

As He hath made me of the least
Of those cast out from Eden's gate:
Yet, seraph dear!
Oh hear!
For thou hast loved me, and I would not die
Until I know what I must die in knowing,
That thou forget'st in thine eternity
Her whose heart death could not keep from o'erflowing
For thee, immortal essence as thou art!
Great is their love who love in sin and fear;
And such I feel are waging in my heart
A war unworthy: to an Adamite
Forgive, my seraph! that such thoughts appear,
For sorrow is our element;
Delight
An Eden kept afar from sight,
Though sometimes with our visions blent.
The hour is near
Which tells me we are not abandon'd quite.—
Appear! appear!
Seraph!
My own Azaziel! be but here,
And leave the stars to their own light.

AHOLIBAMAH.

Samiasa!
Whereso'er
Thou rulest in the upper air—
Or warring with the spirits who may dare
Dispute with Him
Who made all empires, empire; or recalling
Some wandering star which shoots through the abyss,
Whose tenants, dying while their world is falling,
Share the dim destiny of clay in this;
Or joining with the inferior cherubim,
Thou deignest to partake their hymn—
Samiasa!
I call thee, I await thee, and I love thee.
Many worship thee, that will I not:
If that thy spirit down to mine may move thee,
Descend and share my lot!
Though I be form'd of clay,
And thou of beams
More bright than those of day
On Eden's streams,
Thine immortality can not repay
With love more warm than mine
My love. There is a ray
In me, which, though forbidden yet to shine,
I feel was lighted at thy God's and thine.
It may be hidden long: death and decay
Our mother Eve bequeath'd us—but my heart
Defies it: though this life must pass away,
Is *that* a cause for thee and me to part?
Thou art immortal—so am I: I feel—
I feel my immortality o'ersweep
All pains, all tears, all time, all fears, and peal,
Like the eternal thunders of the deep,
Into my ears this truth—« thou livest for ever!»
But if it be in joy
I know not, nor would know;
That secret rests with the Almighty giver
Who folds in clouds the fonts of bliss and woe.
But thee and me He never can destroy;
Change us He may, but not o'erwhelm; we are
Of as eternal essence, and must war
With Him if He will war with us; with *thee*
I can share all things, even immortal sorrow;
For thou hast ventured to share life with *me*,
And shall *I* shrink from thine eternity?
No! though the serpent's sting should pierce me thorough,
And thou thyself wert like the serpent, coil
Around me still! and I will smile
And curse thee not; but hold
Thee in as warm a fold
As——but descend; and prove
A mortal's love
For an immortal. If the skies contain
More joy than thou canst give and take, remain!

ANAH.

Sister! sister! I view them winging
Their bright way through the parted night.

AHOLIBAMAH.

The clouds from off their pinions flinging
As though they bore to-morrow's light.

ANAH.

But if our father see the sight!

AHOLIBAMAH.

He would but deem it was the moon
Rising unto some sorcerer's tune
An hour too soon.

ANAH.

They come! *he* comes!—Azaziel!

AHOLIBAMAH.

Haste
To meet them! Oh! for wings to bear
My spirit, while they hover there,
To Samiasa's breast!

ANAH.

Lo! they have kindled all the west,
Like a returning sunset;—lo!
On Ararat's late secret crest
A mild and many-colour'd bow,
The remnant of their flashing path,
Now shines! and now, behold! it hath
Return'd to night, as rippling foam,
Which the leviathan hath lash'd
From his unfathomable home,
When sporting on the face of the calm deep,
Subsides soon after he again hath dash'd
Down, down, to where the ocean's fountains sleep.

AHOLIBAMAH.

They have touch'd earth! Samiasa!

ANAH.

My Azaziel!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Enter IRAD *and* JAPHET.

IRAD.

Despond not: wherefore wilt thou wander thus
To add thy silence to the silent night,
And lift thy tearful eye unto the stars?
They cannot aid thee.

JAPHET.

But they soothe me—now
Perhaps she looks upon them as I look.
Methinks a being that is beautiful
Becometh more so as it looks on beauty,

The eternal beauty of undying things.
Oh, Anah!

IRAD.

But she loves thee not.

JAPHET.

Alas!

IRAD.

And proud Aholibamah spurns me also.

JAPHET.

I feel for thee too.

IRAD.

Let her keep her pride,
Mine hath enabled me to bear her scorn;
It may be, time too will avenge it.

JAPHET.

Canst thou
Find joy in such a thought?

IRAD.

Nor joy, nor sorrow.
I loved her well; I would have loved her better,
Had love been met with love: as 't is, I leave her
To brighter destinies, if so she deems them.

JAPHET.

What destinies?

IRAD.

I have some cause to think
She loves another.

JAPHET.

Anah!

IRAD.

No; her sister.

JAPHET.

What other?

IRAD.

That I know not; but her air,
If not her words, tells me she loves another.

JAPHET.

Ay, but not Anah: she but loves her God.

IRAD.

Whate'er she loveth, so she loves thee not,
What can it profit thee?

JAPHET.

True, nothing; but
I love.

IRAD.

And so did I.

JAPHET.

And now thou lovest not,
Or think'st thou lovest not, art thou happier?

IRAD.

Yes.

JAPHET.

I pity thee.

IRAD.

Me! why?

JAPHET.

For being happy,
Deprived of that which makes my misery.

IRAD.

I take thy taunt as part of thy distemper,
And would not feel as thou dost, for more shekels
Than all our father's herds would bring if weigh'd
Against the metal of the sons of Cain—
The yellow dust they try to barter with us,
As if such useless and discolour'd trash,
The refuse of the earth, could be received
For milk, and wool, and flesh, and fruits, and all
Our flocks and wilderness afford.—Go, Japhet,
Sigh to the stars as wolves howl to the moon—
I must back to my rest.

JAPHET.

And so would I
If I could rest.

IRAD.

Thou wilt not to our tents then?

JAPHET.

No, Irad; I will to the cavern, whose
Mouth, they say, opens from the internal world
To let the inner spirits of the earth
Forth when they walk its surface.

IRAD.

Wherefore so?
What wouldst thou there?

JAPHET.

Soothe further my sad spirit
With gloom as sad: it is a hopeless spot,
And I am hopeless.

IRAD.

But 't is dangerous;
Strange sounds and sights have peopled it with terrors.
I must go with thee.

JAPHET.

Irad, no; believe me
I feel no evil thought, and fear no evil.

IRAD.

But evil things will be thy foe the more
As not being of them: turn thy steps aside,
Or let mine be with thine.

JAPHET.

No; neither, Irad;
I must proceed alone.

IRAD.

Then peace be with thee!

[*Exit* IRAD.

JAPHET (*solus*).

Peace! I have sought it where it should be found,
In love—with love too, which perhaps deserved it:
And, in its stead, a heaviness of heart—
A weakness of the spirit—listless days,
And nights inexorable to sweet sleep—
Have come upon me. Peace! what peace? the calm
Of desolation, and the stillness of
The untrodden forest, only broken by
The sweeping tempest through its groaning boughs;
Such is the sullen or the fitful state
Of my mind overworn. The earth 's grown wicked,
And many signs and portents have proclaim'd
A change at hand, and an o'erwhelming doom
To perishable beings. Oh, my Anah!
When the dread hour denounced shall open wide
The fountains of the deep, how mightest thou
Have lain within this bosom, folded from
The elements; this bosom, which in vain
Hath beat for thee, and then will beat more vainly,
While thine——Oh, God! at least remit to her
Thy wrath! for she is pure amidst the failing
As a star in the clouds, which cannot quench,
Although they obscure it for an hour. My Anah!
How would I have adored thee, but thou wouldst not;
And still would I redeem thee—see thee live
When ocean is earth's grave, and, unopposed
By rock or shallow, the leviathan,

Lord of the shoreless sea and watery world,
Shall wonder at his boundlessness of realm.

[*Exit* JAPHET.

Enter NOAH *and* SHEM.

NOAH.

Where is thy brother Japhet?

SHEM.

He went forth,
According to his wont, to meet with Irad,
He said; but, as I fear, to bend his steps
Towards Anah's tents, round which he hovers nightly,
Like a dove round and round its pillaged nest;
Or else he walks the wild up to the cavern
Which opens to the heart of Ararat.

NOAH.

What doth he there? It is an evil spot
Upon an earth all evil; for things worse
Than even wicked men resort there: he
Still loves this daughter of a fated race,
Although he could not wed her if she loved him,
And that she doth not. Oh, the unhappy hearts
Of men! that one of my blood, knowing well
The destiny and evil of these days,
And that the hour approacheth, should indulge
In such forbidden yearnings! Lead the way;
He must be sought for!

SHEM.

Go not forward, father:
I will seek Japhet.

NOAH.

Do not fear for me:
All evil things are powerless on the man
Selected by Jehovah—let us on.

SHEM.

To the tents of the father of the sisters?

NOAH.

No; to the cavern of the Caucasus.

[*Exeunt* NOAH *and* SHEM.

SCENE III.

The mountains.—A cavern, and the rocks of Caucasus.

JAPHET (*solus*).

Ye wilds, that look eternal; and thou cave,
Which seem'st unfathomable; and ye mountains,
So varied and so terrible in beauty;
Here, in your rugged majesty of rocks
And toppling trees that twine their roots with stone
In perpendicular places, where the foot
Of man would tremble, could he reach them—yes,
Ye look eternal! Yet, in a few days,
Perhaps even hours, ye will be changed, rent, hurl'd
Before the mass of waters; and yon cave,
Which seems to lead into a lower world,
Shall have its depths search'd by the sweeping wave,
And dolphins gambol in the lion's den!
And man——Oh, men! my fellow-beings! Who
Shall weep above your universal grave,
Save I? Who shall be left to weep? My kinsmen,
Alas! what am I better than ye are,
That I must live beyond ye? Where shall be
The pleasant places where I thought of Anah
While I had hope? or the more savage haunts,
Scarce less beloved, where I despair'd for her?
And can it be!—Shall yon exulting peak,
Whose glittering top is like a distant star,
Lie low beneath the boiling of the deep?
No more to have the morning sun break forth,
And scatter back the mists in floating folds
From its tremendous brow? no more to have
Day's broad orb drop behind its head at even,
Leaving it with a crown of many hues?
No more to be the beacon of the world,
For angels to alight on, as the spot
Nearest the stars? And can those words «*no more*»
Be meant for thee, for all things, save for us,
And the predestined creeping things reserved
By my sire to Jehovah's bidding? May
He preserve *them*, and *I not* have the power
To snatch the loveliest of earth's daughters from
A doom which even some serpent, with his mate,
Shall 'scape to save his kind to be prolong'd,
To kiss and sting through some emerging world,
Reeking and dank from out the slime, whose ooze
Shall slumber o'er the wreck of this until
The salt morass subside into a sphere
Beneath the sun, and be the monument,
The sole and undistinguish'd sepulchre,
Of yet quick myriads of all life? How much
Breath will be still'd at once! All beauteous world!
So young, so mark'd out for destruction, I
With a cleft heart look on thee day by day,
And night by night, thy number'd days and nights.
I cannot save thee, cannot save even her
Whose love had made me love thee more; but as
A portion of thy dust, I cannot think
Upon thy coming doom without a feeling
Such as—Oh God! and canst thou——

[*He pauses.*

A rushing sound from the cavern is heard and shouts of laughter—afterwards a Spirit passes.

JAPHET.

In the name
Of the Most High, what art thou?

SPIRIT (*laughs*).

Ha! ha! ha!

JAPHET.

By all that earth holds holiest, speak!

SPIRIT (*laughs*).

Ha! ha!

JAPHET.

By the approaching deluge! by the earth
Which will be strangled by the ocean! by
The deep which will lay open all her fountains!
The heaven which will convert her clouds to seas,
And the Omnipotent who makes and crushes!
Thou unknown, terrible, and indistinct,
Yet awful thing of shadows, speak to me!
Why dost thou laugh that horrid laugh?

SPIRIT.

Why weep'st thou?

JAPHET.

For earth and all her children.

SPIRIT.

Ha! ha! ha! [*Spirit vanishes.*

JAPHET.

How the fiend mocks the tortures of a world,
The coming desolation of an orb,
On which the sun shall rise and warm no life!

How the earth sleeps! and all that in it is
Sleep too upon the very eve of death!
Why should they wake to meet it? What is here,
Which look like death in life, and speak like things
Born ere this dying world? They come like clouds!

[*Various Spirits pass from the cavern.*

SPIRIT.

Rejoice!
The abhorred race
Which could not keep in Eden their high place,
But listen'd to the voice
Of knowledge without power,
Are nigh the hour
Of death!
Not slow, not single, not by sword, nor sorrow,
Nor years, nor heart-break, nor time's sapping motion,
Shall they drop off. Behold their last to-morrow!
Earth shall be ocean!
And no breath,
Save of the winds, be on the unbounded wave!
Angels shall tire their wings, but find no spot:
Not even a rock from out the liquid grave
Shall lift its point to save,
Or show the place where strong Despair hath died,
After long looking o'er the ocean wide
For the expected ebb which cometh not:
All shall be void,
Destroy'd!
Another element shall be the lord
Of life, and the abhorr'd
Children of dust be quench'd; and of each hue
Of earth nought left but the unbroken blue;
And of the variegated mountain
Shall nought remain
Unchanged, or of the level plain;
Cedar and pine shall lift their tops in vain:
All merged within the universal fountain,
Man, earth, and fire, shall die,
And sea and sky
Look vast and lifeless in the eternal eye.
Upon the foam
Who shall erect a home?

JAPHET (*coming forward*).

My sire!
Earth's seed shall not expire;
Only the evil shall be put away
From day.
Avaunt! ye exulting demons of the waste!
Who howl your hideous joy
When God destroys whom you dare not destroy;
Hence! haste!
Back to your inner caves!
Until the waves
Shall search you in your secret place,
And drive your sullen race
Forth, to be roll'd upon the tossing winds
In restless wretchedness along all space!

SPIRIT.

Son of the saved!
When thou and thine have braved
The wide and warring element;
When the great barrier of the deep is rent,
Shall thou and thine be good or happy?—No!
Thy new world and new race shall be of woe—
Less goodly in their aspect, in their years
Less than the glorious giants, who
Yet walk the world in pride,
The sons of Heaven by many a mortal bride.
Thine shall be nothing of the past, save tears.
And art thou not ashamed
Thus to survive,
And eat, and drink, and wive?
With a base heart so far subdued and tamed,
As even to hear this wide destruction named,
Without such grief and courage, as should rather
Bid thee await the world-dissolving wave,
Than seek a shelter with thy favour'd father,
And build thy city o'er the drown'd earth's grave?
Who would outlive their kind,
Except the base and blind?
Mine
Hateth thine
As of a different order in the sphere,
But not our own.
There is not one who hath not left a throne
Vacant in heaven to dwell in darkness here,
Rather than see his mates endure alone.
Go, wretch! and give
A life like thine to other wretches—live!
And when the annihilating waters roar
Above what they have done,
Envy the giant patriarchs then no more,
And scorn thy sire as the surviving one!
Thyself for being his son!

Chorus of Spirits issuing from the cavern.

Rejoice!
No more the human voice
Shall vex our joys in middle air
With prayer;
No more
Shall they adore;
And we, who ne'er for ages have adored
The prayer-exacting Lord,
To whom the omission of a sacrifice
Is vice;
We, we shall view the deep salt sources pour'd
Until one element shall do the work
Of all in chaos; until they,
The creatures proud of their poor clay,
Shall perish, and their bleached bones shall lurk
In caves, in dens, in clefts of mountains, where
The deep shall follow to their latest lair;
Where even the brutes, in their despair,
Shall cease to prey on man and on each other,
And the striped tiger shall lie down to die
Beside the lamb, as though he were his brother;
Till all things shall be as they were,
Silent and uncreated, save the sky:
While a brief truce
Is made with Death, who shall forbear
The little remnant of the past creation,
To generate new nations for his use;
This remnant, floating o'er the undulation
Of the subsiding deluge, from its slime,
When the hot sun hath baked the reeking soil
Into a world, shall give again to time
New beings—years—diseases—sorrow—crime—
With all companionship of hate and toil,
Until——

JAPHET (*interrupting them*).

The eternal will
Shall deign to expound this dream
Of good and evil; and redeem
Unto himself all times, all things;
And, gather'd under his almighty wings,
Abolish hell!
And to the expiated earth
Restore the beauty of her birth,
Her Eden in an endless paradise,
Where man no more can fall as once he fell,
And even the very demons shall do well!

SPIRITS.

And when shall take effect this wond'rous spell?

JAPHET.

When the Redeemer cometh; first in pain,
And then in glory.

SPIRIT.

Meantime still struggle in the mortal chain,
Till earth wax hoary;
War with yourselves, and hell, and heaven, in vain,
Until the clouds look gory
With the blood reeking from each battle plain;
New times, new climes, new arts, new men; but still
The same old tears, old crimes, and oldest ill,
Shall be amongst your race in different forms;
But the same moral storms
Shall oversweep the future, as the waves
In a few hours the glorious giants' graves.[1]

Chorus of Spirits.

Brethren, rejoice!
Mortal, farewell!
Hark! hark! already we can hear the voice
Of growing ocean's gloomy swell;
The winds, too, plume their piercing wings!
The clouds have nearly fill'd their springs!
The fountains of the great deep shall be broken,
And heaven set wide her windows; while mankind
View, unacknowledged, each tremendous token—
Still, as they were from the beginning, blind.
We hear the sound they cannot hear,
The mustering thunders of the threatening sphere;
Yet a few hours their coming is delay'd;
Their flashing banners, folded still on high,
Yet undisplay'd,
Save to the spirits' all-pervading eye.
Howl! howl! oh earth!
Thy death is nearer than thy recent birth:
Tremble, ye mountains, soon to shrink below
The ocean's overflow!
The wave shall break upon your cliffs; and shells,
The little shells of ocean's least things be
Deposed where now the eagle's offspring dwells—
How shall he shriek o'er the remorseless sea!
And call his nestlings up with fruitless yell,
Unanswer'd save by the encroaching swell:—
While man shall long in vain for his broad wings,
The wings which could not save:—
Where could he rest them, while the whole space brings
Nought to his eye beyond the deep, his grave?
Brethren, rejoice!
And loudly lift each superhuman voice—
All die,
Save the slight remnant of Seth's seed—
The seed of Seth,
Exempt for future sorrow's sake from death.
But of the sons of Cain
None shall remain;
And all his goodly daughters
Must lie beneath the desolating waters;
Or, floating upward with their long hair laid
Along the wave, the cruel Heaven upbraid,
Which would not spare
Beings even in death so fair.
It is decreed,
All die!
And to the universal human cry
The universal silence shall succeed!
Fly, brethren, fly!
But still rejoice!
We fell!
They fall!
So perish all
These petty foes of Heaven who shrink from Hell!

[*The Spirits disappear, soaring upwards.*

JAPHET (*solus*).

God hath proclaim'd the destiny of earth;
My father's ark of safety hath announced it;
The very demons shriek it from their caves;
The scroll[1] of Enoch prophesied it long
In silent books, which, in their silence, say
More to the mind than thunder to the ear:
And yet men listen'd not, nor listen: but
Walk darkling to their doom; which, though so nigh,
Shakes them no more in their dim disbelief,
Than their last cries shall shake the Almighty purpose,
Or deaf obedient ocean, which fulfils it.
No sign yet hangs its banner in the air;
The clouds are few, and of their wonted texture;
The sun will rise upon the earth's last day
As on the fourth day of creation, when
God said unto him, «Shine!» and he broke forth
Into the dawn, which lighted not the yet
Unform'd forefather of mankind—but roused
Before the human orison the earlier
Made and far sweeter voices of the birds,
Which in the open firmament of heaven
Have wings like angels, and like them salute
Heaven first each day before the Adamites!
Their matins now draw nigh—the east is kindling—
And they will sing! and day will break! Both near,
So near the awful close! For these must drop
Their outworn pinions on the deep: and day,
After the bright course of a few brief morrows,—
Ay, day will rise; but upon what? A chaos,
Which was ere day; and which, renew'd, makes time
Nothing! for, without life, what are the hours?
No more to dust than is eternity
Unto Jehovah, who created both.
Without him, even eternity would be
A void: without man, time, as made for man,
Dies with man, and is swallow'd in that deep
Which has no fountain; as his race will be
Devour'd by that which drowns his infant world.—
What have we here? Shapes of both earth and air?
No—*all* of heaven, they are so beautiful.

[1] «And there were giants in those days, and after; mighty men, which were of old men of renown.»—*Genesis.*

[1] The Book of Enoch, preserved by the Ethiopians, is said by them to be anterior to the flood.

I cannot trace their features; but their forms,
How lovelily they move along the side
Of the gray mountain, scattering its mist!
And after the swart savage spirits, whose
Infernal immortality pour'd forth
Their impious hymn of triumph, they shall be
Welcome as Eden. It may be they come
To tell me the reprieve of our young world,
For which I have so often pray'd—They come!
Anah! oh God! and with her——

Enter SAMIASA, AZAZIEL, ANAH, *and* AHOLIBAMAH.

ANAH.

Japhet!

SAMIASA.

Lo!
A son of Adam!

AZAZIEL.

What doth the earth-born here,
While all his race are slumbering?

JAPHET.

Angel! what
Dost thou on earth when thou should'st be on high?

AZAZIEL.

Know'st thou not, or forget'st thou, that a part
Of our great function is to guard thine earth?

JAPHET.

But all good angels have forsaken earth,
Which is condemn'd: nay, even the evil fly
The approaching chaos. Anah! Anah! my
In vain, and long, and still to be belov'd!
Why walk'st thou with this spirit, in those hours
When no good spirit longer lights below?

ANAH.

Japhet, I cannot answer thee; yet, yet
Forgive me——

JAPHET.

May the Heaven, which soon no more
Will pardon, do so! for thou art greatly tempted.

AHOLIBAMAH.

Back to thy tents, insulting son of Noah!
We know thee not.

JAPHET.

The hour may come when thou
May'st know me better; and thy sister know
Me still the same which I have ever been.

SAMIASA.

Son of the patriarch, who hath ever been
Upright before his god, whate'er thy griefs,
And thy words seem of sorrow, mix'd with wrath,
How have Azaziel, or myself, brought on thee
Wrong?

JAPHET.

Wrong! the greatest of all wrongs: but thou
Say'st well, though she be dust, I did not, could not,
Deserve her. Farewell, Anah! I have said
That word so often! but now say it, ne'er
To be repeated. Angel! or whate'er
Thou art, or must be soon, hast thou the power
To save this beautiful—*these* beautiful
Children of Cain?

AZAZIAH.

From what?

JAPHET.

And is it so
That ye too know not? Angels! angels! ye
Have shared man's sin, and, it may be, now must
Partake his punishment: or at the least
My sorrow.

SAMIASA.

Sorrow! I ne'er thought till now
To hear an Adamite speak riddles to me.

JAPHET.

And hath not the Most High expounded them?
Then ye are lost, as they are lost.

AHOLIBAMAH.

So be it!
If they love as they are loved, they will not shrink
More to be mortal, than I would to dare
An immortality of agonies
With Samiasa!

ANAH.

Sister! sister! speak not
Thus.

AZAZIEL.

Fearest thou, my Anah?

ANAH.

Yes, for thee;
I would resign the greater remnant of
This little life of mine, before one hour
Of thine eternity should know a pang.

JAPHET.

It is for *him*, then! for the seraph thou
Hast left me! That is nothing, if thou hast not
Left thy God too! for unions like to these,
Between a mortal and immortal, cannot
Be happy or be hallow'd. We are sent
Upon the earth to toil and die; and they
Are made to minister on high unto
The Highest; but if he can *save* thee, soon
The hour will come in which celestial aid
Alone can do so.

ANAH.

Ah! he speaks of death.

SAMIASA.

Of death to *us!* and those who are with us!
But that the man seems full of sorrow, I
Could smile.

JAPHET.

I grieve not for myself, nor fear;
I am safe, not for my own deserts, but those
Of a well-doing sire, who hath been found
Righteous enough to save his children. Would
His power was greater of redemption! or
That by exchanging my own life for hers,
Who could alone have made mine happy, she,
The last and loveliest of Cain's race, could share
The ark which shall receive a remnant of
The seed of Seth!

AHOLIBAMAH.

And dost thou think that we,
With Cain's, the eldest born of Adam's blood
Warm in our veins,—strong Cain! who was begotten
In Paradise,—would mingle with Seth's children?
Seth, the last offspring of old Adam's dotage?
No, not to save all earth, were earth in peril!
Our race hath always dwelt apart from thine
From the beginning, and shall do so ever.

JAPHET.

I did not speak to thee, Aholibamah!
Too much of the forefather, whom thou vauntest,
Has come down in that haughty blood which springs

From him who shed the first, and that a brother's!
But thou, my Anah! let me call thee mine,
Albeit thou art not; 't is a word I cannot
Part with, although I must from thee. My Anah!
Thou who dost rather make me dream that Abel
Had left a daughter, whose pure pious race
Survived in thee, so much unlike thou art
The rest of the stern Cainites, save in beauty,
For all of them are fairest in their favour——

AHOLIBAMAH (*interrupting him*).

And wouldst thou have her like our father's foe
In mind, in soul? If *I* partook thy thought,
And dream'd that aught of *Abel* was in *her!*—
Get thee hence, son of Noah; thou mak'st strife.

JAPHET.

Offspring of Cain, thy father did so!

AHOLIBAMAH.

But
He slew not Seth; and what hast thou to do
With other deeds between his God and him?

JAPHET.

Thou speakest well: his God hath judged him, and
I had not named his deed, but that thyself
Didst seem to glory in him, nor to shrink
From what he had done.

AHOLIBAMAH.

He was our fathers' father:
The eldest born of man, the strongest, bravest,
And most enduring:—Shall I blush for him,
From whom we had our being? Look upon
Our race; behold their stature and their beauty,
Their courage, strength, and length of days——

JAPHET.

They are number'd.——

AHOLIBAMAH.

Be it so! but while yet their hours endure,
I glory in my brethren and our fathers!

JAPHET.

My sire and race but glory in their God,
Anah! and thou?——

ANAH.

Whate'er our God decrees,
The God of Seth as Cain, I must obey,
And will endeavour patiently to obey:
But could I dare to pray in his dread hour
Of universal vengeance (if such should be),
It would not be to live, alone exempt
Of all my house. My sister! Oh, my sister!
What were the world, or other worlds, or all
The brightest future without the sweet past—
Thy love—my father's—all the life, and all
The things which sprung up with me, like the stars,
Making my dim existence radiant with
Soft lights which were not mine? Aholibamah!
Oh! if there should be mercy—seek it, find it:
I abhor death, because that thou must die.

AHOLIBAMAH.

What? hath this dreamer, with his father's ark,
The bugbear he hath built to scare the world,
Shaken *my* sister? Are *we* not the loved
Of seraphs? and if we were not, must we
Cling to a son of Noah for our lives?
Rather than thus——But the enthusiast dreams
The worst of dreams, the fantasies engender'd
By hopeless love and heated vigils. Who
Shall shake these solid mountains, this firm earth,
And bid those clouds and waters take a shape
Distinct from that which we and all our sires
Have seen them wear on their eternal way?
Who shall do this?

JAPHET.

He, whose one word produced them.

AHOLIBAMAH.

Who *heard* that word?

JAPHET.

The universe, which leap'd
To life before it. Ah! smilest thou still in scorn?
Turn to thy seraphs; if they attest it not,
They are none.

SAMIASA.

Aholibamah, own thy God!

AHOLIBAMAH.

I have ever hail'd our Maker, Samiasa,
As thine, and mine: a God of love, not sorrow.

JAPHET.

Alas! what else is love but sorrow? Even
He who made earth in love, had soon to grieve
Above its first and best inhabitants.

AHOLIBAMAH.

'T is said so.

JAPHET.

It is even so.

Enter NOAH *and* SHEM.

NOAH.

Japhet! What
Dost thou here with these children of the wicked?
Dread'st thou not to partake their coming doom?

JAPHET.

Father, it cannot be a sin to seek
To save an earth-born being; and behold,
These are not of the sinful, since they have
The fellowship of angels.

NOAH.

These are they, then,
Who leave the throne of God, to take them wives
From out the race of Cain: the sons of Heaven,
Who seek earth's daughters for their beauty?

AZAZIEL.

Patriarch!
Thou hast said it.

NOAH.

Woe, woe, woe to such communion!
Has not God made a barrier between earth
And heaven, and limited each, kind to kind?

SAMIASA.

Was not man made in high Jehovah's image?
Did God not love what he had made? And what
Do we but imitate and emulate
His love unto created love?

NOAH.

I am
But man, and was not made to judge mankind,
Far less the sons of God; but as our God
Has deign'd to commune with me, and reveal
His judgments, I reply, that the descent
Of seraphs from their everlasting seat
Unto a perishable and perishing,
Even on the very *eve* of *perishing*, world,
Cannot be good.

AZAZIEL.

What! though it were to save?

NOAH.

Not ye in all your glory can redeem
What He who made you glorious hath condemn'd.
Were your immortal mission safety, 't would
Be general, not for two, though beautiful,
And beautiful they are, but not the less
Condemn'd.

JAPHET.

Oh father! say it not.

NOAH.

Son! son!
If that thou wouldst avoid their doom, forget
That they exist; they soon shall cease to be,
While thou shalt be the sire of a new world,
And better.

JAPHET.

Let me die with *this*, and *them!*

NOAH.

Thou *shouldst* for such a thought, but shalt not; He
Who *can*, redeems thee.

SAMIASA.

And why him and thee,
More than what he, thy son, prefers to both?

NOAH.

Ask Him who made thee greater than myself
And mine, but not less subject to his own
Almightiness. And lo! his mildest and
Least to be tempted messenger appears!

Enter RAPHAEL *the Archangel.*

RAPHAEL.

Spirits!
Whose seat is near the throne,
What do ye here?
Is thus a seraph's duty to be shown
Now that the hour is near
When earth must be alone?
Return!
Adore and burn
In glorious homage with the elected « seven.»
Your place is heaven.

SAMIASA.

Raphael!
The first and fairest of the sons of God,
How long hath this been law,
That earth by angels must be left untrod?
Earth! which oft saw
Jehovah's footsteps not disdain her sod!
The world He loved, and made
For love; and oft have we obey'd
His frequent mission with delighted pinions.
Adoring Him in his least works display'd;
Watching this youngest star of His dominions:
And as the latest birth of His great word,
Eager to keep it worthy of our Lord.
Why is thy brow severe?
And wherefore speak'st thou of destruction near?

RAPHAEL.

Had Samiasa and Azaziel been
In their true place, with the angelic choir,
Written in fire
They would have seen
Jehovah's late decree,
And not inquired their Maker's breath of me.
But ignorance must ever be
A part of sin;
And even the spirits' knowledge shall grow less
As they wax proud within;
For blindness is the first-born of excess.
When all good angels left the world, ye stay'd,
Stung with strange passions, and debased
By mortal feelings for a mortal maid;
But ye are pardon'd thus far, and replaced
With your pure equals: Hence! away! away!
Or stay,
And lose eternity by that delay!

AZAZIEL.

And thou! if earth be thus forbidden
In the decree
To us until this moment hidden,
Dost thou not err as we
In being here?

RAPHAEL.

I came to call ye back to your fit sphere,
In the great name and at the word of God!
Dear, dearest in themselves, and scarce less dear
That which I came to do: till now we trod
Together the eternal space, together
Let us still walk the stars. True, earth must die!
Her race, return'd into her womb, must wither,
And much which she inherits; but oh! why
Cannot this earth be made, or be destroy 'd,
Without involving ever some vast void
In the immortal ranks? immortal still
In their immeasurable forfeiture.
Our brother Satan fell, his burning will
Rather than longer worship dared endure!
But ye who still are pure!
Seraphs! less mighty than that mightiest one,
Think how he was undone!
And think if tempting man can compensate
For heaven desired too late?
Long have I warr'd,
Long must I war
With him who deem'd it hard
To be created, and to acknowledge him
Who 'midst the cherubim
Made him as suns to a dependant star,
Leaving the archangels at his right hand dim.
I loved him—beautiful he was: oh Heaven!
Save *His* who made, what beauty and what power
Was ever like to Satan's! Would the hour
In which he fell could ever be forgiven!
The wish is impious: but oh ye!
Yet undestroy'd, be warn'd! Eternity
With him, or with his God, is in your choice:
He hath not tempted you, he cannot tempt
The angels, from his further snares exempt;
But man hath listen'd to his voice,
And ye to woman's—beautiful she is,
The serpent's voice less subtle than her kiss,
The snake but vanquish'd dust; but she will draw
A second host from heaven, to break Heaven 's law.
Yet, yet, oh fly!
Ye cannot die,
But they
Shall pass away,
While ye shall fill with shrieks the upper sky
For perishable clay,
Whose memory in your immortality
Shall long outlast the sun which gave them day.
Think how your essence differeth from theirs

In all but suffering! Why partake
The agony to which they must be heirs—
Born to be plough'd with years, and sown with cares,
And reap'd by Death, lord of the human soil?
Even had their days been left to toil their path
Through time to dust, unshorten'd by God's wrath,
Still they are evil's prey and sorrow's spoil.

AHOLIBAMAH.

Let them fly!
I hear the voice which says that all must die,
Sooner than our white-bearded patriarchs died;
And that on high
An ocean is prepared,
While from below
The deep shall rise to meet heaven's overflow.
Few shall be spared,
It seems; and, of that few, the race of Cain
Must lift their eyes to Adam's God in vain.
Sister! since it is so,
And the eternal Lord
In vain would be implored
For the remission of one hour of woe,
Let us resign even what we have adored,
And meet the wave, as we would meet the sword,
If not unmoved, yet undismay'd,
And wailing less for us than those who shall
Survive in mortal or immortal thrall,
And, when the fatal waters are allay'd,
Weep for the myriads who can weep no more.
Fly, seraphs! to your own eternal shore,
Where winds nor howl nor waters roar.
Our portion is to die,
And yours to live for ever:
But which is best, a dead eternity,
Or living, is but known to the great Giver:
Obey him, as we shall obey;
I would not keep this life of mine in clay
An hour beyond His will;
Nor see ye lose a portion of His grace,
For all the mercy which Seth's race
Find still.
Fly!
And as your pinions bear ye back to heaven,
Think that my love still mounts with thee on high,
Samiasa!
And if I look up with a tearless eye,
'T is that an angel's bride disdains to weep—
Farewell! Now rise, inexorable deep!

ANAH.

And must we die?
And must I lose thee too,
Azaziel?
Oh, my heart! my heart!
Thy prophecies were true,
And yet thou wert so happy too!
The blow, though not unlook'd for, falls as new;
But yet depart!
Ah, why?
Yet let me not retain thee—fly!
My pangs can be but brief; but thine would be
Eternal, if repulsed from Heaven for me.
Too much already hast thou deign'd
To one of Adam's race!
Our doom is sorrow: not to us alone,
But to the spirits who have not disdain'd
To love us, cometh anguish with disgrace.
The first who taught us knowledge hath been hurl'd
From his onee archangelic throne
Into some unknown world:
And thou, Azaziel! No—
Thou shalt not suffer woe
For me. Away! nor weep!
Thou canst not weep; but yet
May'st suffer more, not weeping: then forget
Her whom the surges of the all-strangling deep
Can bring no pang like this. Fly! fly!
Being gone, 't will be less difficult to die.

JAPHET.

Oh say not so!
Father! and thou, archangel, thou!
Surely celestial mercy lurks below
That pure severe serenity of brow:
Let them not meet this sea without a shore,
Save in our ark, or let me be no more!

NOAH.

Peace, child of passion, peace!
If not within thy heart yet with thy tongue
Do God no wrong!
Live as he wills it—die, when he ordains,
A righteous death, unlike the seed of Cain's.
Cease, or be sorrowful in silence; cease
To weary Heaven's ear with thy selfish plaint.
Wouldst thou have God commit a sin for thee?
Such would it be
To alter his intent
For a mere mortal sorrow. Be a man!
And bear what Adam's race must bear, and can.

JAPHET.

Ay, father! but when they are gone,
And we are all alone,
Floating upon the azure desert, and
The depth beneath us hides our own dear land,
And dearer, silent friends and brethren, all
Buried in its immeasurable breast,
Who, who, our tears, our shrieks, shall then command?
Can we in desolation's peace have rest?
Oh, God! be thou a God, and spare
Yet while 't is time!
Renew not Adam's fall:
Mankind were then but twain,
But they are numerous now as are the waves
And the tremendous rain,
Whose drops shall be less thick than would their graves,
Were graves permitted to the seed of Cain.

NOAH.

Silence, vain boy! each word of thine 's a crime!
Angel! forgive this stripling's fond despair.

RAPHAEL.

Seraphs! these mortals speak in passion: Ye,
Who are, or should be, passionless and pure,
May now return with me.

SAMIASA.

It may not be:
We have chosen, and will endure.

RAPHAEL.

Say'st thou?

AZAZIEL.

He hath said it, and I say, Amen!

RAPHAEL.

Again!
Then from this hour,
Shorn as ye are of all celestial power,

And aliens from your God,
Farewell!

JAPHET.

Alas! where shall they dwell?
Hark! hark! Deep sounds, and deeper still,
Are howling from the mountain's bosom:
There's not a breath of wind upon the hill,
Yet quivers every leaf, and drops each blossom:
Earth groans as if beneath a heavy load.

NOAH.

Hark! hark! the sea-birds cry!
In clouds they overspread the lurid sky
And hover round the mountain, where before
Never a white wing, wetted by the wave,
Yet dared to soar,
Even when the waters wax'd too fierce to brave.
Soon it shall be their only shore,
And then, no more!

JAPHET.

The sun! the sun!
He riseth, but his better light is gone;
And a black circle, bound
His glaring disk around,
Proclaims earth's last of summer days hath shone!
The clouds return into the hues of night,
Save where their brazen-colour'd edges streak
The verge where brighter morns were wont to break.

NOAH.

And lo! yon flash of light,
The distant thunder's harbinger, appears!
It cometh! hence, away!
Leave to the elements their evil prey!
Hence to where our all-hallow'd ark uprears
Its safe and wreckless sides.

JAPHET.

Oh, father, stay!
Leave not my Anah to the swallowing tides!

NOAH.

Must we not leave all life to such? Begone!

JAPHET.

Not I.

NOAH.

Then die
With them!
How darest thou look on that prophetic sky,
And seek to save what all things now condemn,
In overwhelming unison
With just Jehovah's wrath?

JAPHET.

Can rage and justice join in the same path?

NOAH.

Blasphemer! darest thou murmur even now?

RAPHAEL.

Patriarch, be still a father! smoothe thy brow:
Thy son, despite his folly, shall not sink;
He knows not what he says, yet shall not drink
With sobs the salt foam of the swelling waters;
But he, when passion passeth, good as thou,
Nor perish like Heaven's children with man's daughters.

AHOLIBAMAH.

The tempest cometh; heaven and earth unite
For the annihilation of all life.
Unequal is the strife
Between our strength and the eternal might!

SAMIASA.

But ours is with thee: we will bear ye far
To some untroubled star,
Where thou and Anah shall partake our lot:
And if thou dost not weep for thy lost earth,
Our forfeit heaven shall also be forgot.

ANAH.

Oh, my dear father's tents, my place of birth!
And mountains, land, and woods, when ye are not,
Who shall dry up my tears?

AZAZIEL.

Thy spirit-lord.
Fear not, though we are shut from heaven,
Yet much is ours, whence we can not be driven.

RAPHAEL.

Rebel! thy words are wicked, as thy deeds
Shall henceforth be but weak: the flaming sword,
Which chased the first-born out of paradise,
Still flashes in the angelic hands.

AZAZIEL.

It cannot slay us: threaten dust with death,
And talk of weapons unto that which bleeds!
What are thy swords in our immortal eyes?

RAPHAEL.

The moment cometh to approve thy strength;
And learn at length
How vain to war with what thy God commands:
Thy former force was in thy faith.

Enter Mortals, flying for refuge.

Chorus of Mortals.

The heavens and earth are mingling—God! oh God!
What have we done? Yet spare!
Hark! even the forest beasts howl forth their prayer!
The dragon crawls from out his den,
To herd in terror innocent with men;
And the birds scream their agony through air.
Yet, yet, Jehovah! yet withdraw thy rod
Of wrath, and pity thine own world's despair!
Hear not man only but all nature plead!

RAPHAEL.

Farewell, thou earth! ye wretched sons of clay,
I cannot, must not aid you. 'T is decreed!

[*Exit* RAPHAEL.

JAPHET.

Some clouds sweep on, as vultures for their prey,
While others, fix'd as rocks, await the word
At which their wrathful vials shall be pour'd.
No azure more shall robe the firmament,
Nor spangled stars be glorious: death hath risen:
In the sun's place a pale and ghastly glare
Hath wound itself around the dying air.

AZAZIEL.

Come, Anah! quit this chaos-founded prison,
To which the elements again repair,
To turn it into what it was: beneath
The shelter of these wings thou shalt be safe,
As was the eagle's nestling once within
Its mother's.—Let the coming chaos chafe
With all its elements! Heed not their din!
A brighter world than this, where thou shalt breathe
Ethereal life, will we explore:
These darken'd clouds are not the only skies.

[AZAZIEL *and* SAMIASA *fly off, and disappear with* ANAH *and* AHOLIBAMAH.

JAPHET.

They are gone! They have disappear'd amidst the roar
Of the forsaken world; and never more,
Whether they live, or die with all earth's life,
Now near its last, can aught restore
Anah unto these eyes.

Chorus of Mortals.

Oh son of Noah! mercy on thy kind!
What, wilt thou leave us all—all—*all* behind?
While safe amidst the elemental strife,
Thou sit'st within thy guarded ark?

A MOTHER (*offering her infant to* JAPHET).

Oh let this child embark!
I brought him forth in woe,
But thought it joy
To see him to my bosom clinging so.
Why was he born?
What hath he done—
My unwean'd son—
To move Jehovah's wrath or scorn?
What is there in this milk of mine, that death
Should stir all heaven and earth up to destroy
My boy,
And roll the waters o'er his placid breath?
Save him, thou seed of Seth!
Or cursed be—with Him who made
Thee and thy race, for which we are betray'd!

JAPHET.

Peace! 't is no hour for curses, but for prayer!

Chorus of Mortals.

For prayer!!!
And where
Shall prayer ascend,
When the swoln clouds unto the mountains bend
And burst,
And gushing oceans every barrier rend,
Until the very deserts know no thirst?
Accursed
Be He, who made thee and thy sire!
We deem our curses vain; we must expire;
But, as we know the worst,
Why should our hymn be raised, our knees be bent
Before the implacable Omnipotent,
Since we must fall the same?
If He hath made earth, let it be His shame,
To make a world for torture:—Lo! they come,
The loathsome waters in their rage!
And with their roar make wholesome nature dumb!
The forest's trees (coeval with the hour
When paradise upsprung,
Ere Eve gave Adam knowledge for her dower,
Or Adam his first hymn of slavery sung,)
So massy, vast, yet green in their old age,
Are overtopp'd,
Their summer blossoms by the surges lopp'd,
Which rise, and rise, and rise.
Vainly we look up to the lowering skies—
They meet the seas,
And shut out God from our beseeching eyes.
Fly, son of Noah, fly, and take thine ease
In thine allotted ocean-tent;
And view, all floating o'er the element,
The corpses of the world of thy young days:
Then to Jehovah raise
Thy song of praise!

A WOMAN.

Blessed are the dead
Who die in the Lord!
And though the waters be o'er earth outspread,
Yet, as *His* word,
Be the decree adored!
He gave me life—He taketh but
The breath which is His own:
And though these eyes should be for ever shut,
Nor longer this weak voice before His throne
Be heard in supplicating tone,
Still blessed be the Lord,
For what is past,
For that which is:
For all are His,
From first to last—
Time—space—eternity—life—death—
The vast known and immeasurable unknown.
He made, and can unmake;
And shall *I*, for a little gasp of breath,
Blaspheme and groan?
No; let me die, as I have lived, in faith,
Nor quiver, though the universe may quake!

Chorus of Mortals.

Where shall we fly?
Not to the mountains high;
For now their torrents rush with double roar,
To meet the ocean, which, advancing still,
Already grasps each drowning hill,
Nor leaves an unsearch'd cave.

Enter a Woman.

WOMAN.

Oh, save me, save!
Our valley is no more:
My father and my father's tent,
My brethren and my brethren's herds,
The pleasant trees that o'er our noonday bent
And sent forth evening songs from sweetest birds,
The little rivulet which freshen'd all
Our pastures green,
No more are to be seen.
When to the mountain cliff I climb'd this morn,
I turn'd to bless the spot,
And not a leaf appear'd about to fall;—
And now they are not!—
Why was I born?

JAPHET.

To die! in youth to die;
And happier in that doom,
Than to behold the universal tomb
Which I
Am thus condemn'd to weep above in vain.
Why, when all perish, why must I remain?

[*The Waters rise: Men fly in every direction; many are overtaken by the waves; the Chorus of Mortals disperses in search of safety up the Mountains;* JAPHET *remains upon a rock, while the Ark floats towards him in the distance.*

The Prophecy of Dante.

"'T is the sunset of life gives me mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."
CAMPBELL.

DEDICATION.

LADY! if for the cold and cloudy clime
Where I was born, but where I would not die,
Of the great poet-sire of Italy
I dare to build the imitative rhyme,
Harsh Runic copy of the South's sublime,
THOU art the cause; and, howsoever I
Fall short of his immortal harmony,
Thy gentle heart will pardon me the crime.
Thou, in the pride of beauty and of youth,
Spakest; and for thee to speak and be obey'd
Are one; but only in the sunny South
Such sounds are utter'd, and such charms display'd,
So sweet a language from so fair a mouth—
Ah! to what effort would it not persuade?

Ravenna, June 21, 1819.

PREFACE.

IN the course of a visit to the city of Ravenna, in the summer of 1819, it was suggested to the author that, having composed something on the subject of Tasso's confinement, he should do the same on Dante's exile—the tomb of the poet forming one of the principal objects of interest in that city, both to the native and to the stranger.

«On this hint I spake,» and the result has been the following four cantos, in terza rima, now offered to the reader. If they are understood and approved, it is my purpose to continue the poem in various other cantos to its natural conclusion in the present age. The reader is requested to suppose that Dante addresses him in the interval between the conclusion of the Divina Commedia and his death, and shortly before the latter event, foretelling the fortunes of Italy in general in the ensuing centuries. In adopting this plan I have had in my mind the Cassandra of Lycophron, and the Prophecy of Nereus by Horace, as well as the Prophecies of Holy Writ. The measure adopted is the terza rima of Dante, which I am not aware to have seen hitherto tried in our language, except it may be by Mr Hayley, of whose translation I never saw but one extract, quoted in the notes to Caliph Vathek; so that—if I do not err—this poem may be considered as a metrical experiment. The cantos are short, and about the same length of those of the poet whose name I have borrowed, and most probably taken in vain.

Amongst the inconveniences of authors in the present day, it is difficult for any who have a name, good or bad, to escape translation. I have had the fortune to see the fourth canto of Childe Harold translated into Italian versi sciolti—that is, a poem written in the *Spenserean stanza* into *blank verse*, without regard to the natural divisions of the stanza, or of the sense. If the present poem, being on a national topic, should chance to undergo the same fate, I would request the Italian reader to remember, that when I have failed in the imitation of his great «Padre Alighier,» I have failed in imitating that which all study and few understand, since to this very day it is not yet settled what was the meaning of the allegory in the first canto of the Inferno, unless Count Marchetti's ingenious and probable conjecture may be considered as having decided the question.

He may also pardon my failure the more, as I am not quite sure that he would be pleased with my success, since the Italians, with a pardonable nationality, are particularly jealous of all that is left them as a nation—their literature; and, in the present bitterness of the classic and romantic war, are but ill disposed to permit a foreigner even to approve or imitate them, without finding some fault with his ultramontane presumption. I can easily enter into all this, knowing what would be thought in England of an Italian imitator of Milton, or if a translation of Monti, or Pindemonte, or Arici, should be held up to the rising generation as a model for their future poetical essays. But I perceive that I am deviating into an address to the Italian reader, when my business is with the English one, and he they few or many, I must take my leave of both.

THE

PROPHECY OF DANTE.

CANTO I.

ONCE more in man's frail world! which I had left
So long that 't was forgotten; and I feel
The weight of clay again,—too soon bereft
Of the immortal vision which could heal
My earthly sorrows, and to God's own skies
Lift me from that deep gulf without repeal,
Where late my ears rung with the damned cries
Of souls in hopeless bale; and from that place
Of lesser torment, whence men may arise
Pure from the fire to join the angelic race;
'Midst whom my own bright Beatricè bless'd
My spirit with her light; and to the base
Of the Eternal Triad! first, last, best,
Mysterious, three, sole, infinite, great God!
Soul universal! led the mortal guest,
Unblasted by the glory, though he trod
From star to star to reach the almighty throne..
Oh Beatricè! whose sweet limbs the sod

So long hath press'd, and the cold marble stone,
Thou sole pure seraph of my earliest love,
Love so ineffable, and so alone,
That nought on earth could more my bosom move,
And meeting thee in heaven was but to meet
That without which my soul, like the arkless dove,
Had wander'd still in search of, nor her feet
Relieved her wing till found; without thy light
My paradise had still been incomplete. [2]
Since my tenth sun gave summer to my sight
Thou wert my life, the essence of my thought,
Loved ere I knew the name of love, and bright
Still in these dim old eyes, now overwrought
With the world's war, and years, and banishment,
And tears for thee, by other woes untaught;
For mine is not a nature to be bent
By tyrannous faction, and the brawling crowd;
And though the long, long conflict hath been spent
In vain, and never more, save when the cloud
Which overhangs the Apennine, my mind's eye
Pierces to fancy Florence, once so proud
Of me, can I return, though but to die,
Unto my native soil, they have not yet
Quench'd the old exile's spirit, stern and high.
But the sun, though not overcast, must set,
And the night cometh; I am old in days,
And deeds, and contemplation, and have met
Destruction face to face in all his ways.
The world hath left me, what it found me—pure,
And if I have not gather'd yet its praise,
I sought it not by any baser lure;
Man wrongs, and Time avenges, and my name
May form a monument not all obscure,
Though such was not my ambition's end or aim,
To add to the vain-glorious list of those
Who dabble in the pettiness of fame,
And make men's fickle breath the wind that blows
Their sail, and deem it glory to be class'd
With conquerors, and virtue's other foes,
In bloody chronicles of ages past.
I would have had my Florence great and free: [3]
Oh Florence! Florence! unto me thou wast
Like that Jerusalem which the Almighty He
Wept over: «but thou wouldst not;» as the bird
Gathers its young, I would have gather'd thee
Beneath a parent pinion, hadst thou heard
My voice; but as the adder, deaf and fierce,
Against the breast that cherish'd thee was stirr'd
Thy venom, and my state thou didst amerce,
And doom this body forfeit to the fire.
Alas! how bitter is his country's curse
To him who *for* that country would expire,
But did not merit to expire *by* her,
And loves her, loves her even in her ire.
The day may come when she will cease to err,
The day may come she would be proud to have
The dust she dooms to scatter, and transfer [4]
Of him, whom she denied a home, the grave.
But this shall not be granted; let my dust
Lie where it falls; nor shall the soil which gave
Me breath, but in her sudden fury thrust
Me forth to breathe elsewhere, so re-assume
My indignant bones, because her angry gust
Forsooth is over, and repeal'd her doom.
No,—she denied me what was mine—my roof,
And shall not have what is not hers—my tomb.

Too long her armed wrath hath kept aloof
The breast which would have bled for her, the heart
That beat, the mind that was temptation—proof,
The man who fought, toil'd, travell'd, and each part
Of a true citizen fulfill'd, and saw
For his reward the Guelf's ascendant art
Pass his destruction even into a law.
These things are not made for forgetfulness—
Florence shall be forgotten first; too raw
The wound, too deep the wrong, and the distress
Of such endurance too prolong'd, to make
My pardon greater, her injustice less,
Though late repented; yet—yet for her sake
I feel some fonder yearnings, and for thine,
My own Beatricê, I would hardly take
Vengeance upon the land which once was mine,
And still is hallow'd by thy dust's return,
Which would protect the murderess like a shrine,
And save ten thousand foes by thy sole urn.
Though, like old Marius from Minturnæ's marsh
And Carthage ruins, my lone breast may burn
At times with evil feelings hot and harsh,
And sometimes the last pangs of a vile foe
Writhe in a dream before me, and o'erarch
My brow with hopes of triumph,—let them go!
Such are the last infirmities of those
Who long have suffer'd more than mortal woe,
And yet being mortal still, have no repose
But on the pillow of Revenge—Revenge,
Who sleeps to dream of blood, and waking glows
With the oft-baffled, slakeless thirst of change,
When we shall mount again, and they that trod
Be trampled on, while Death and Até range
O'er humbled heads and sever'd necks—Great God!
Take these thoughts from me—to thy hands I yield
My many wrongs, and thine almighty rod
Will fall on those who smote me,—be my shield!
As thou hast been in peril, and in pain,
In turbulent cities, and the tented field—
In toil, and many troubles borne in vain
For Florence.—I appeal from her to Thee!
Thee, whom I late saw in thy loftiest reign,
Even in that glorious vision, which to see
And live was never granted until now,
And yet thou hast permitted this to me.
Alas! with what a weight upon my brow
The sense of earth and earthly things come back,
Corrosive passions, feelings dull and low,
The heart's quick throb upon the mental rack,
Long day, and dreary night; the retrospect
Of half a century bloody and black,
And the frail few years I may yet expect
Hoary and hopeless, but less hard to bear,
For I have been too long and deeply wreck'd
On the lone rock of desolate despair
To lift my eyes more to the passing sail
Which shuns that reef so horrible and bare;
Nor raise my voice—for who would heed my wail?
I am not of this people, nor this age,
And yet my harpings will unfold a tale
Which shall preserve these times when not a page
Of their perturbed annals could attract
An eye to gaze upon their civil rage,
Did not my verse embalm full many an act
Worthless as they who wrought it: 'tis the doom
Of spirits of my order to be rack'd

In life, to wear their hearts out, and consume
Their days in endless strife, and die alone;
Then future thousands crowd around their tomb,
And pilgrims come from climes where they have known
The name of him—who now is but a name.
And wasting homage o'er the sullen stone
Spread his—by him unheard, unheeded—fame;
And mine at least hath cost me dear: to die
Is nothing; but to wither thus—to tame
My mind down from its own infinity—
To live in narrow ways with little men,
A common sight to every common eye,
A wanderer, while even wolves can find a den,
Ripp'd from all kindred, from all home, all things
That make communion sweet, and soften pain—
To feel me in the solitude of kings,
Without the power that makes them bear a crown—
To envy every dove his nest and wings
Which waft him where the Apennine looks down
On Arno, till he perches, it may be,
Within my all inexorable town,
Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she,[5]
Their mother, the cold partner who hath brought
Destruction for a dowry—this to see
And feel, and know without repair, hath taught
A bitter lesson; but it leaves me free:
I have not vilely found, nor basely sought,—
They made an exile—not a slave of me.

CANTO II.

The spirit of the fervent days of old,
When words were things that came to pass, and thought
Flash'd o'er the future, bidding men behold
Their children's children's doom already brought
Forth from the abyss of time which is to be,
The chaos of events, where lie half-wrought
Shapes that must undergo mortality;
What the great seers of Israel wore within,
That spirit was on them, and is on me,
And if, Cassandra-like, amidst the din
Of conflict none will hear, or hearing heed,
This voice from out the wilderness, the sin
Be theirs, and my own feelings be my meed,
The only guerdon I have ever known.
Hast thou not bled? and hast thou still to bleed,
Italia? Ah! to me such things, foreshown
With dim sepulchral light, bid me forget
In thine irreparable wrongs my own;
We can have but one country, and even yet
Thou'rt mine—my bones shall be within thy breast,
My soul within thy language, which once set
With our old Roman sway in the wide west;
But I will make another tongue arise
As lofty and more sweet, in which exprest
The hero's ardour, or the lover's sighs,
Shall find alike such sounds for every theme
That every word, as brilliant as thy skies,
Shall realise a poet's proudest dream,
And make thee Europe's nightingale of song;
So that all present speech to thine shall seem
The note of meaner birds, and every tongue
Confess its barbarism when compared with thine.
This shalt thou owe to him thou didst so wrong,
Thy Tuscan bard, the banish'd Ghibelline.
Woe! woe! the veil of coming centuries
Is rent,—a thousand years, which yet supine
Lie like the ocean waves ere winds arise,
Heaving in dark and sullen undulation,
Float from eternity into these eyes;
The storms yet sleep, the clouds still keep their station,
The unborn earthquake yet is in the womb,
The bloody chaos yet expects creation,
But all things are disposing for thy doom;
The elements await but for the word,
"Let there be darkness!" and thou grow'st a tomb!
Yes! thou, so beautiful shall feel the sword,
Thou, Italy! so fair that paradise,
Revived in thee, blooms forth to man restored:
Ah! must the sons of Adam lose it twice?
Thou, Italy! whose ever golden fields,
Plough'd by the sunbeams solely, would suffice
For the world's granary; thou whose sky heaven gilds
With brighter stars, and robes with deeper blue;
Thou, in whose pleasant places summer builds
Her palace, in whose cradle empire grew,
And form'd the eternal city's ornaments
From spoils of kings whom freemen overthrew;
Birth-place of heroes, sanctuary of saints,
Where earthly first, then heavenly glory made
Her home; thou, all which fondest fancy paints,
And finds her prior vision but pourtray'd
In feeble colours, when the eye—from the Alp
Of horrid show, and rock and shaggy shade
Of desert-loving pine, whose emerald scalp
Nods to the storm—dilates and dotes o'er thee,
And wistfully implores, as 't were, for help
To see thy sunny fields, my Italy,
Nearer and nearer yet, and dearer still
The more approach'd, and dearest were they free,
Thou—thou must wither to each tyrant's will:
The Goth hath been,—the German, Frank, and Hun,
Are yet to come,—and on the imperial hill
Ruin, already proud of the deeds done
By the old barbarians, there awaits the new,
Throned on the Palatine, while, lost and won,
Rome at her feet lies bleeding; and the hue
Of human sacrifice and Roman slaughter
Troubles the clotted air, of late so blue,
And deepens into red the saffron water
Of Tiber, thick with dead; the helpless priest,
And still more helpless nor less holy daughter,
Vow'd to their god, have shrieking fled, and ceased
Their ministry: the nations take their prey,
Iberian, Almain, Lombard, and the beast
And bird, wolf, vulture, more humane than they
Are; these but gorge the flesh and lap the gore
Of the departed, and then go their way;
But those, the human savages, explore
All paths of torture, and insatiate yet
With Ugolino hunger prowl for more.
Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set;[6]
The chiefless army of the dead, which late
Beneath the traitor prince's banner met,
Hath left its leader's ashes at the gate;
Had but the royal rebel lived, perchance
Thou hadst been spared, but his involved thy fate.
Oh! Rome, the spoiler of the spoil of France,
From Brennus to the Bourbon, never, never

Shall foreign standard to thy walls advance,
But Tiber shall become a mournful river.
Oh! when the strangers pass the Alps and Po,
Crush them, ye rocks! floods, whelm them, and for ever!
Why sleep the idle avalanches so,
To topple on the lonely pilgrim's head?
Why doth Eridanus but overflow
The peasant's harvest from his turbid bed?
Were not each barbarous horde a nobler prey?
Over Cambyses' host the desert spread
Her sandy ocean, and the sea waves' sway
Roll'd over Pharaoh and his thousands,—why,
Mountains and waters, do ye not as they?
And you, ye men! Romans, who dare not die,
Sons of the conquerors who overthrew
Those who overthrew proud Xerxes, where yet lie
The dead whose tomb oblivion never knew,
Are the Alps weaker than Thermopylæ?
Their passes more alluring to the view
Of an invader? is it they, or ye
That to each host the mountain-gate unbar,
And leave the march in peace, the passage free?
Why, nature's self detains the victor's car,
And makes your land impregnable, if earth
Could be so: but alone she will not war,
Yet aids the warrior worthy of his birth,
In a soil where the mothers bring forth men!
No so with those whose souls are little worth;
For them no fortress can avail,—the den
Of the poor reptile which preserves its sting
Is more secure than walls of adamant, when
The hearts of those within are quivering.
Are ye not brave? Yes, yet the Ausonian soil
Hath hearts, and hands, and arms, and hosts to bring
Against oppression; but how vain the toil,
While still division sows the seeds of woe
And weakness, till the stranger reaps the spoil.
Oh! my own beauteous land! so long laid low,
So long the grave of thy own children's hopes,
When there is but required a single blow
To break the chain, yet—yet the avenger stops,
And doubt and discord step 'twixt thine and thee,
And join their strength to that which with thee copes:
What is there wanting then to set thee free,
And show thy beauty in its fullest light?
To make the Alps impassable; and we,
Her sons, may do this with *one* deed——Unite!

CANTO III.

From out the mass of never dying ill,
The plague, the prince, the stranger, and the sword,
Vials of wrath but emptied to refill
And flow again, I cannot all record
That crowds on my prophetic eye: the earth
And ocean written o'er would not afford
Space for the annal, yet it shall go forth;
Yes, all, though not by human pen, is graven,
There where the farthest suns and stars have birth.
Spread like a banner at the gate of heaven,
The bloody scroll of our millennial wrongs
Waves, and the echo of our groans is driven
Athwart the sound of archangelic songs,
And Italy, the martyr'd nation's gore,
Will not in vain arise to where belongs
Omnipotence and mercy evermore;
Like to a harp-string stricken by the wind,
The sound of her lament shall, rising o'er
The seraph voices, touch the Almighty Mind.
Meantime I, humblest of thy sons, and of
Earth's dust by immortality refined
To sense and suffering, though the vain may scoff,
And tyrants threat, and meeker victims bow
Before the storm because its breath is rough,
To thee, my country! whom before as now,
I loved and love, devote the mournful lyre
And melancholy gift high powers allow
To read the future; and if now my fire
Is not as once it shone o'er thee, forgive!
I but foretel thy fortunes—then expire;
Think not that I would look on them and live.
A spirit forces me to see and speak,
And for my guerdon grants *not* to survive;
My heart shall be pour'd over thee and break:
Yet for a moment, ere I must resume
Thy sable web of sorrow, let me take
Over the gleams that flash athwart thy gloom
A softer glimpse; some stars shine through thy night,
And many meteors, and above thy tomb
Leans sculptured beauty, which death cannot blight;
And from thine ashes boundless spirits rise
To give thee honour and the earth delight;
Thy soil shall still be pregnant with the wise,
The gay, the learn'd, the generous, and the brave,
Native to thee as summer to thy skies,
Conquerors on foreign shores and the far wave,[7]
Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name;[8]
For *thee* alone they have no arm to save,
And all thy recompense is in their fame,
A noble one to them, but not to thee—
Shall they be glorious, and thou still the same?
Oh! more than these illustrious far shall be
The being—and even yet he may be born—
The mortal saviour who shall set thee free,
And see thy diadem, so changed and worn
By fresh barbarians, on thy brow replaced;
And the sweet sun replenishing thy morn,
Thy moral morn, too long with clouds defaced
And noxious vapours from Avernus risen,
Such as all they must breathe who are debased
By servitude, and have the mind in prison.
Yet through this centuried eclipse of woe
Some voices shall be heard, and earth shall listen;
Poets shall follow in the path I show,
And make it broader; the same brilliant sky
Which cheers the birds to song shall bid them glow,
And raise their notes as natural and high;
Tuneful shall be their numbers: they shall sing
Many of love, and some of liberty,
But few shall soar upon that eagle's wing,
And look in the sun's face with eagle's gaze
All free and fearless as the feather'd king,
But fly more near the earth; how many a phrase
Sublime shall lavish'd be on some small prince
In all the prodigality of praise!
And language, eloquently false, evince
The harlotry of genius, which, like beauty,
Too oft forgets its own self-reverence,
And looks on prostitution as a duty.

He who once enters in a tyrant's hall[9]
As guest is slave, his thoughts become a booty,
And the first day which sees the chain enthral
A captive, sees his half of manhood gone—[10]
The soul's emasculation saddens all
His spirit; thus the bard too near the throne
Quails from his inspiration, bound to *please*,—
How servile is the task to please alone!
To smooth the verse to suit his sovereign's ease
And royal leisure, nor too much prolong
Aught save his eulogy, and find, and seize,
Or force or forge fit argument of song!
Thus trammell'd, thus condemn'd to flattery's trebles,
He toils through all, still trembling to be wrong:
For fear some noble thoughts, like heavenly rebels,
Should rise up in high treason to his brain,
He sings, as the Athenian spoke, with pebbles
In 's mouth, lest truth should stammer through his strain.
But out of the long file of sonnetteers
There shall be some who will not sing in vain,
And he, their prince, shall rank among my peers,[11]
And love shall be his torment; but his grief
Shall make an immortality of tears,
And Italy shall hail him as the chief
Of poet lovers, and his higher song
Of freedom wreathe him with as green a leaf.
But in a farther age shall rise along
The banks of Po, two greater still than he;
The world which smiled on him shall do them wrong
Till they are ashes and repose with me.
The first will make an epoch with his lyre,
And fill the earth with feats of chivalry:
His fancy like a rainbow, and his fire,
Like that of heaven, immortal, and his thought
Borne onward with a wing that cannot tire;
Pleasure shall, like a butterfly new caught,
Flutter her lovely pinions o'er his theme,
And art itself seem into nature wrought
By the transparency of his bright dream.—
The second, of a tenderer, sadder mood,
Shall pour his soul out o'er Jerusalem;
He, too, shall sing of arms, and christian blood
Shed where Christ bled for man; and his high harp
Shall, by the willow over Jordan's flood,
Revive a song of Sion, and the sharp
Conflict, and final triumph of the brave
And pious, and the strife of hell to warp
Their hearts from their great purpose, until wave
The red-cross banners where the first red cross
Was crimson'd from his veins who died to save,
Shall be his sacred argument; the loss
Of years, of favour, freedom, even of fame
Contested for a time, while the smooth gloss
Of courts would slide o'er his forgotten name,
And call captivity a kindness, meant
To shield him from insanity or shame;
Such shall be his meet guerdon! who was sent
To be Christ's laureate—they reward him well!
Florence dooms me but death or banishment,
Ferrara him a pittance and a cell,
Harder to bear and less deserved, for I
Had stung the factions which I strove to quell;
But this meek man, who with a lover's eye
Will look on earth and heaven, and who will deign
To embalm with his celestial flattery
As poor a thing as e'er was spawn'd to reign,
What will *he* do to merit such a doom?
Perhaps he 'll *love*,—and is not love in vain
Torture enough without a living tomb?
Yet it will be so—he and his compeer,
The Bard of Chivalry, will both consume
In penury and pain too many a year,
And, dying in despondency, bequeath
To the kind world, which scarce will yield a tear,
A heritage enriching all who breathe
With the wealth of a genuine poet's soul,
And to their country a redoubled wreath,
Unmatch'd by time; not Hellas can unrol
Through her olympiads two such names, though one
Of hers be mighty;—and is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the sun?
Must all the finer thoughts, the thrilling sense,
The electric blood with which their arteries run,
Their body's self-turn'd soul with the intense
Feeling of that which is, and fancy of
That which should be, to such a recompense
Conduct? shall their bright plumage on the rough
Storm be still scatter'd? Yes, and it must be.
For, form'd of far too penetrable stuff,
These birds of paradise but long to flee
Back to their native mansion; soon they find
Earth's mist with their pure pinions not agree,
And die, or are degraded, for the mind
Succumbs to long infection, and despair,
And vulture passions, flying close behind,
Await the moment to assail and tear;
And when at length the winged wanderers stoop,
Then is the prey-birds' triumph, then they share
The spoil, o'erpower'd at length by one fell swoop.
Yet some have been untouch'd, who learn'd to bear,
Some whom no power could ever force to droop,
Who could resist themselves even, hardest care!
And task most hopeless; but some such have been,
And if my name amongst the number were,
That destiny austere, and yet serene,
Were prouder than more dazzling fame unblest;
The Alp's snow summit nearer heaven is seen
Than the volcano's fierce eruptive crest,
Whose splendour from the black abyss is flung,
While the scorch'd mountain, from whose burning breast
A temporary torturing flame is wrung,
Shines for a night of terror, then repels
Its fire back to the hell from whence it sprung,
The hell which in its entrails ever dwells.

CANTO IV.

Many are poets who have never penn'd
Their inspiration, and perchance the best:
They felt, and loved, and died, but would not lend
Their thoughts to meaner beings; they compress'd
The god within them, and rejoin'd the stars
Unlaurell'd upon earth, but far more blest
Than those who are degraded by the jars
Of passion, and their frailties link'd to fame,
Conquerors of high renown, but full of scars.
Many are poets but without the name;
For what is poesy but to create

From overfeeling good or ill; and aim
At an external life beyond our fate,
And be the new Prometheus of new men,
Bestowing fire from heaven, and then, too late,
Finding the pleasure given repaid with pain,
And vultures to the heart of the bestower,
Who, having lavish'd his high gift in vain,
Lies chain'd to his lone rock by the sea-shore?
So be it; we can bear.—But thus all they,
Whose intellect is an o'ermastering power,
Which still recoils from its encumbering clay,
Or lightens it to spirit, whatsoe'er
The form which their creations may essay,
Are bards; the kindled marble's bust may wear
More poesy upon its speaking brow
Than aught less than the Homeric page may bear;
One noble stroke with a whole life may glow,
Or deify the canvas till it shine
With beauty so surpassing all below,
That they who kneel to idols so divine
Break no commandment, for high heaven is there
Transfused, transfigurated: and the line
Of poesy which peoples but the air
With thought and beings of our thought reflected,
Can do no more: then let the artist share
The palm, he shares the peril, and dejected
Faints o'er the labour unapproved—Alas!
Despair and genius are too oft connected.
Within the ages which before me pass,
Art shall resume and equal even the sway
Which with Apelles and old Phidias
She held in Hellas' unforgotten day.
Ye shall be taught by ruin to revive
The Grecian forms at least from their decay,
And Roman souls at last again shall live
In Roman works wrought by Italian hands,
And temples, loftier than the old temples, give
New wonders to the world; and while still stands
The austere Pantheon, into heaven shall soar
A dome,[12] its image, while the base expands
Into a fane surpassing all before,
Such as all flesh shall flock to kneel in: ne'er
Such sight hath been unfolded by a door
As this, to which all nations shall repair
And lay their sins at this huge gate of heaven.
And the bold architect unto whose care
The daring charge to raise it shall be given,
Whom all arts shall acknowledge as their lord,
Whether into the marble chaos driven
His chisel bid the Hebrew,[13] at whose word
Israel left Egypt, stop the waves in stone,
Or hues of hell be by his pencil pour'd
Over the damn'd before the Judgment throne,[14]
Such as I saw them, such as all shall see,
Or fanes be built of grandeur yet unknown,
The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me,[15]
The Ghibelline, who traversed the three realms
Which form the empire of eternity.
Amidst the clash of swords and clang of helms,
The age which I anticipate, no less
Shall be the age of beauty, and while whelms
Calamity the nations with distress,
The genius of my country shall arise,
A cedar towering o'er the wilderness.
Lovely in all its branches to all eyes,
Fragrant as fair, and recognized afar,
Wafting its native incense through the skies.
Sovereigns shall pause amidst their sport of war,
Wean'd for an hour from blood, to turn and gaze
On canvas or on stone; and they who mar
All beauty upon earth, compell'd to praise,
Shall feel the power of that which they destroy;
And art's mistaken gratitude shall raise
To tyrants who but take her for a toy
Emblems and monuments, and prostitute
Her charms to pontiffs proud,[16] who but employ
The man of genius as the meanest brute
To bear a burthen, and to serve a need.
To sell his labours, and his soul to boot:
Who toils for nations may be poor indeed
But free; who sweats for monarchs is no more
Than the gilt chamberlain, who, clothed and fee'd,
Stands sleek and slavish bowing at his door.
Oh, Power that rulest and inspirest! how
Is it that they on earth, whose earthly power
Is likest thine in heaven in outward show,
Least like to thee in attributes divine,
Tread on the universal necks that bow,
And then assure us that their rights are thine?
And how is it that they, the sons of fame,
Whose inspiration seems to them to shine
From high, they whom the nations oftest name,
Must pass their days in penury or pain,
Or step to grandeur through the paths of shame,
And wear a deeper brand and gaudier chain?
Or if their destiny be borne aloof
From lowliness, or tempted thence in vain,
In their own souls sustain a harder proof,
The inner war of passions deep and fierce?
Florence! when thy harsh sentence razed my roof,
I loved thee, but the vengeance of my verse,
The hate of injuries, which every year
Makes greater and accumulates my curse,
Shall live, outliving all thou holdest dear,
Thy pride, thy wealth, thy freedom, and even *that*,
The most infernal of all evils here,
The sway of petty tyrants in a state;
For such sway is not limited to kings,
And demagogues yield to them but in date
As swept off sooner; in all deadly things
Which make men hate themselves, and one another,
In discord, cowardice, cruelty, all that springs
From Death the Sin-born's incest with his mother,
In rank oppression in its rudest shape,
The faction chief is but the sultan's brother,
And the worst despot's far less human ape:
Florence! when this lone spirit, which so long
Yearn'd as the captive toiling at escape,
To fly back to thee in despite of wrong,
An exile, saddest of all prisoners,
Who has the whole world for a dungeon strong,
Seas, mountains, and the horizon's verge for bars,
Which shut him from the sole small spot of earth
Where—whatsoe'er his fate—he still were hers,
His country's, and might die where he had birth—
Florence! when this lone spirit shall return
To kindred spirits, thou wilt feel my worth,
And seek to honour with an empty urn
The ashes thou shalt ne'er obtain.—Alas!
«What have I done to thee, my people?»[17] Stern
Are all thy dealings, but in this they pass
The limits of man's common malice, for

All that a citizen could be I was;
Raised by thy will, all thine in peace or war,
And for this thou hast warr'd with me.—'Tis done:
I may not overleap the eternal bar
Built up between us, and will die alone,
Beholding, with the dark eye of a seer,
The evil days to gifted souls foreshown,
Foretelling them to those who will not hear,
As in the old time, till the hour be come
When truth shall strike their eyes through many a tear,
And make them own the prophet in his tomb.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 457, line 11.

Midst whom my own bright Beatricè bless'd.

The reader is requested to adopt the Italian pronunciation of Beatrice, sounding all the syllables.

Note 2. Page 458, line 9.

My paradise had still been incomplete.

« Che sol per le belle opre
Che fanno in Cielo il sole e l' altre stelle
Dentro di lui *si crede il Paradiso*,
Così se guardi fiso
Pensar ben dei ch'ogni terren piacere.»

Canzone, in which Dante describes the person of Beatrice, strophe third.

Note 3. Page 458, line 41.

I would have had my Florence great and free.

« L' Esilio che m' è dato onor mi tegno.
* * * * * *
« Cader tra' buoni è pur di lode degno.»
Sonnet of Dante.

in which he represents Right, Generosity, and Temperance, as banished from among men, and seeking refuge from Love, who inhabits his bosom.

Note 4. Page 458, line 57.

The dust she dooms to scatter.

« Ut si quis prædictorum ullo tempore in fortiam dicti communis pervenerit, *talis perveniens igne comburatur, sic quod moriatur.*

Second sentence of Florence against Dante, and the fourteen accused with him.—The Latin is worthy of the sentence.

Note 5. Page 459, line 22.

Where yet my boys are, and that fatal she.

This lady, whose name was *Gemma*, sprung from one of the most powerful Guelf families, named Donati. Corso Donati was the principal adversary of the Ghibellines. She is described as being «*Admodum morosa, ut de Xantippe Socratis philosophi conjuge scriptum esse legimus,*» according to Giannozzo Manetti. But Lionardo Aretino is scandalised with Boccace, in his life of Dante, for saying that literary men should not marry. «Qui il Boccaccio non ha pazienza, e dice, le mogli esser contrarie agli studj; e non si ricorda che Socrate il più nobile filosofo che mai fosse ebbe moglie, e figliuoli e ufficj della Repubblica nella sua Città; e Aristotele che, etc. etc. ebbe due mogli in varj tempi, ed ebbe figliuoli, e ricchezze assai.—E Marco Tullio—e Catone—e Varrone—e Seneca—ebbero moglie,» etc. etc. It is odd that honest Lionardo's examples, with the exception of Seneca, and, for any thing I know, of Aristotle, are not the most felicitous. Tully's Terentia, and Socrates's Xantippe, by no means contributed to their husbands' happiness, whatever they might do to their philosophy—Cato gave away his wife—of Varro's we know nothing—and of Seneca's, only that she was disposed to die with him, but recovered, and lived several years afterwards. But, says Lionardo, «L' uomo è *animale civile*, secondo piace a tutti i filosofi.» And thence concludes that the greatest proof of the *animal's civism* is «la prima congiunzione, dalla quale multiplicata nasce la Città.»

Note 6. Page 459, line 119.

Nine moons shall rise o'er scenes like this and set.

See, «Sacco di Roma,» generally attributed to Guicciardini. There is another written by a Jacopo *Buonaparte*, Gentiluomo Samminiatese che vi si trovò presente.

Note 7. Page 460, line 93.

Conquerors on foreign shores and the far wave.

Alexander of Parma, Spinola, Pescara, Eugene of Savoy, Montecucco.

Note 8. Page 460, line 94.

Discoverers of new worlds, which take their name.

Columbus, Americus Vespusius, Sebastian Cabot.

Note 9. Page 461, line 1.

He who once enters in a tyrant's hall, etc.

A verse from the Greek tragedians, with which Pompey took leave of Cornelia on entering the boat in which he was slain.

Note 10. Page 461, line 4.

And the first day which sees the chain enthral, etc.

The verse and sentiment are taken from Homer.

Note 11. Page 461, line 21.

And he their prince shall rank among my peers.

Petrarch.

Note 12. Page 462, line 40.

A dome, its image.

The cupola of St Peter's.

Note 13. Page 462, line 50.

His chisel bid the Hebrew.

The statue of Moses on the monument of Julius II.

SONETTO.

Di Giovanni Battista Zappi.

Chi è costui, che in dura pietra scolto,
Siede gigante; e le più illustri, e conte
Prove dell' arte avvanza, e ha vive, e pronte
Le labbia sì, che le parole ascolto?
Quest, è Mosè; ben me 'l diceva il folto
Onor del mento, e 'l doppio raggio in fronte,
Quest' è Mosè, quando scendea del monte,
E gran parte del Nume avea nel volto.
Tal era allor, che le sonanti, e vaste
Acque ei sospese a se d'intorno, e fale
Quando il mar chiuse, e ne fè tomba altrui.
E voi sue turbe un rio vitello alzate?
Alzata aveste imago a questra eguale!
Ch' era men fallo l' adorar costui.

Note 14. Page 462, line 53.

Over the damn'd before the Judgment throne.

The last Judgment in the Sistine chapel.

Note 15. Page 462, line 56.

The stream of his great thoughts shall spring from me.

I have read somewhere (if I do not err, for I cannot recollect where) that Dante was so great a favourite of

Michel Angiolo's, that he had designed the whole of the Divina Commedia; but that the volume containing these studies was lost by sea.

Note 16. Page 462, line 76.

Her charms to pontiffs proud, who but employ, etc.

See the treatment of Michel Angiolo by Julius II. and his neglect by Leo X.

Note 17. Page 462, line 130.

« What have I done to thee, my people? »

« E scrisse più volte non solamente a particolari cittadini del reggimento, ma ancora al popolo, e intra l' altre una epistola assai lunga che comincia:—« '*Populo mi, quid feci tibi?*' »

Vita di Dante scritta da Lionardo Aretino.

The Island;

OR,

CHRISTIAN AND HIS COMRADES.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The foundation of the following story will be found partly in the account of the Mutiny of the Bounty, in the South Seas, in 1789, and partly in « Mariner's Account of the Tonga Islands.»

THE ISLAND.

I.

The morning watch was come; the vessel lay
Her course, and gently made her liquid way;
The cloven billow flash'd from off her prow
In furrows form'd by that majestic plough;
The waters with their world were all before;
Behind, the South Sea's many an islet shore.
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to wane,
Dividing darkness from the dawning main;
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day,
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray;
The stars from broader beams began to creep,
And lift their shining eyelids from the deep;
The sail resumed its lately-shadow'd white,
And the wind flutter'd with a freshening flight;
The purpling ocean owns the coming sun—
But, ere he break, a deed is to be done.

II.

The gallant chief within his cabin slept,
Secure in those by whom the watch was kept:
His dreams were of old England's welcome shore,
Of toils rewarded, and of dangers o'er;
His name was added to the glorious roll
Of those who search the storm-surrounded pole.
The worst was over, and the rest seem'd sure,
And why should not his slumber be secure?
Alas! his deck was trod by unwilling feet,
And wilder hands would hold the vessel's sheet;
Young hearts, which languish'd for some sunny isle,
Where summer years and summer women smile;
Men without country, who, too long estranged,
Had found no native home, or found it changed,
And, half-uncivilised, preferr'd the cave
Of some soft savage to the uncertain wave;
The gushing fruits that nature gave untill'd;
The wood without a path but where they will'd;
The field o'er which promiscuous plenty pour'd
Her horn; the equal land without a lord;
The wish—which ages have not yet subdued
In man—to have no master save his mood;
The earth, whose mine was on its face, unsold,
The glowing sun and produce all its gold;
The freedom which can call each grot a home;
The general garden, where all steps may roam,
Where nature owns a nation as her child,
Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild;
Their shells, their fruits, the only wealth they know;
Their unexploring navy, the canoe;
Their sport, the dashing breakers and the chase;
Their strangest sight, an European face:—
Such was the country which these strangers yearn'd
To see again—a sight they dearly earn'd.

III.

Awake, bold Bligh! the foe is at the gate!
Awake! awake!——Alas! it is too late!
Fiercely beside thy cot the mutineer
Stands, and proclaims the reign of rage and fear.
Thy limbs are bound, the bayonet at thy breast,
The hands, which trembled at thy voice, arrest;
Dragg'd o'er the deck, no more at thy command
The obedient helm shall veer, the sail expand;
That savage spirit, which would lull by wrath
Its desperate escape from duty's path,
Glares round thee, in the scarce-believing eyes
Of those who fear the chief they sacrifice;
For ne'er can man his conscience all assuage,
Unless he drain the wine of passion—rage.

IV.

In vain, not silenced by the eye of death,
Thou call'st the loyal with thy menaced breath:—
They come not; they are few, and, overawed,
Must acquiesce while sterner hearts applaud.
In vain thou dost demand the cause; a curse
Is all the answer, with the threat of worse.
Full in thine eyes is waved the glittering blade,
Close to thy throat the pointed bayonet laid,
The levell'd muskets circle round thy breast
In hands as steel'd to do the deadly rest.
Thou darest them to their worst, exclaiming, « Fire!»
But they who pitied not could yet admire;

Some lurking remnant of their former awe
Restrain'd them longer than their broken law;
They would not dip their souls at once in blood,
But left thee to the mercies of the flood.

V.

«Hoist out the boat!» was now the leader's cry;
And who dare answer «No» to mutiny,
In the first dawning of the drunken hour,
The Saturnalia of unhoped-for power?
The boat is lower'd with all the haste of hate,
With its slight plank between thee and thy fate;
Her only cargo such a scant supply
As promises the death their hands deny;
And just enough of water and of bread
To keep, some days, the dying from the dead:
Some cordage, canvas, sails, and lines, and twine,
But treasures all to hermits of the brine,
Were added after, to the earnest prayer
Of those who saw no hope save sea and air;
And last, that trembling vassal of the pole,
The feeling compass, navigation's soul.

VI.

And now the self-elected chief finds time
To stun the first sensation of his crime,
And raise it in his followers—«Ho! the bowl!»
Lest passion should return to reason's shoal.
«Brandy for heroes!» Burke could once exclaim—
No doubt a liquid path to epic fame;
And such the new-born heroes found it here,
And drain'd the draught with an applauding cheer.
«Huzza! for Otaheite!» was the cry;
How strange such shouts from sons of mutiny!
The gentle island, and the genial soil,
The friendly hearts, the feasts without a toil,
The courteous manners but from nature caught,
The wealth unhoarded, and the love unbought;
Could these have charms for rudest sea-boys, driven
Before the mast by every wind of heaven?
And now, even now prepared with others' woes
To earn mild virtue's vain desire—repose?
Alas! such is our nature! all but aim
At the same end, by pathways not the same;
Our means, our birth, our nation, and our name,
Our fortune, temper, even our outward frame,
Are far more potent o'er our yielding clay
Than aught we know beyond our little day.
Yet still there whispers the small voice within,
Heard through gain's silence, and o'er glory's din:
Whatever creed be taught or land be trod,
Man's conscience is the oracle of God!

VII.

The launch is crowded with the faithful few
Who wait their chief, a melancholy crew:
But some remain'd reluctant on the deck
Of that proud vessel—now a moral wreck—
And view'd their captain's fate with piteous eyes;
While others scoff'd his augured miseries,
Sneer'd at the prospect of his pigmy sail,
And the slight bark, so laden and so frail.
The tender Nautilus who steers his prow,
The sea-born sailor of his shell canoe,
The ocean Mab, the fairy of the sea,
Seems far less fragile, and, alas! more free!
He, when the lightning-wing'd Tornados sweep
The surge, is safe—his port is in the deep—
And triumphs o'er the armadas of mankind,
Which shake the world, yet crumble in the wind.

VIII.

When all was now prepared, the vessel clear
Which hail'd her master in the mutineer—
A seaman, less obdurate than his mates,
Show'd the vain pity which but irritates;
Watch'd his late chieftain with exploring eye,
And told, in signs, repentant sympathy;
Held the moist shaddock to his parched mouth,
Which felt exhaustion's deep and bitter drouth.
But, soon observed, this guardian was withdrawn,
Nor further mercy clouds rebellion's dawn.
Then forward stepp'd the bold and froward boy
His chief had cherish'd only to destroy,
And, pointing to the helpless prow beneath,
Exclaim'd, «Depart at once! delay is death!»
Yet then, even then, his feelings ceased not all:
In that last moment could a word recal
Remorse for the black deed as yet half done,
And, what he hid from many, show'd to one:
When Bligh, in stern reproach, demanded where
Was now his grateful sense of former care?—
Where all his hopes to see his name aspire,
And blazon Britain's thousand glories higher?
His feverish lips thus broke their gloomy spell,
«'T is that! 't is that! I am in hell! in hell!»
No more he said; but, urging to the bark
His chief, commits him to his fragile ark:
These the sole accents from his tongue that fell,
But volumes lurk'd below his fierce farewell.

IX.

The arctic sun rose broad above the wave;
The breeze now sunk, now whisper'd from his cave;
As on the Æolian harp, his fitful wings
Now swell'd, now flutter'd o'er his ocean strings.
With slow, despairing oar, the abandon'd skiff
Ploughs its drear progress to the scarce-seen cliff,
Which lifts its peak a cloud above the main:
That boat and ship shall never meet again!
But 't is not mine to tell their tale of grief,
Their constant peril and their scant relief;
Their days of danger, and their nights of pain;
Their manly courage, even when deem'd in vain;
The sapping famine, rendering scarce a son
Known to his mother in the skeleton;
The ills that lessen'd still their little store,
And starved even hunger till he wrung no more;
The varying frowns and favours of the deep,
That now almost engulphs, then leaves to creep
With crazy oar and shatter'd strength along
The tide, that yields reluctant to the strong;
Th' incessant fever of that arid thirst
Which welcomes, as a well, the clouds that burst
Above their naked bones, and feels delight
In the cold drenching of the stormy night,
And from the outspread canvas gladly wrings
A drop to moisten life's all-gasping springs;
The savage foe escaped, to seek again
More hospitable shelter from the main;
The ghastly spectres which were doom'd at last
To tell as true a tale of dangers past,

As ever the dark annals of the deep
Disclosed for man to dread or woman weep.

X.

We leave them to their fate, but not unknown
Nor unredress'd! Revenge may have her own:
Roused discipline aloud proclaims their cause,
And injured navies urge their broken laws.
Pursue we on his track the mutineer,
Whom distant vengeance had not taught to fear,
Wide o'er the wave—away! away! away!
Once more his eyes shall hail the welcome bay;
Once more the happy shores without a law
Receive the outlaws whom they lately saw;
Nature, and nature's goddess—Woman—woos
To lands where, save their conscience, none accuse;
Where all partake the earth without dispute,
And bread itself is gather'd as a fruit; [1]
Where none contest the fields, the woods, the streams:—
The goldless age, where gold disturbs no dreams,
Inhabits or inhabited the shore,
Till Europe taught them better than before,
Bestow'd her customs, and amended theirs,
But left her vices also to their heirs.
Away with this! behold them as they were,
Do good with nature, or with nature err.
« Huzza! for Otaheite!» was the cry,
As stately swept the gallant vessel by.
The breeze springs up; the lately flapping sail
Extends its arch before the growing gale;
In swifter ripples stream aside the seas,
Which her bold bow flings off with dashing ease.
Thus Argo plough'd the Euxine's virgin foam;
But those she wafted still look'd back to home—
These spurn their country with their rebel bark,
And fly her as the raven fled the ark;
And yet they seek to nestle with the dove,
And tame their fiery spirits down to love.

CANTO II.

I.

How pleasant were the songs of Toobonai,[2]
When summer's sun went down the coral bay!
Come, let us to the islet's softest shade,
And hear the warbling birds! the damsels said;
The wood-dove from the forest depth shall coo,
Like voices of the gods from Bolotoo;
We 'll cull the flowers that grow above the dead,
For these most bloom where rests the warrior's head;
And we will sit in twilight's face, and see
The sweet moon glancing through the tooa tree,
The lofty accents of whose sighing bough
Shall sadly please us as we lean below;
Or climb the steep, and view the surf in vain
Wrestle with rocky giants o'er the main,
Which spurn in columns back the baffled spray.
How beautiful are these! how happy they,
Who, from the toil and tumult of their lives,
Steal to look down where nought but Ocean strives!
Even he too loves at times the blue lagoon,
And smoothes his ruffled mane beneath the moon.

II.

Yes—from the sepulchre we 'll gather flowers,
Then feast like spirits in their promised bowers,
Then plunge and revel in the rolling surf,
Then lay our limbs along the tender turf,
And, wet and shining from the sportive toil,
Anoint our bodies with the fragrant oil,
And plait our garlands gather'd from the grave,
And wear the wreaths that sprung from out the brave.
But lo! night comes, the Mooa woos us back,
The sound of mats is heard along our track;
Anon the torchlight-dance shall fling its sheen
In flashing mazes o'er the Marly's green;
And we too will be there; we too recal
The memory bright with many a festival,
Ere Fiji blew the shell of war, when foes
For the first time were wafted in canoes.
Alas! for them the flower of mankind bleeds;
Alas! for them our fields are rank with weeds:
Forgotten is the rapture, or unknown,
Of wandering with the moon and love alone.
But be it so:—*they* taught us how to wield
The club, and rain our arrows o'er the field;
Now let them reap the harvest of their art!
But feast to-night! to-morrow we depart.
Strike up the dance, the cava bowl fill high,
Drain every drop!—to-morrow we may die.
In summer garments be our limbs array'd;
Around our waists the Tappa's white display'd;
Thick wreaths shall form our coronal, like spring's,
And round our necks shall glance the Hooni strings;
So shall their brighter hues contrast the glow
Of the dusk bosoms that beat high below.

III.

But now the dance is o'er—yet stay awhile;
Ah, pause! nor yet put out the social smile.
To-morrow for the Mooa we depart,
But not to-night—to-night is for the heart.
Again bestow the wreaths we gently woo,
Ye young enchantresses of gay Licoo!
How lovely are your forms! how every sense
Bows to your beauties, soften'd, but intense,
Like to the flowers on Mataloco's steep,
Which fling their fragrance far athwart the deep:
We too will see Licoo; but oh! my heart—
What do I say? to-morrow we depart.

IV.

Thus rose a song—the harmony of times
Before the winds blew Europe o'er these climes.
True, they had vices—such are nature's growth—
But only the barbarian's—we have both:
The sordor of civilization, mix'd
With all the savage which man's fall hath fix'd.
Who hath not seen dissimulation's reign,
The prayers of Abel link'd to deeds of Cain?
Who such would see, may from his lattice view
The old world more degraded than the new,—

[1] The now celebrated bread-fruit, to transplant which Captain Bligh's expedition was undertaken.

[2] The first three sections are taken from an actual song of the Tonga Islanders, of which a prose translation is given in Mariner's *Account of the Tonga Islands*. Toobonai is not however one of them; but was one of those where Christian and the mutineers took refuge. I have altered and added, but have retained as much as possible of the original.

Now new no more, save where Columbia rears
Twin giants, born by freedom to her spheres,
Where Chimborazo, over air, earth, wave,
Glares with his Titan eye, and sees no slave.

V.

Such was this ditty of tradition's days,
Which to the dead a lingering fame conveys
In song, where fame as yet hath left no sign
Beyond the sound, whose charm is half divine;
Which leaves no record to the sceptic eye,
But yields young history all to harmony;
A boy Achilles, with the Centaur's lyre
In hand, to teach him to surpass his sire.
For one long-cherish'd ballad's simple stave,
Rung from the rock, or mingled with the wave,
Or from the bubbling streamlet's grassy side,
Or gathering mountain echoes as they glide,
Hath greater power o'er each true heart and ear,
Than all the columns conquest's minions rear;
Invites, when hieroglyphics are a theme
For sages' labours or the student's dream;
Attracts, when history's volumes are a toil,—
The first, the freshest bud of feeling's soil.
Such was this rude rhyme—rhyme is of the rude—
But such inspired the Norseman's solitude,
Who came and conquer'd; such, wherever rise
Lands which no foes destroy or civilize,
Exist: and what can our accomplish'd art
Of verse do more than reach the awaken'd heart?

VI.

And sweetly now those untaught melodies
Broke the luxurious silence of the skies,
The sweet siesta of a summer day,
The tropic afternoon of Toobonai,
When every flower was bloom, and air was balm,
And the first breath began to stir the palm,
The first yet voiceless wind to urge the wave
All gently to refresh the thirsty cave,
Where sat the songstress with the stranger boy,
Who taught her passion's desolating joy,
Too powerful over every heart, but most
O'er those who know not how it may be lost;
O'er those who, burning in the new-born fire,
Like martyrs revel in their funeral pyre,
With such devotion to their ecstasy,
That life knows no such rapture as to die:
And die they do; for earthly life has nought
Match'd with that burst of nature, even in thought;
And all our dreams of better life above
But close in one eternal gush of love.

VII.

There sate the gentle savage of the wild,
In growth a woman, though in years a child,
As childhood dates within our colder clime,
Where nought is ripen'd rapidly save crime;
The infant of an infant world, as pure
From nature—lovely, warm, and premature;
Dusky like Night, but Night with all her stars,
Or cavern sparkling with its native spars;
With eyes that were a language and a spell,
A form like Aphrodite's in her shell;
With all her loves around her on the deep,
Voluptuous as the first approach of sleep;
Yet full of life—for through her tropic cheek
The blush would make its way, and all but speak;
The sun-born blood suffused her neck, and threw
O'er her clear nut-brown skin a lucid hue,
Like coral reddening through the darken'd wave,
Which draws the diver to the crimson cave.
Such was this daughter of the Southern Seas,
Herself a billow in her energies,
To bear the bark of others' happiness,
Nor feel a sorrow till their joy grew less:
Her wild and warm yet faithful bosom knew
No joy like what it gave; her hopes ne'er drew
Aught from experience, that chill touchstone, whose
Sad proof reduces all things from their hues:
She fear'd no ill, because she knew it not,
Or what she knew was soon—too soon—forgot:
Her smiles and tears had pass'd, as light winds pass
O'er lakes, to ruffle, not destroy, their glass,
Whose depths unsearch'd, and fountains from the hill,
Restore their surface, in itself so still,
Until the earthquake tear the Naïad's cave,
Root up the spring and trample on the wave,
And crush the living waters to a mass,
The amphibious desart of the dank morass!
And must their fate be hers? Th' eternal change
But grasps humanity with quicker range;
And they who fall, but fall as worlds will fall,
To rise, if just, a spirit o'er them all.

VIII.

And who is he? the blue-eyed northern child
Of isles more known to man, but scarce less wild;
The fair-hair'd offspring of the Hebrides,
Where roars the Pentland with its whirling seas;
Rock'd in his cradle by the roaring wind,
The tempest-born in body and in mind,
His young eyes opening on the ocean-foam,
Had from that moment deem'd the deep his home,
The giant comrade of his pensive moods,
The sharer of his craggy solitudes,
The only Mentor of his youth, where'er
His bark was borne; the sport of wave and air;
A careless thing, who placed his choice in chance,
Nursed by the legends of his land's romance;
Eager to hope, but not less firm to bear,
Acquainted with all feelings save despair.
Placed in the Arab's clime, he would have been
As bold a rover as the sands have seen,
And braved their thirst with as enduring lip
As Ishmael, wafted on his desart-ship,[1]
Fix'd upon Chili's shore, a proud Cacique;
On Hella's mountains, a rebellious Greek;
Born in a tent, perhaps a Tamerlane;
Bred to a throne, perhaps unfit to reign.
For the same soul that rends its path to sway,
If rear'd to such, can find no further prey
Beyond itself, and must retrace its way,[2]
Plunging for pleasure into pain; the same
Spirit which made a Nero, Rome's worst shame.

[1] The "ship of the desart" is the Oriental figure for the camel or dromedary, and they deserve the metaphor well: the former for his endurance, the latter for his swiftness.

[2] "Lucullus, when frugality could charm,
Had wasted turnips in his Sabine farm."—Pope.

A humbler state and discipline of heart
Had form'd his glorious namesake's counterpart:[1]
But grant his vices, grant them all his own,
How small their theatre without a throne!

IX.

Thou smilest,—these comparisons seem high
To those who scan all things with dazzled eye;
Link'd with the unknown name of one whose doom
Has nought to do with glory or with Rome,
With Chili, Hellas, or with Araby,
Thou smilest?—Smile; 't is better thus than sigh:
Yet such he might have been; he was a man,
A soaring spirit ever in the van,
A patriot hero or despotic chief,
To form a nation's glory or its grief,
Born under auspices which make us more
Or less than we delight to ponder o'er:
But these are visions; say, what was he here?
A blooming boy, a truant mutineer,
The fair-hair'd Torquil, free as ocean's spray,
The husband of the bride of Toobonai.

X.

By Neuha's side he sate, and watch'd the waters,—
Neuha, the sun-flower of the Island daughters,
Highborn (a birth at which the herald smiles,
Without a scutcheon for these secret isles)
Of a long race, the valiant and the free,
The naked knights of savage chivalry,
Whose grassy cairns ascend along the shore,
And thine,—I 've seen,—Achilles! do no more.
She, when the thunder-bearing strangers came
In vast canoes, begirt with bolts of flame,
Topp'd with tall trees, which, loftier than the palm,
Seem'd rooted in the deep amidst its calm;
But, when the winds awaken'd shot forth wings
Broad as the cloud along the horizon flings,
And sway'd the waves, like cities of the sea,
Making the very billows look less free;—
She, with her paddling oar and dancing prow,
Shot through the surf, like rein-deer through the snow,
Swift-gliding o'er the breaker's whitening edge,
Light as a Nereid in her ocean-sledge,
And gazed and wonder'd at the giant hulk
Which heaved from wave to wave its trampling bulk:
The anchor dropp'd, it lay along the deep,
Like a huge lion in the sun asleep,
While round it swarm'd the proas' flitting chain,
Like summer-bees that hum around his mane.

XI.

The white man landed;—need the rest be told?
The New World stretch'd its dusk hand to the Old;
Each was to each a marvel, and the tie
Of wonder warm'd to better sympathy.
Kind was the welcome of the sun-born sires,
And kinder still their daughters' gentler fires.
Their union grew: the children of the storm
Found beauty link'd with many a dusky form;
While these in turn admired the paler glow,
Which seem'd so white in climes that knew no snow.
The chase, the race, the liberty to roam,
The soil where every cottage show'd a home;
The sea-spread net, the lightly-launch'd canoe,
Which stemm'd the studded Archipelago,
O'er whose blue bosom rose the starry isles;
The healthy slumber, earn'd by sportive toils;
The palm, the loftiest Dryad of the woods,
Within whose bosom infant Bacchus broods,
While eagles scarce build higher than the crest
Which shadows o'er the vineyard in her breast;
The cava feast, the yam, the cocoa's root,
Which bears at once the cup, and milk, and fruit;
The bread-tree, which, without the ploughshare, yields
The unreap'd harvest of unfurrow'd fields,
And bakes its unadulterated loaves
Without a furnace in unpurchased groves,
And flings off famine from its fertile breast,
A priceless market for the gathering guest;—
These, with the luxuries of seas and woods,
The airy joys of social solitudes,
Tamed each rude wanderer to the sympathies
Of those who were more happy if less wise,
Did more than Europe's discipline had done,
And civilized civilization's son!

XII.

Of these, and there was many a willing pair,
Neuha and Torquil were not the least fair:
Both children of the isles, though distant far;
Both born beneath a sea-presiding star;
Both nourish'd amidst nature's native scenes,
Loved to the last whatever intervenes
Between us and our childhood's sympathy,
Which still reverts to what first caught the eye.
He who first met the Highland's swelling blue,
Will love each peak that shows a kindred hue,
Hail in each crag a friend's familiar face,
And clasp the mountain in his mind's embrace.
Long have I roam'd through lands which are not mine,
Adored the Alp and loved the Apennine,
Revered Parnassus, and beheld the steep
Jove's Ida and Olympus crown the deep:
But 't was not all long ages' lore, nor all
Their nature held me in their thrilling thrall;
The infant rapture still survived the boy,
And Loch-na-gar with Ida look'd o'er Troy,[1]
Mix'd Celtic memories with the Phrygian mount,
And Highland linns with Castalie's clear fount.
Forgive me, Homer's universal shade!
Forgive me, Phœbus! that my fancy stray'd;
The North and Nature taught me to adore
Your scenes sublime from those beloved before.

[1] The Consul Nero, who made the unequalled march which deceived Hannibal, and defeated Asdrubal; thereby accomplishing an achievement almost unrivalled in military annals. The first intelligence of his return, to Hannibal, was the sight of Asdrubal's head thrown into his camp. When Hannibal saw this, he exclaimed, with a sigh, that «Rome would now be the mistress of the world.» And yet to this victory of Nero's it might be owing that his imperial namesake reigned at all! But the infamy of the one has eclipsed the glory of the other. When the name of «Nero» is heard, who thinks of the Consul? But such are human things.

[1] When very young, about eight years of age, after an attack of the scarlet fever at Aberdeen, I was removed by medical advice into the Highlands. Here I passed occasionally some summers, and from this period I date my love of mountainous countries. I can never forget the effect a few years afterwards in England, of the only thing I had long seen, even in miniature, of a mountain, in the Malvern Hills. After I returned to Cheltenham, I used to watch them every afternoon at sunset, with a sensation which I cannot describe. This was boyish enough; but I was then only thirteen years of age, and it was in the holidays.

XIII.

The love, which maketh all things fond and fair,
The youth, which makes one rainbow of the air,
The dangers past, that make even man enjoy
The pause in which he ceases to destroy,
The mutual beauty, which the sternest feel
Strike to their hearts like lightning to the steel,
United the half savage and the whole,
The maid and boy, in one absorbing soul.
No more the thundering memory of the fight
Wrapp'd his wean'd bosom in its dark delight;
No more the irksome restlessness of rest
Disturb'd him like the eagle in her nest,
Whose whetted beak and far-pervading eye
Darts for a victim over all the sky;
His heart was tamed to that voluptuous state,
At once Elysian and effeminate,
Which leaves no laurels o'er the hero's urn;—
These wither when for aught save blood they burn;
Yet, when their ashes in their nook are laid,
Doth not the myrtle leave as sweet a shade?
Had Cæsar known but Cleopatra's kiss,
Rome had been free, the world had not been his.
And what have Cæsar's deeds and Cæsar's fame
Done for the earth? We feel them in our shame:
The gory sanction of his glory stains
The rust which tyrants cherish on our chains.
Though glory, nature, reason, freedom, bid
Roused millions do what single Brutus did,—
Sweep these mere mock-birds of the despot's song
From the tall bough where they have perch'd so long,—
Still are we hawk'd at by such mousing owls,
And take for falcons those ignoble fowls,
When but a word of freedom would dispel
These bugbears, as their terrors show too well.

XIV.

Rapt in the fond forgetfulness of life,
Neuha, the South Sea girl, was all a wife,
With no distracting world to call her off
From love; with no society to scoff
At the new transient flame; no babbling crowd
Of coxcombry in admiration loud,
Or with adulterous whisper to alloy
Her duty, and her glory, and her joy;
With faith and feelings naked as her form,
She stood as stands a rainbow in a storm,
Changing its hues with bright variety,
But still expanding lovelier o'er the sky,
However its arch may swell, its colours move,
The cloud-compelling harbinger of love.

XV.

Here, in this grotto of the wave-worn shore,
They pass'd the tropic's red meridian o'er;
Nor long the hours—they never paused o'er time,
Unbroken by the clock's funereal chime,
Which deals the daily pittance of our span,
And points, and mocks with iron laugh at man.
What deem'd they of the future or the past?
The present, like a tyrant, held them fast:
Their hour-glass was the sea-sand, and the tide,
Like her smooth billow, saw their moments glide;
Their clock the sun, in his unbounded tower;
They reckon'd not, whose day was but an hour;
The nightingale, their only vesper-bell,
Sung sweetly to the rose the day's farewell;[1]
The broad sun set, but not with lingering sweep,
As in the north he mellows o'er the deep,
But fiery, full, and fierce, as if he left
The world for ever, earth of light bereft,
Plunged with red forehead down along the wave,
As dives a hero headlong to his grave.
Then rose they, looking first along the skies,
And then for light into each other's eyes,
Wondering that summer show'd so brief a sun,
And asking if indeed the day were done?

XVI.

And let not this seem strange; the devotee
Lives not in earth, but in his ecstasy;
Around him days and worlds are heedless driven,—
His soul is gone before his dust to heaven.
Is love less potent? No—his path is trod,
Alike uplifted gloriously to God;
Or link'd to all we know of heaven below,
The other better self, whose joy or woe
Is more than ours; the all-absorbing flame
Which, kindled by another, grows the same,
Wrapt in one blaze; the pure, yet funeral pile,
Where gentle hearts, like Bramins, sit and smile.
How often we forget all time, when lone,
Admiring nature's universal throne,
Her woods, her wilds, her waters, the intense
Reply of *hers* to our intelligence!
Live not the stars and mountains? Are the waves
Without a spirit? Are the dropping caves
Without a feeling in their silent tears?
No, no;—they woo and clasp us to their spheres,
Dissolve this clog and clod of clay before
Its hour, and merge our soul in the great shore.
Strip off this fond and false identity!—
Who thinks of self, when gazing on the sky?
And who, though gazing lower, ever thought,
In the young moments ere the heart is taught
Time's lesson, of man's baseness or his own?
All nature is his realm, and love his throne.

XVII.

Neuha arose, and Torquil: twilight's hour
Came sad and softly to their rocky bower,
Which, kindling by degrees its dewy spars,
Echo'd their dim light to the mustering stars.
Slowly the pair, partaking nature's calm,
Sought out their cottage, built beneath the palm;
Now smiling and now silent, as the scene;
Lovely as love—the spirit! when serene.
The Ocean scarce spoke louder with his swell
Than breathes his mimic murmurer in the shell,[2]

[1] The now well-known story of the loves of the nightingale and rose need not be more than alluded to, being sufficiently familiar to the Western as to the Eastern reader.

[2] If the reader will apply to his ear the sea-shell on his chimney-piece, he will be aware of what is alluded to. If the text should appear obscure, he will find in "Gebir" the same idea better expressed in two lines.—The poem I never read, but have heard the lines quoted by a more recondite reader—who seems to be of a different opinion from the Editor of the Quarterly Review, who qualified it, in his answer to the Critical Reviewer of his Juvenal, as trash of the worst and most insane description. It is to Mr Landor, the author of Gebir, so qualified, and of some Latin poems, which vie with Martial or Catullus in obscenity, that the immaculate Mr Southey addresses his declamation against impurity!

As, far divided from his parent deep,
The sea-born infant cries and will not sleep,
Raising his little plaint in vain, to rave
For the broad bosom of his nursing wave:
The woods droop'd darkly, as inclined to rest,
The tropic bird wheel'd rock-ward to his nest,
And the blue sky spread round them like a lake
Of peace, where piety her thirst might slake.

XVIII.

But through the palm and plantain, hark, a voice!
Not such as would have been a lover's choice,
In such an hour, to break the air so still!
No dying night-breeze, harping o'er the hill,
Striking the strings of nature, rock and tree,
Those best and earliest lyres of harmony,
With echo for their chorus; nor the alarm
Of the loud war-whoop to dispel the charm;
Nor the soliloquy of the hermit owl,
Exhaling all his solitary soul,
The dim though large-eyed winged anchorite,
Who peals his dreary pæan o'er the night;—
But a loud, long, and naval whistle, shrill
As ever startled through a sea-bird's bill;
And then a pause, and then a hoarse «Hillo!
Torquil! my boy! what cheer? Ho, brother, ho!»
«Who hails?» cried Torquil, following with his eye
The sound. «Here's one,» was all the brief reply.

XIX.

But here the herald of the self-same mouth
Came breathing o'er the aromatic south,
Not like a «bed of violets» on the gale,
But such as wafts its cloud o'er grog or ale,
Borne from a short frail pipe, which yet had blown
Its gentle odours over either zone,
And puff'd where'er winds rise or waters roll,
Had wafted smoke from Portsmouth to the Pole,
Opposed its vapour as the lightning flash'd,
And reek'd, 'midst mountain-billows unabash'd,
To Æolus a constant sacrifice,
Through every change of all the varying skies.
And what was he who bore it?—I may err,
But deem him sailor or philosopher.[1]
Sublime tobacco! which from east to west
Cheers the tar's labour or the Turkman's rest;
Which on the Moslem's ottoman divides
His hours, and rivals opium and his brides;
Magnificent in Stamboul, but less grand,
Though not less loved, in Wapping or the Strand;
Divine in hookas, glorious in a pipe,
When tipp'd with amber, mellow, rich, and ripe;
Like other charmers, wooing the caress
More dazzlingly when daring in full dress;
Yet thy true lovers more admire by far
Thy naked beauties—Give me a cigar!

XX.

Through the approaching darkness of the wood
A human figure broke the solitude,
Fantastically, it may be, array'd,
A seaman in a savage masquerade;
Such as appears to rise out from the deep,
When o'er the Line the merry vessels sweep,
And the rough Saturnalia of the Tar
Flock o'er the deck, in Neptune's borrow'd car;[1]
And, pleased, the God of Ocean sees his name
Revive once more, though but in mimic game
Of his true sons, who riot in a breeze
Undreamt of in his native Cyclades.
Still the old god delights, from out the main,
To snatch some glimpses of his ancient reign.
Our sailor's jacket, though in ragged trim,
His constant pipe, which never yet burn'd dim,
His foremast air, and somewhat rolling gait,
Like his dear vessel, spoke his former state;
But then a sort of kerchief round his head,
Not over tightly bound, or nicely spread;
And 'stead of trowsers (ah! too early torn!
For even the mildest woods will have their thorn)
A curious sort of somewhat scanty mat
Now served for inexpressibles and hat;
His naked feet and neck, and sunburnt face,
Perchance might suit alike with either race.
His arms were all his own, our Europe's growth,
Which two worlds bless for civilizing both;
The musket swung behind his shoulders, broad
And somewhat stoop'd by his marine abode,
But brawny as the boar's; and hung beneath,
His cutlass droop'd, unconscious of a sheath,
Or lost or worn away; his pistols were
Link'd to his belt, a matrimonial pair—
(Let not this metaphor appear a scoff,
Though one miss'd fire, the other would go off);
These, with a bayonet, not so free from rust
As when the arm-chest held its brighter trust,
Completed his accoutrements, as night
Survey'd him in his garb heteroclite.

XXI.

«What cheer, Ben Bunting?» cried (when in full view
Our new acquaintance) Torquil; «Aught of new?»
«Ey, ey,» quoth Ben, «not new, but news enow;
A strange sail in the offing.»—«Sail! and how?
What! could you make her out? It cannot be;
I've seen no rag of canvas on the sea.»
«Belike,» said Ben, «you might not from the bay,
But from the bluff-head, where I watch'd to-day,
I saw her in the doldrums; for the wind
Was light and baffling.»—«When the sun declined
Where lay she? had she anchor'd?»—«No, but still
She bore down on us, till the wind grew still.»
«Her flag?»—«I had no glass; but fore and aft,
Egad, she seem'd a wicked-looking craft.»
«Arm'd?»—«I expect so;—sent on the look-out;—
'T is time, belike, to put our helm about.»
«About?—Whate'er may have us now in chase,
We'll make no running fight, for that were base;
We will die at our quarters, like true men.»
«Ey, ey; for that, 'tis all the same to Ben.»
«Does Christian know this?»—«Ay; he has piped all hands
To quarters. They are furbishing the stands
Of arms; and we have got some guns to bear,
And scaled them. You are wanted.»—«That's but fair;
And if it were not, mine is not the soul
To leave my comrades helpless on the shoal.

[1] Hobbes, the father of Locke's and other philosophy, was an inveterate smoker,—even to pipes beyond computation.

[1] This rough but jovial ceremony, used in crossing the Line, has been so often and so well described, that it need not be more than alluded to.

My Neuha! ah! and must my fate pursue
Not me alone, but one so sweet and true?
But whatsoe'er betide, ah, Neuha! now
Unman me not; the hour will not allow
A tear; I 'm thine, whatever intervenes!»
«Right,» quoth Ben, «that will do for the marines.» [1]

CANTO III.

I.

The fight was o'er; the flashing through the gloom,
Which robes the cannon as he wings a tomb,
Had ceased; and sulphury vapours upward driven
Had left the earth, and but polluted heaven:
The rattling roar which rung in every volley
Had left the echoes to their melancholy;
No more they shriek'd their horror, boom for boom;
The strife was done, the vanquish'd had their doom;
The mutineers were crush'd, dispersed, or ta'en,
Or lived to deem the happiest were the slain.
Few, few escaped, and these were hunted o'er
The isle they loved beyond their native shore.
No further home was their's, it seem'd, on earth,
Once renegades to that which gave them birth;
Track'd like wild beasts, like them they sought the wild;
As to a mother's bosom flies the child;
But vainly wolves and lions seek their den,
And still more vainly, men escape from men.

II.

Beneath a rock whose jutting base protrudes
Far over ocean in his fiercest moods,
When scaling his enormous crag, the wave
Is hurl'd down headlong like the foremost brave,
And falls back on the foaming crowd behind,
Which fight beneath the banners of the wind,
But now at rest, a little remnant drew
Together, bleeding, thirsty, faint, and few;
But still their weapons in their hands, and still
With something of the pride of former will,
As men not all unused to meditate,
And strive much more than wonder at their fate.
Their present lot was what they had foreseen,
And dared as what was likely to have been;
Yet still the lingering hope, which deem'd their lot
Not pardon'd, but unsought for or forgot,
Or trusted that, if sought, their distant caves
Might still be miss'd amidst the world of waves,
Had wean'd their thoughts in part from what they saw
And felt—the vengeance of their country's law.
Their sea-green isle, their guilt-won paradise,
No more could shield their virtue or their vice:
Their better feelings, if such were, were thrown
Back on themselves,—their sins remain'd alone.
Proscribed even in their second country, they
Were lost; in vain the world before them lay;
All outlets seem'd secured. Their new allies
Had fought and bled in mutual sacrifice;
But what avail'd the club and spear and arm
Of Hercules, against the sulphury charm,
The magic of the thunder, which destroy'd
The warrior ere his strength could be employ'd?
Dug, like a spreading pestilence, the grave
No less of human bravery than the brave![1]
Their own scant numbers acted all the few
Against the many oft will dare and do;
But though the choice seems native to die free,
Even Greece can boast but one Thermopylæ,
Till *now*, when she has forged her broken chain
Back to a sword, and dies and lives again!

III.

Beside the jutting rock the few appear'd,
Like the last remnant of the red-deer's herd;
Their eyes were feverish, and their aspect worn,
But still the hunter's blood was on their horn.
A little stream came tumbling from the height,
And straggling into ocean as it might,
Its bounding crystal frolick'd in the ray,
And gush'd from cleft to crag with saltless spray;
Close on the wild, wide ocean, yet as pure
And fresh as innocence, and more secure,
Its silver torrent glitter'd o'er the deep,
As the shy chamois' eye o'erlooks the steep,
While far below the vast and sullen swell
Of ocean's Alpine azure rose and fell.
To this young spring they rush'd,—all feelings first
Absorb'd in passion's and in nature's thirst,—
Drank as they do who drink their last, and threw
Their arms aside to revel in its dew;
Cool'd their scorch'd throats, and wash'd the gory stains
From wounds whose only bandage might be chains;
Then, when their drought was quench'd, look'd sadly round,
As wondering how so many still were found
Alive and fetterless:—but silent all,
Each sought his fellow's eyes as if to call
On him for language, which his lips denied,
As though their voices with their cause had died.

IV.

Stern, and aloof a little from the rest,
Stood Christian, with his arms across his chest.
The ruddy, reckless, dauntless hue, once spread
Along his cheek, was livid now as lead;
His light-brown locks, so graceful in their flow,
Now rose like startled vipers o'er his brow.
Still as a statue, with his lips compress'd
To stifle even the breath within his breast,
Fast by the rock, all menacing but mute,
He stood; and, save a slight beat of his foot,
Which deepen'd now and then the sandy dint
Beneath his heel, his form seem'd turn'd to flint.
Some paces further Torquil lean'd his head
Against a bank, and spoke not, but he bled,—
Not mortally—his worst wound was within:
His brow was pale, his blue eyes sunken in,
And blood-drops sprinkled o'er his yellow hair
Show'd that his faintness came not from despair,
But nature's ebb. Beside him was another,
Rough as a bear, but willing as a brother,—

[1] «That will do for the marines, but the sailors won't believe it,» is an old saying, and one of the few fragments of former jealousies which still survive (in jest only) between these gallant services.

[1] Archidamus, King of Sparta, and son of Agesilaus, when he saw a machine invented for the casting of stones and darts, exclaimed that it was the «grave of valour.» The same story has been told of some knights on the first application of gunpowder; but the original anecdote is in Plutarch.

Ben Bunting, who essay'd to wash, and wipe,
And bind his wound—then calmly lit his pipe—
A trophy which survived an hundred fights,
A beacon which had cheer'd ten thousand nights.
The fourth and last of this deserted group
Walk'd up and down—at times would stand, then stoop
To pick a pebble up—then let it drop—
Then hurry as in haste—then quickly stop—
Then cast his eyes on his companions—then
Half whistle half a tune, and pause again—
And then his former movements would redouble,
With something between carelessness and trouble.
This is a long description, but applies
To scarce five minutes past before the eyes;
But yet *what* minutes! Moments like to these
Rend men's lives into immortalities.

V.

At length Jack Skyscrape, a mercurial man,
Who flutter'd over all things like a fan,
More brave than firm, and more disposed to dare
And die at once than wrestle with despair,
Exclaim'd «G—d damn!» Those syllables intense,—
Nucleus of England's native eloquence,
As the Turk's «Allah!» or the Roman's more
Pagan «Proh Jupiter!» was wont of yore
To give their first impressions such a vent,
By way of echo to embarrassment.
Jack was embarrass'd,—never hero more,
And as he knew not what to say, he swore:
Nor swore in vain; the long congenial sound
Revived Ben Bunting from his pipe profound;
He drew it from his mouth, and look'd full wise,
But merely added to the oath, his *eyes;*
Thus rendering the imperfect phrase complete—
A peroration I need not repeat.

VI.

But Christian, of an higher order, stood
Like an extinct volcano in his mood;
Silent, and sad, and savage,—with the trace
Of passion reeking from his clouded face;
Till lifting up again his sombre eye,
It glanced on Torquil who lean'd faintly by.
«And is it thus?» he cried, «unhappy boy!
And thee too, *thee*—my madness must destroy.»
He said, and strode to where young Torquil stood,
Yet dabbled with his lately flowing blood;
Seized his hand wistfully, but did not press,
And shrunk as fearful of his own caress;
Enquired into his state; and when he heard
The wound was slighter than he deem'd or fear'd,
A moment's brightness pass'd along his brow,
As much as such a moment would allow.
«Yes,» he exclaim'd, «we are taken in the toil,
But not a coward or a common spoil;
Dearly they have bought us—dearly still may buy,—
And I must fall; but have you strength to fly?
'T would be some comfort still, could you survive;
Our dwindled band is now too few to strive,
Oh! for a sole canoe! though but a shell,
To bear you hence to where a hope may dwell!
For me, my lot is what I sought; to be,
In life or death, the fearless and the free.»

VII.

Even as he spoke, around the promontory,
Which nodded o'er the billows high and hoary,
A dark speck dotted ocean: on it flew,
Like to the shadow of a roused sea-mew:
Onward it came—and, lo! a second follow'd—
Now seen—now hid—where ocean's vale was hollow'd;
And near, and nearer, till their dusky crew
Presented well-known aspects to the view,
Till on the surf their skimming paddles play,
Buoyant as wings, and flitting through the spray;—
Now perching on the wave's high curl, and now
Dash'd downward in the thundering foam below,
Which flings it broad and boiling, sheet on sheet,
And slings its high flakes, shiver'd into sleet:
But floating still through surf and swell, drew nigh
The barks, like small birds through a lowering sky.
Their art seem'd nature—such the skill to sweep
The wave, of these born playmates of the deep.

VIII.

And who the first that, springing on the strand,
Leap'd like a Nereid from her shell to land,
With dark but brilliant skin, and dewy eye
Shining with love, and hope, and constancy?
Neuha,—the fond, the faithful, the adored,
Her heart on Torquil's like a torrent pour'd;
And smiled, and wept, and near, and nearer clasp'd,
As if to be assured 't was *him* she grasp'd;
Shudder'd to see his yet warm wound, and then,
To find it trivial, smiled and wept again.
She was a warrior's daughter, and could bear
Such sights, and feel, and mourn, but not despair.
Her lover lived,—nor foes nor fears could blight
That full-blown moment in its all delight:
Joy trickled in her tears, joy fill'd the sob
That rock'd her heart till almost HEARD to throb;
And paradise was breathing in the sigh
Of nature's child in nature's ecstasy.

IX.

The sterner spirits who beheld that meeting
Were not unmov'd; who are, when hearts are greeting?
Even Christian gazed upon the maid and boy
With tearless eye, but yet a gloomy joy
Mix'd with those bitter thoughts the soul arrays
In hopeless visions of our better days,
When all 's gone—to the rainbow's latest ray.
«And but for me!» he said, and turn'd away;
Then gazed upon the pair, as in his den
A lion looks upon his cubs again;
And then relapsed into his sullen guise,
As heedless of his further destinies.

X.

But brief their time for good or evil thought;
The billows round the promontory brought
The plash of hostile oars—Alas! who made
That sound a dread? All round them seem'd array'd
Against them, save the bride of Toobonai:
She, as she caught the first glimpse o'er the bay
Of the arm'd boats which hurried to complete
The remnant's ruin with their flying feet,
Beckon'd the natives round her to their prows,
Embark'd their guests, and launch'd their light canoes;

In one placed Christian and his comrades twain;
But she and Torquil must not part again.
She fix'd him in her own—Away! away!
They clear the breakers, dart along the bay,
And towards a group of islets, such as bear
The sea-bird's nest and seal's surf-hollow'd lair,
They skim the blue tops of the billows; fast
They flew, and fast their fierce pursuers chased.
They gain upon them—now they lose again,—
Again make way and menace o'er the main;
And now the two canoes in chase divide,
And follow different courses o'er the tide,
To baffle the pursuit—Away! away!
As life is on each paddle's flight to-day,
And more than life or lives to Neuha: love
Freights the frail bark and urges to the cove—
And now the refuge and the foe are nigh—
Yet, yet a moment!—Fly, thou light ark, fly!

CANTO IV.

I.

White as a white sail on a dusky sea,
When half the horizon's clouded and half free,
Fluttering between the dun wave and the sky,
Is hope's last gleam in man's extremity.
Her anchor parts; but still her snowy sail
Attracts our eye amidst the rudest gale:
Though every wave she climbs divides us more,
The heart still follows from the loneliest shore.

II.

Not distant from the isle of Toobonai,
A black rock rears its bosom o'er the spray,
The haunt of birds, a desart to mankind,
Where the rough seal reposes from the wind,
And sleeps unwieldy in his cavern dun,
Or gambols with huge frolic in the sun;
There shrilly to the passing oar is heard
The startled echo of the ocean bird,
Who rears on its bare breast her callow brood,
The feather'd fishers of the solitude.
A narrow segment of the yellow sand
On one side forms the outline of a strand;
Here the young turtle, crawling from his shell,
Steals to the deep wherein his parents dwell;
Chipp'd by the beam, a nursling of the day,
But hatch'd for ocean by the fostering ray;
The rest was one bleak precipice, as e'er
Gave mariners a shelter and despair,
A spot to make the saved regret the deck
Which late went down, and envy the lost wreck.
Such was the stern asylum Neuha chose
To shield her lover from his following foes;
But all its secret was not told; she knew
In this a treasure hidden from the view.

III.

Ere the canoes divided, near the spot,
The men that mann'd what held her Torquil's lot,
By her command removed, to strengthen more
The skiff which wafted Christian from the shore.
This he would have opposed: but with a smile
She pointed calmly to the craggy isle,
And bade him «speed and prosper.» *She* would take
The rest upon herself for Torquil's sake.
They parted with this added aid; afar
The proa darted like a shooting star,
And gain'd on the pursuers, who now steer'd
Right on the rock which she and Torquil near'd.
They pull'd; her arm, though delicate, was free
And firm as ever grappled with the sea,
And yielded scarce to Torquil's manlier strength.
The prow now almost lay within its length
Of the crag's steep, inexorable face,
With nought but soundless waters for its base;
Within an hundred boats' length was the foe,
And now what refuge but their frail canoe?
This Torquil ask'd with half upbraiding eye,
Which said—«Has Neuha brought me here to die?
Is this a place of safety, or a grave,
And yon huge rock the tombstone of the wave?»

IV.

They rested on their paddles, and uprose
Neuha, and, pointing to the approaching foes,
Cried, «Torquil, follow me, and fearless follow!»
Then plunged at once into the ocean's hollow.
There was no time to pause—the foes were near—
Chains in his eye and menace in his ear:
With vigour they pull'd on, and as they came,
Hail'd him to yield, and by his forfeit name.
Headlong he leap'd—to him the swimmer's skill
Was native, and now all his hope from ill;
But how or where? He dived, and rose no more;
The boat's crew look'd amazed o'er sea and shore.
There was no landing on that precipice,
Steep, harsh, and slippery as a berg of ice.
They watch'd awhile to see him float again,
But not a trace rebubbled from the main:
The wave roll'd on, no ripple on its face,
Since their first plunge, recall'd a single trace;
The little whirl which eddied, and slight foam,
That whiten'd o'er what seem'd their latest home,
White as a sepulchre above the pair,
Who left no marble (mournful as an heir),
The quiet proa, wavering o'er the tide,
Was all that told of Torquil and his bride;
And but for this alone the whole might seem
The vanish'd phantom of a seaman's dream.
They paused and search'd in vain, then pull'd away,
Even superstition now forbade their stay.
Some said he had not plunged into the wave,
But vanish'd like a corpse-light from a grave;
Others, that something supernatural
Glared in his figure, more than mortal tall;
While all agreed, that in his cheek and eye
There was the dead hue of eternity.
Still as their oars receded from the crag,
Round every weed a moment would they lag,
Expectant of some token of their prey;
But no—he had melted from them like the spray.

V.

And where was he, the pilgrim of the deep,
Following the Nereid? Had they ceased to weep
For ever? or, received in coral caves,
Wrung life and pity from the softening waves?
Did they with ocean's hidden sovereigns dwell,
And sound with mermen the fantastic shell?

Did Neuha with the mermaids comb her hair,
Flowing o'er ocean as it stream'd in air?
Or had they perish'd, and in silence slept
Beneath the gulph wherein they boldly leap'd?

VI.

Young Neuha plunged into the deep, and he
Follow'd: her track beneath her native sea
Was as a native's of the element,
So smoothly, bravely, brilliantly she went,
Leaving a streak of light behind her heel,
Which struck and flash'd like an amphibious steel.
Closely, and scarcely less expert to trace
The depths where divers hold the pearl in chase,
Torquil, the nursling of the northern seas,
Pursued her liquid steps with art and ease.
Deep—deeper for an instant Neuha led
The way—then upward soar'd—and, as she spread
Her arms, and flung the foam from off her locks,
Laugh'd, and the sound was answer'd by the rocks.
They had gain'd a central realm of earth again,
But look'd for tree, and field, and sky, in vain.
Around she pointed to a spacious cave,
Whose only portal was the keyless wave,[1]
(A hollow archway by the sun unseen,
Save through the billows' glassy veil of green,
In some transparent ocean holiday,
When all the finny people are at play),
Wiped with her hair the brine from Torquil's eyes,
And clapp'd her hands with joy at his surprise;
Led him to where the rock appear'd to jut
And form a something like a Triton's hut;
For all was darkness for a space, till day
Through clefts above let in a sober'd ray;
As in some old cathedral's glimmering aisle
The dusty monuments from light recoil,
Thus sadly in their refuge submarine
The vault drew half her shadow from the scene.

VII.

Forth from her bosom the young savage drew
A pine torch, strongly girded with gnatoo;
A plantain leaf o'er all, the more to keep
Its latent sparkle from the sapping deep.
This mantle kept it dry; then from a nook
Of the same plantain leaf, a flint she took,
A few shrunk wither'd twigs, and from the blade
Of Torquil's knife struck fire, and thus array'd
The grot with torchlight. Wide it was and high,
And show'd a self-born Gothic canopy;
The arch uprear'd by nature's architect,
The architrave some earthquake might erect;
The buttress from some mountain's bosom hurl'd,
When the poles crash'd and water was the world;
Or harden'd from some earth-absorbing fire
While yet the globe reek'd from its funeral pyre;
The fretted pinnacle, the aisle, the nave,[2]
Were there, all scoop'd by Darkness from her cave.

There, with a little tinge of phantasy,
Fantastic faces moped and mow'd on high,
And then a mitre or a shrine would fix
The eye upon its seeming crucifix.
Thus Nature play'd with the Stalactites,
And built herself a chapel of the seas.

VIII.

And Neuha took her Torquil by the hand,
And waved along the vault her kindled brand,
And led him into each recess, and show'd
The secret places of their new abode.
Nor these alone, for all had been prepared
Before, to soothe the lover's lot she shared;
The mat for rest; for dress the fresh gnatoo,
And sandal-oil to fence against the dew;
For food the cocoa-nut, the yam, the bread
Born of the fruit; for board the plantain spread
With its broad leaf, or turtle-shell which bore
A banquet in the flesh it cover'd o'er;
The gourd with water recent from the rill,
The ripe banana from the mellow hill:
A pine-torch pile to keep undying light,
And she herself, as beautiful as night,
To fling her shadowy spirit o'er the scene,
And make their subterranean world serene.
She had foreseen, since first the stranger's sail
Drew to their isle, that force or flight might fail,
And form'd a refuge of the rocky den
For Torquil's safety from his countrymen.
Each dawn had wafted there her light canoe,
Laden with all the golden fruits that grew;
Each eve had seen her gliding through the hour
With all could cheer or deck their sparry bower;
And now she spread her little store with smiles,
The happiest daughter of the loving isles.

IX.

She, as he gazed with grateful wonder, press'd
Her shelter'd love to her impassion'd breast;
And, suited to her soft caresses, told
An elden tale of love,—for love is old,
Old as eternity, but not outworn
With each new being born or to be born:[1]
How a young Chief, a thousand moons ago,
Diving for turtle in the depths below,
Had risen, in tracking fast his ocean prey,
Into the cave which round and o'er them lay;
How, in some desperate feud of after time,
He shelter'd there a daughter of the clime,
A foe beloved, and offspring of a foe,
Saved by his tribe but for a captive's woe;
How, when the storm of war was still'd, he led
His island clan to where the waters spread
Their deep green shadow o'er the rocky door,
Then dived—it seem'd as if to rise no more:
His wondering mates, amazed within their bark,
Or deem'd him mad, or prey to the blue shark;

[1] Of this cave (which is no fiction) the original will be found in the 9th chapter of Mariner's *Account of the Tonga Islands*. I have taken the poetical liberty to transplant it to Toobonai, the last island where any distinct account is left of Christian and his comrades.

[2] This may seem too minute for the general outline (in Mariner's *Account*) from which it is taken. But few men have travelled without seeing something of the kind—on *land*, that is. Without adverting to Ellora, in Mungo Park's last journal (if my memory do not err, for there are eight years since I read the book) he mentions having met with a rock or mountain so exactly resembling a Gothic cathedral, that only minute inspection could convince him that it was a work of nature.

[1] The reader will recollect the epigram of the Greek Anthology, or its translation into most of the modern languages:—

"Whoe'er thou art, thy master see,
He was, or is, or is to be."

Row'd round in sorrow the sea-girded rock,
Then paused upon their paddles from the shock,
When, fresh and springing from the deep, they saw
A goddess rise—so deem'd they in their awe;
And their companion, glorious by her side,
Proud and exulting in his mermaid bride;
And how, when undeceived, the pair they bore
With sounding conchs and joyous shouts to shore;
How they had gladly lived and calmly died,
And why not also Torquil and his bride?
Not mine to tell the rapturous caress
Which follow'd wildly in that wild recess
This tale; enough that all within that cave
Was love, though buried strong as in the grave
Where Abelard, through twenty years of death,
When Eloisa's form was lower'd beneath
Their nuptial vault, his arms outstretch'd, and press'd
The kindling ashes to his kindled breast.[1]
The waves without sang round their couch, their roar
As much unheeded as if life were o'er;
Within, their hearts made all their harmony,
Love's broken murmur and more broken sigh.

X.

And they, the cause and sharers of the shock,
Which left them exiles of the hollow rock,
Where were they? O'er the sea for life they plied,
To seek from heaven the shelter men denied.
Another course had been their choice—but where?
The wave which bore them still, their foes would bear,
Who, disappointed of their former chase,
In search of Christian now renew'd their race.
Eager with anger, their strong arms made way,
Like vultures baffled of their previous prey.
They gain'd upon them, all whose safety lay
In some bleak crag or deeply-hidden bay:
No further chance or choice remain'd; and right
For the first further rock which met their sight
They steer'd, to take their latest view of land,
And yield as victims, or die sword in hand;
Dismiss'd the natives and their shallop, who
Would still have battled for that scanty crew;
But Christian bade them seek their shore again,
Nor add a sacrifice which were in vain;
For what were simple bow and savage spear
Against the arms which must be wielded here?

XI.

They landed on a wild but narrow scene,
Where few but nature's footsteps yet had been;
Prepared their arms, and with that gloomy eye,
Stern and sustain'd, of man's extremity,
When hope is gone, nor glory's self remains
To cheer resistance against death or chains,—
They stood, the three, as the three hundred stood
Who dyed Thermopylæ with holy blood.
But, ah! how different! 't is the *cause* makes all,
Degrades or hallows courage in its fall.
O'er them no fame, eternal and intense,
Blazed through the clouds of death and beckon'd hence;
No grateful country, smiling through her tears,
Begun the praises of a thousand years;
No nation's eyes would on their tomb be bent,
No heroes envy them their monument;
However boldly their warm blood was spilt,
Their life was shame, their epitaph was guilt.
And this they knew and felt, at least the one,
The leader of the band he had undone;
Who, born perchance for better things, had set
His life upon a cast which linger'd yet:
But now the die was to be thrown, and all
The chances were in favour of his fall:
And such a fall! But still he faced the shock,
Obdurate as a portion of the rock
Whereon he stood, and fix'd his levell'd gun,
Dark as a sullen cloud before the sun.

XII.

The boat drew nigh, well arm'd, and firm the crew
To act whatever duty bade them do;
Careless of danger, as the onward wind
Is of the leaves it strews, nor looks behind:
And yet perhaps they rather wish'd to go
Against a nation's than a native foe,
And felt that this poor victim of self-will,
Briton no more, had once been Britain's still.
They hail'd him to surrender—no reply;
Their arms were poised, and glitter'd in the sky.
They hail'd again—no answer; yet once more
They offer'd quarter louder than before.
The echoes only, from the rock's rebound,
Took their last farewell of the dying sound.
Then flash'd the flint, and blazed the volleying flame,
And the smoke rose between them and their aim,
While the rock rattled with the bullets' knell,
Which peal'd in vain, and flatten'd as they fell;
Then flew the only answer to be given
By those who had lost all hope in earth or heaven.
After the first fierce peal, as they pull'd nigher,
They heard the voice of Christian shout, «Now fire!»
And ere the word upon the echo died,
Two fell; the rest assail'd the rock's rough side,
And, furious at the madness of their foes,
Disdain'd all further efforts, save to close.
But steep the crag, and all without a path,
Each step opposed a bastion to their wrath;
While, placed 'midst clefts the least accessible,
Which Christian's eye was train'd to mark full well,
The three maintain'd a strife which must not yield,
In spots where eagles might have chosen to build.
Their every shot told; while the assailant fell,
Dash'd on the shingles like the limpet shell;
But still enough survived, and mounted still,
Scattering their numbers here and there, until
Surrounded and commanded, though not nigh
Enough for seizure, near enough to die,
The desperate trio held aloof their fate
But by a thread, like sharks who have gorged the bait;
Yet to the very last they battled well,
And not a groan inform'd their foes *who* fell.
Christian died last—twice wounded; and once more
Mercy was offer'd when they saw his gore;
Too late for life, but not too late to die,
With though a hostile hand to close his eye.
A limb was broken, and he droop'd along
The crag, as doth a falcon reft of young.
The sound revived him, or appear'd to wake
Some passion which a weakly gesture spake;
He beckon'd to the foremost who drew nigh,
But, as they near'd, he rear'd his weapon high—

[1] The tradition is attached to the story of Eloisa, that when her body was lowered into the grave of Abelard (who had been buried twenty years) he opened his arms to receive her.

His last ball had been aim'd, but from his breast
He tore the topmost button of his vest, [1]
Down the tube dash'd it, levell'd, fired, and smiled
As his foe fell; then, like a serpent, coil'd
His wounded, weary form, to where the steep
Look'd desperate as himself along the deep;
Cast one glance back, and clench'd his hand, and shook
His last rage 'gainst the earth which he forsook;
Then plunged: the rock below received like glass
His body crush'd into one gory mass,
With scarce a shred to tell of human form,
Or fragment for the sea-bird or the worm;
A fair-hair'd scalp, besmear'd with blood and weeds,
Yet reek'd, the remnant of himself and deeds;
Some splinters of his weapons (to the last,
As long as hand could hold, he held them fast)
Yet glitter'd, but at distance—hurl'd away
To rust beneath the dew and dashing spray.
The rest was nothing—save a life mis-spent,
And soul—but who shall answer where it went?
'T is ours to bear, not judge the dead; and they
Who doom to hell, themselves are on the way,
Unless these bullies of eternal pains
Are pardon'd their bad hearts for their worse brains.

XIII.

The deed was over! All were gone or ta'en,
The fugitive, the captive, or the slain.
Chain'd on the deck, where once, a gallant crew,
They stood with honour, were the wretched few
Survivors of the skirmish on the isle;
But the last rock left no surviving spoil.
Cold lay they where they fell, and weltering,
While o'er them flapp'd the sea-birds' dewy wing,
Now wheeling nearer from the neighbouring surge,
And screaming high their harsh and hungry dirge:
But calm and careless heaved the wave below,
Eternal with unsympathetic flow;
Far o'er its face the dolphins sported on,
And sprung the flying-fish against the sun,
Till its dried wing relapsed from its brief height,
To gather moisture for another flight.

XIV.

'T was morn; and Neuha, who by dawn of day
Swam smoothly forth to catch the rising ray,
And watch if aught approach'd the amphibious lair
Where lay her lover, saw a sail in air:
It flapp'd, it filled, and to the growing gale
Bent its broad arch: her breath began to fail
With fluttering fear, her heart beat thick and high,
While yet a doubt sprung where its course might lie:
But no! it came not; fast and far away
The shadow lessen'd as it clear'd the bay.

She gazed, and flung the sea-foam from her eyes,
To watch as for a rainbow in the skies.
On the horizon verged the distant deck,
Diminish'd, dwindled to a very speck—
Then vanish'd. All was ocean, all was joy!
Down plunged she through the cave to rouse her boy;
Told all she had seen, and all she hoped, and all
That happy love could augur or recal;
Sprung forth again, with Torquil following free
His bounding Nereid over the broad sea;
Swam round the rock, to where a shallow cleft
Hid the canoe that Neuha there had left
Drifting along the tide, without an oar,
That eve the strangers chased them from the shore;
But when these vanish'd, she pursued her prow,
Regain'd, and urged to where they found it now:
Nor ever did more love and joy embark,
Than now was wafted in that slender ark.

XV.

Again their own shore rises on the view,
No more polluted with a hostile hue;
No sullen ship lay bristling o'er the foam,
A floating dungeon:—all was hope and home!
A thousand proas darted o'er the bay,
With sounding shells, and heralded their way;
The chiefs came down, around the people pour'd,
And welcomed Torquil as a son restored;
The women throng'd, embracing and embraced
By Neuha, asking where they had been chased,
And how escaped? The tale was told; and then
One acclamation rent the sky again;
And from that hour a new tradition gave
Their sanctuary the name of «Neuha's cave.»
An hundred fires, far flickering from the height,
Blazed o'er the general revel of the night,
The feast in honour of the guest, return'd
To peace and pleasure, perilously earn'd;
A night succeeded by such happy days
As only the yet infant world displays.

[1] In Thibault's *Account of Frederic II. of Prussia*, there is a singular relation of a young Frenchman, who, with his mistress, appeared to be of some rank. He enlisted and deserted at Seweidnitz; and, after a desperate resistance, was retaken, having killed an officer, who attempted to seize him after he was wounded, by the discharge of his musket loaded with a *button* of his uniform. Some circumstances on his court-martial raised a great interest amongst his judges, who wished to discover his real situation in life, which he offered to disclose, but to the *King* only, to whom he requested permission to write. This was refused, and Frederic was filled with the greatest indignation, from baffled curiosity or some other motive, when he understood that his request had been denied.—See Thibault's work, vol. ii.—(I quote from memory.)

APPENDIX.

EXTRACT FROM THE VOYAGE BY CAPTAIN BLIGH.

On the 27th of December it blew a severe storm of wind from the eastward, in the course of which we suffered greatly. One sea broke away the spare yards and spars out of the starboard main-chains; another broke into the ship and stove all the boats. Several casks of beer that had been lashed on deck broke loose, and were washed overboard; and it was not without great risk and difficulty that we were able to secure the boats from being washed away entirely. A great quantity of our bread was also damaged and rendered useless, for the sea had stove in our stern, and filled the cabin with water.

On the 5th of January, 1788, we saw the island of Teneriffe about twelve leagues distant, and next day, being Sunday, came to an anchor in the road of Santa Cruz. There we took in the necessary supplies, and, having finished our business, sailed on the 10th.

I now divided the people into three watches, and gave the charge of the third watch to Mr Fletcher Christian,

one of the mates. I have always considered this a desirable regulation when circumstances will admit of it, and I am persuaded that unbroken rest not only contributes much towards the health of the ship's company, but enables them more readily to exert themselves in cases of sudden emergency.

As I wished to proceed to Otaheite without stopping, I reduced the allowance of bread to two-thirds, and caused the water for drinking to be filtered through drip-stones, bought at Teneriffe for that purpose. I now acquainted the ship's company of the object of the voyage, and gave assurances of certain promotion to every one whose endeavours should merit it.

On Tuesday the 26th of February, being in South latitude 29° 38′, and 44° 44′, west longitude, we bent new sails, and made other necessary preparations for encountering the weather that was to be expected in a high latitude. Our distance from the coast of Brazil was about 100 leagues.

On the forenoon of Sunday, the 2d of March, after seeing that every person was clean, divine service was performed, according to my usual custom on this day: I gave to Mr Fletcher Christian, whom I had before directed to take charge of the third watch, a written order to act as lieutenant.

The change of temperature soon began to be sensibly felt, and, that the people might not suffer from their own negligence, I supplied them with thicker clothing, as better suited to the climate. A great number of whales of an immense size, with two spoutholes on the back of the head, were seen on the 11th.

On a complaint made to me by the master, I found it necessary to punish Matthew Quintal, one of the seamen, with two dozen of lashes, for insolence and mutinous behaviour, which was the first time that there was any occasion for punishment on board.

We were off Cape St Diego, the eastern part of the Terre de Fuego, and, the wind being unfavourable, I thought it more advisable to go round to the eastward of Staten-land than to attempt passing through Straits le Maire. We passed New Year's Harbour and Cape St John, and on Monday the 31st were in latitude 60° 1′ south. But the wind became variable, and we had bad weather.

Storms, attended with a great sea, prevailed until the 12th of April. The ship began to leak, and required pumping every hour, which was no more than we had reason to expect from such a continuance of gales of wind and high seas. The decks also became so leaky that it was necessary to allot the great cabin, of which I made little use except in fine weather, to those people who had not births to hang their hammocks in, and by this means the space between decks was less crowded.

With all this bad weather, we had the additional mortification to find, at the end of every day, that we were losing ground; for, notwithstanding our utmost exertions, and keeping on the most advantageous tacks, we did little better than drift before the wind. On Tuesday the 22d of April, we had eight down on the sick list, and the rest of the people, though in good health, were greatly fatigued; but I saw, with much concern, that it was impossible to make a passage this way to the Society Islands, for we had now been thirty days in a tempestuous ocean. Thus the season was too far advanced for us to expect better weather to enable us to double Cape Horn; and, from these and other considerations, I ordered the helm to be put a-weather, and bore away for the Cape of Good Hope, to the great joy of every one on board.

We came to an anchor on Friday the 23d of May, in Simon's Bay, at the Cape, after a tolerable run. The ship required complete caulking, for she had become so leaky, that we were obliged to pump hourly in our passage from Cape Horn. The sails and rigging also required repair, and, on examining the provisions, a considerable quantity was found damaged.

Having remained thirty-eight days at this place, and my people having received all the advantage that could be derived from refreshments of every kind that could be met with, we sailed on the 1st of July.

A gale of wind blew on the 20th, with a high sea; it increased after noon with such violence, that the ship was driven almost forecastle under before we could get the sails clewed up. The lower yards were lowered, and the top-gallant-mast got down upon deck, which relieved her much. We lay to all night, and in the morning bore away under a reefed foresail. The sea still running high, in the afternoon it became very unsafe to stand on; we therefore lay to all night, without any accident, excepting that a man at the steerage was thrown over the wheel and much bruised. Towards noon the violence of the storm abated, and we again bore away under the reefed foresail.

In a few days we passed the Island of St Paul, where there is good fresh water, as I was informed by a Dutch captain, and also a hot spring, which boils fish as completely as if done by a fire. Approaching to Van Dieman's land, we had much bad weather, with snow and hail, but nothing was seen to indicate our vicinity, on the 13th of August, except a seal, which appeared at the distance of twenty leagues from it. We anchored in Adventure Bay on Wednesday the 20th.

In our passage hither from the Cape of Good Hope, the winds were chiefly from the westward, with very boisterous weather. The approach of strong southerly winds is announced by many birds of the albatross or peterel tribe; and the abatement of the gale, or a shift of wind to the northward, by their keeping away. The thermometer also varies five or six degrees in its height, when a change of these winds may be expected.

In the land surrounding Adventure Bay are many forest trees one hundred and fifty feet high; we saw one which measured above thirty-three feet in girth. We observed several eagles, some beautiful blue-plumaged herons, and parroquets in great variety.

The natives not appearing, we went in search of them towards Cape Frederic-Henry. Soon after, coming to a grapnel, close to the shore, for it was impossible to land, we heard their voices, like the cackling of geese, and twenty persons came out of the woods. We threw trinkets ashore tied up in parcels, which they would not open out until I made an appearance of leaving them: they then did so, and, taking the articles out, put them on their heads. On first coming in sight, they made a prodigious clattering in their speech, and held their arms over their heads. They spoke so quick that it was impossible to catch one single word they uttered. Their colour is of a dull black; their skin scarified about the breast and shoulders. One was distinguished by his body being coloured with red ochre, but all the others were painted black, with a kind of soot, so thickly laid over their faces and shoulders, that it was difficult to ascertain what they were like.

On Thursday, the 4th of September, we sailed out of Adventure Bay, steering first towards the east-south-east, and then to the northward of east, when, on the 19th, we came in sight of a cluster of small rocky islands, which I named Bounty Isles. Soon afterwards we frequently observed the sea, in the night-time, to be covered by luminous spots, caused by amazing quantities of small blubbers, or medusæ, which emit a light, like the blaze of a candle, from the strings or filaments extending from them, while the rest of the body continues perfectly dark.

We discovered the island of Otaheite on the 25th, and, before casting anchor next morning in Matavai Bay, such numbers of canoes had come off, that, after the natives ascertained we were friends, they came on board, and crowded the deck so much, that in ten minutes I could scarce find my own people. The whole distance which the ship had run, in direct and contrary courses, from the time of leaving England until reaching Otaheite, was twenty-seven thousand and eighty-six miles, which, on an average, was one hundred and eight miles each twenty-four hours.

Here we lost our surgeon on the 9th of December. Of late he had scarcely ever stirred out of the cabin, though not apprehended to be in a dangerous state. Nevertheless, appearing worse than usual in the evening, he was removed where he could obtain more air, but without any benefit, for he died in an hour afterwards. This unfortunate man drank very hard, and was so averse to exercise, that he would never be prevailed on to take half a dozen turns on deck at a time, during all the course of the voyage. He was buried on shore.

On Monday, the 5th of January, the small cutter was missed, of which I was immediately apprized. The ship's company being mustered, we found three men absent, who had carried it off. They had taken with them eight stand of arms and ammunition; but with regard to their plan, every one on board seemed to be quite ignorant. I therefore went on shore, and engaged all the chiefs to assist in recovering both the boat and the deserters. Accordingly, the former was brought back in the course of the day, by five of the natives; but the men were not taken until nearly three weeks afterwards. Learning the place where they were, in a different quarter of the island of Otaheite, I went thither in the cutter, thinking there would be no great difficulty in securing them with the assistance of the natives. However, they heard of my arrival; and when I was near a house in which they were, they came out wanting their fire-arms, and delivered themselves up. Some of the chiefs had formerly seized and bound these deserters; but had been prevailed on, by fair promises of returning peaceably to the ship, to release them. But finding an opportunity again to get possession of their arms, they set the natives at defiance.

The object of the voyage being now completed, all the bread-fruit plants, to the number of one thousand and fifteen, were got on board on Tuesday, the 31st of March. Besides these, we had collected many other plants, some of them bearing the finest fruits in the world; and valuable, from affording brilliant dyes, and for various properties besides. At sunset of the 4th of April, we made sail from Otaheite, bidding farewell to an island where for twenty-three weeks we had been treated with the utmost affection and regard, and which seemed to increase in proportion to our stay. That we were not insensible to their kindness, the succeeding circumstances sufficiently proved; for to the friendly and endearing behaviour of these people may be ascribed the motives inciting an event that effected the ruin of our expedition, which there was every reason to believe would have been attended with the most favourable issue.

Next morning we got sight of the island Huaheine; and a double canoe soon coming alongside, containing ten natives, I saw among them a young man who recollected me, and called me by my name. I had been here in the year 1780, with Captain Cook, in the Resolution. A few days after sailing from this island, the weather became squally, and a thick body of black clouds collected in the east. A water-spout was in a short time seen at no great distance from us, which appeared to great advantage from the darkness of the clouds behind it. As nearly as I could judge, the upper part was about two feet in diameter, and the lower about eight inches. Scarcely had I made these remarks, when I observed that it was rapidly advancing towards the ship. We immediately altered our course, and took in all the sails except the foresail; soon after which it passed within ten yards of the stern, with a rustling noise, but without our feeling the least effect from it being so near. It seemed to be travelling at the rate of about ten miles an hour, in the direction of the wind, and it dispersed in a quarter of an hour after passing us. It is impossible to say what injury we should have received, had it passed directly over us. Masts, I imagine, might have been carried away, but I do not apprehend that it would have endangered the loss of the ship.

Passing several islands on the way, we anchored at Annamooka, on the 23d of April; and an old lame man called Tepa, whom I had known here in 1777, and immediately recollected, came on board, along with others, from different islands in the vicinity. They were desirous to see the ship, and, on being taken below, where the bread-fruit plants were arranged, they testified great surprize. A few of these being decayed, we went on shore to procure some in their place.

The natives exhibited numerous marks of the peculiar mourning which they express on losing their relatives; such as bloody temples, their heads being deprived of most of the hair, and, what was worse, almost the whole of them had lost some of their fingers. Several fine boys, not above six years old, had lost both their little fingers; and several of the men, besides these, had parted with the middle finger of the right hand.

The chiefs went off with me to dinner, and we carried on a brisk trade for yams; we also got plantains and bread-fruit. But the yams were in great abundance, and very fine and large. One of them weighed above forty-five pounds. Sailing canoes came, some of which contained not less than ninety passengers. Such a number of them gradually arrived from different islands, that it was impossible to get any thing done, the multitude became so great, and there was no chief of sufficient authority to command the whole. I therefore ordered a watering party, then employed, to come on board, and sailed on Sunday, the 26th of April.

We kept near the island of Kotoo all the afternoon of Monday, in hopes that some canoes would come off to the ship, but in this we were disappointed. The wind being northerly, we steered to the westward in the

evening, to pass south of Tofoa; and I gave directions for this course to be continued during the night. The master had the first watch, the gunner the middle watch, and Mr Christian the morning watch. This was the turn of duty for the night.

Hitherto the voyage had advanced in a course of uninterrupted prosperity, and had been attended with circumstances equally pleasing and satisfactory. But a very different scene was now to be disclosed; a conspiracy had been formed, which was to render all our past labour productive only of misery and distress; and it had been concerted with so much secrecy and circumspection, that no one circumstance escaped to betray the impending calamity.

On the night of Monday, the watch was set as I have described. Just before sunrise, on Tuesday morning, while I was yet asleep, Mr Christian, with the master-at-arms, gunner's mate, and Thomas Burkitt, seaman, came into my cabin, and, seizing me, tied my hands with a cord behind my back; threatening me with instant death if I spoke or made the least noise. I nevertheless called out as loud as I could, in hopes of assistance; but the officers not of their party were already secured by sentinels at their doors. At my own cabin-door were three men, besides the four within: all except Christian had muskets and bayonets; he had only a cutlass. I was dragged out of bed, and forced on deck in my shirt, suffering great pain in the mean time from the tightness with which my hands were tied. On demanding the reason of such violence, the only answer was abuse for not holding my tongue. The master, the gunner, surgeon, master's mate, and Nelson the gardener, were kept confined below, and the fore-hatchway was guarded by sentinels. The boatswain and carpenter, and also the clerk, were allowed to come on deck, where they saw me standing abaft the mizen-mast, with my hands tied behind my back, under a guard, with Christian at their head. The boatswain was then ordered to hoist out the launch, accompanied by a threat, if he did not do it instantly, TO TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF.

The boat being hoisted out, Mr Hayward and Mr Hallett, two of the midshipmen, and Mr Samuel, the clerk, were ordered into it. I demanded the intention of giving this order, and endeavoured to persuade the people near me not to persist in such acts of violence; but it was to no effect; for the constant answer was, «Hold your tongue, sir, or you are dead this moment.»

The master had by this time sent, requesting that he might come on deck, which was permitted; but he was soon ordered back again to his cabin. My exertions to turn the tide of affairs were continued; when Christian, changing the cutlass he held for a bayonet, and, holding me by the cord about my hands with a strong gripe, threatened me with immediate death if I would not be quiet; and the villains around me had their pieces cocked and bayonets fixed.

Certain individuals were called on to get into the boat, and were hurried over the ship's side; whence I concluded, that along with them I was to be set adrift. Another effort to bring about a change produced nothing but menaces of having my brains blown out.

The boatswain and those seamen who were to be put into the boat, were allowed to collect twine, canvass, lines, sails, cordage, an eight-and-twenty gallon cask of water; and Mr Samuel got 150 pounds of bread, with a small quantity of rum and wine; also quadrant and compass; but he was prohibited on pain of death, to touch any map or astronomical book, and any instrument, or any of my surveys and drawings.

The mutineers having thus forced those of the seamen whom they wished to get rid of into the boat, Christian directed a dram to be served to each of his crew. I then unhappily saw that nothing could be done to recover the ship. The officers were next called on deck, and forced over the ship's side into the boat, while I was kept apart from every one abaft the mizen mast. Christian, armed with a bayonet, held the cord fastening my hands, and the guard around me stood with their pieces cocked; but on my daring the ungrateful wretches to fire, they uncocked them. Isaac Martin, one of them, I saw had an inclination to assist me; and as he fed me with shaddock, my lips being quite parched, we explained each other's sentiments by looks. But this was observed, and he was removed. He then got into the boat, attempting to leave the ship; however, he was compelled to return. Some others were also kept contrary to their inclination.

It appeared to me, that Christian was some time in doubt whether he should keep the carpenter or his mates. At length he determined for the latter, and the carpenter was ordered into the boat. He was permitted, though not without opposition, to take his tool-chest.

Mr Samuel secured my journals and commission, with some important ship-papers; this he did with great resolution, though strictly watched. He attempted to save the time-keeper, and a box with my surveys, drawings, and remarks for fifteen years past, which were very numerous, when he was hurried away with—«Damn your eyes, you are well off to get what you have.»

Much altercation took place among the mutinous crew during the transaction of this whole affair. Some swore, «I'll be damned if he does not find his way home, if he gets any thing with him,» meaning me; and when the carpenter's chest was carrying away, «Damn my eyes, he will have a vessel built in a month;» while others ridiculed the helpless situation of the boat, which was very deep in the water, and had so little room for those who were in her. As for Christian, he seemed as if meditating destruction on himself and every one else.

I asked for arms, but the mutineers laughed at me, and said I was well acquainted with the people among whom I was going; four cutlasses, however, were thrown into the boat, after we were veered astern.

The officers and men being in the boat, they only waited for me, of which the master-at-arms informed Christian, who then said, «Come, Captain Bligh, your officers and men are now in the boat, and you must go with them; if you attempt to make the least resistance, you will instantly be put to death;» and without further ceremony, I was forced over the side by a tribe of armed ruffians, where they untied my hands. Being in the boat, we were veered astern by a rope. A few pieces of pork were thrown to us, also the four cutlasses. The armourer and carpenter then called out to me to remember that they had no hand in the transaction. After having been kept some time to make sport for these unfeeling wretches, and having undergone much ridicule, we were at length cast adrift in the open ocean.

Eighteen persons were with me in the boat,—the

master, acting surgeon, botanist, gunner, boatswain, carpenter, master, and quarter-master's mate, two quarter-masters, the sail-maker, two cooks, my clerk, the butcher, and a boy. There remained on board, Fletcher Christian, the master's mate; Peter Haywood, Edward Young, George Stewart, midshipmen; the master-at-arms, gunner's mate, boatswain's mate, gardener, armourer, carpenter's mate, carpenter's crew, and fourteen seamen, being altogether the most able men of the ship's company.

Having little or no wind, we rowed pretty fast towards the island of Tofoa, which bore north-east about ten leagues distant. The ship while in sight steered west-north-west, but this I considered only as a feint, for when we were sent away, «Huzza for Otaheite!» was frequently heard among the mutineers.

Christian, the chief of them, was of a respectable family in the north of England. This was the third voyage he had made with me. Notwithstanding the roughness with which I was treated, the remembrance of past kindnesses produced some remorse in him. While they were forcing me out of the ship, I asked him whether this was a proper return for the many instances he had experienced of my friendship? He appeared disturbed at the question, and answered, with much emotion, «That—Captain Bligh—that is the thing—I am in hell—I am in hell.» His abilities to take charge of the third watch, as I had so divided the ship's company, were fully equal to the task.

Haywood was also of a respectable family in the north of England, and a young man of abilities, as well as Christian. These two had been objects of my particular regard and attention, and I had taken great pains to instruct them, having entertained hopes that, as professional men, they would have become a credit to their country. Young was well recommended; and Stewart of creditable parents in the Orkneys, at which place, on the return of the Resolution from the South Seas in 1780, we received so many civilities, that in consideration of these alone I should gladly have taken him with me. But he had always borne a good character.

When I had time to reflect, an inward satisfaction prevented the depression of my spirits. Yet, a few hours before, my situation had been peculiarly flattering; I had a ship in the most perfect order, stored with every necessary, both for health and service; the object of the voyage was attained, and two-thirds of it now completed. The remaining part had every prospect of success.

It will naturally be asked, what could be the cause of such a revolt? In answer, I can only conjecture that the mutineers had flattered themselves with the hope of a happier life among the Otaheitans than they could possibly enjoy in England; which, joined to some female connexions, most probably occasioned the whole transaction.

The women of Otaheite are handsome, mild, and cheerful in manners and conversation; possessed of great sensibility, and have sufficient delicacy to make them be admired and beloved. The chiefs were so much attached to our people, that they rather encouraged their stay among them than otherwise, and even made them promises of large possessions. Under these, and many other concomitant circumstances, it ought hardly to be the subject of surprise that a set of sailors, most of them void of connexions, should be led away, where they had the power of fixing themselves in the midst of plenty, in one of the finest islands in the world, where there was no necessity to labour, and where the allurements of dissipation are beyond any conception that can be formed of it. The utmost, however, that a commander could have expected, was desertions, such as have already happened more or less in the South Seas, and not an act of open mutiny.

But the secrecy of this mutiny surpasses belief. Thirteen of the party who were now with me had always lived forward among the seamen; yet neither they, nor the messmates of Christian, Stewart, Haywood, and Young, had ever observed any circumstance to exite suspicion of what was plotting; and it is not wonderful if I fell a sacrifice to it, my mind being entirely free from suspicion. Perhaps, had marines been on board, a sentinel at my cabin-door might have prevented it; for I constantly slept with the door open, that the officer of the watch might have access to me on all occasions. If the munity had been occasioned by any grievances, either real or imaginary, I must have discovered symptoms of discontent, which would have put me on my guard; but it was far otherwise. With Christian, in particular, I was on the most friendly terms; that very day he was engaged to have dined with me; and the preceding night he excused himself from supping with me on pretence of indisposition, for which I felt concerned, having no suspicions of his honour or integrity.

The Age of Bronze;

OR,

CARMEN SECULARE ET ANNUS HAUD MIRABILIS.

« Impar *Congressus* Achilli.»

I.

The «good old times»—all times, when old, are good—
Are gone; the present might be, if they would;
Great things have been, and are, and greater still
Want little of mere mortals but their will:
A wider space, a greener field is given
To those who play their «tricks before high Heaven.»
I know not if the angels weep, but men
Have wept enough—for what?—to weep again.

II.

All is exploded—be it good or bad.
Reader! remember when thou wert a lad,
Then Pitt was all; or, if not all, so much,
His very rival almost deem'd him such.

We, we have seen the intellectual race
Of giants stand, like Titans, face to face—
Athos and Ida, with a dashing sea
Of eloquence between, which flow'd all free,
As the deep billows of the Ægean roar
Betwixt the Hellenic and the Phrygian shore.
But where are they—the rivals?—a few feet
Of sullen earth divide each winding-sheet.
How peaceful and how powerful is the grave
Which hushes all! a calm, unstormy wave
Which oversweeps the world. The theme is old
Of «dust to dust;» but half its tale untold.
Time tempers not its terrors—still the worm
Winds its cold folds, the tomb preserves its form—
Varied above, but still alike below;
The urn may shine, the ashes will not glow.
Though Cleopatra's mummy cross the sea,
O'er which from empire she lured Anthony;
Though Alexander's urn a show be grown
On shores he wept to conquer, though unknown—
How vain, how worse than vain, at length appear
The madman's wish, the Macedonian's tear.
He wept for worlds to conquer—half the earth
Knows not his name, or but his death and birth
And desolation; while his native Greece
Hath all of desolation, save its peace.
He «wept for worlds to conquer!» he who ne'er
Conceived the globe he panted not to spare!
With even the busy Northern Isle unknown,
Which holds his urn, and never knew his throne.

III.

But where is he, the modern, mightier far,
Who, born no king, made monarchs draw his car;
The new Sesostris, whose unharness'd kings,
Freed from the bit, believe themselves with wings,
And spurn the dust o'er which they crawl'd of late,
Chain'd to the chariot of the chieftain's state?
Yes! where is he, the champion and the child
Of all that 's great or little, wise or wild?
Whose game was empires, and whose stakes were thrones;
Whose table, earth—whose dice were human bones?
Behold the grand result in yon lone isle,
And, as thy nature urges, weep or smile.
Sigh to behold the eagle's lofty rage
Reduced to nibble at his narrow cage;
Smile to survey the Queller of the Nations
Now daily squabbling o'er disputed rations;
Weep to perceive him mourning, as he dines,
O'er curtail'd dishes and o'er stinted wines;
O'er petty quarrels upon petty things—
Is this the man who scourged or feasted kings?
Behold the scales in which his fortune hangs,
A surgeon's statement and an earl's harangues!
A bust delay'd, a book refused, can shake
The sleep of him who kept the world awake.
Is this indeed the Tamer of the Great,
Now slave of all could teaze or irritate—
The paltry jailor and the prying spy,
The staring stranger with his note-book nigh?
Plunged in a dungeon, he had still been great;
How low, how little was this middle state,
Between a prison and a palace, where
How few could feel for what he had to bear!
Vain his complaint,—my lord presents his bill,
His food and wine were doled out duly still:
Vain was his sickness,—never was a clime
So free from homicide—to doubt 's a crime;
And the stiff surgeon, who maintain'd his cause,
Hath lost his place, and gain'd the world's applause.
But smile—though all the pangs of brain and heart
Disdain, defy, the tardy aid of art;
Though, save the few fond friends, and imaged face
Of that fair boy his sire shall ne'er embrace,
None stand by his low bed—though even the mind
Be wavering, which long awed and awes mankind;—
Smile—for the fetter'd eagle breaks his chain,
And higher worlds than this are his again.

IV.

How, if that soaring spirit still retain
A conscious twilight of his blazing reign,
How must he smile, on looking down, to see
The little that he was and sought to be!
What though his name a wider empire found
Than his ambition, though with scarce a bound;
Though first in glory, deepest in reverse,
He tasted empire's blessings and its curse;
Though kings, rejoicing in their late escape
From chains, would gladly be *their* tyrant's ape;
How must he smile, and turn to yon lone grave,
The proudest sea-mark that o'ertops the wave!
What though his jailor, duteous to the last,
Scarce deem'd the coffin's lead could keep him fast,
Refusing one poor line along the lid
To date the birth and death of all it hid,
That name shall hallow the ignoble shore,
A talisman to all save him who bore:
The fleets that sweep before the eastern blast
Shall hear their sea-boys hail it from the mast;
When Victory's Gallic column shall but rise,
Like Pompey's pillar, in a desert's skies,
The rocky isle that holds or held his dust
Shall crown the Atlantic like the hero's bust,
And mighty Nature o'er his obsequies
Do more than niggard Envy still denies.
But what are these to him? Can glory's lust
Touch the free'd spirit or the fetter'd dust?
Small care hath he of what his tomb consists,
Nought if he sleeps—nor more if he exists:
Alike the better-seeing shade will smile
On the rude cavern of the rocky isle,
As if his ashes found their latest home
In Rome's Pantheon, or Gaul's mimic dome.
He wants not this; but France shall feel the want
Of this last consolation, though so scant;
Her honour, fame, and faith, demand his bones,
To rear above a pyramid of thrones;
Or, carried onward, in the battle's van
To form, like Guesclin's [1] dust, her talisman.
But be it as it is, the time may come
His name shall beat the alarm like Ziska's drum.

V.

Oh, Heaven! of which he was in power a feature;
Oh, earth! of which he was a noble creature;
Thou isle! to be remember'd long and well,
That saw'st the unfledged eaglet chip his shell!

[1] Guesclin died during the siege of a city: it surrendered, and the keys were brought and laid upon his bier, so that the place might appear rendered to his ashes.

Ye Alps, which view'd him in his dawning flights
Hover the victor of an hundred fights!
Thou Rome, who saw'st thy Cæsar's deeds outdone!
Alas! why pass'd he too the Rubicon?
The Rubicon of man's awaken'd rights,
To herd with vulgar kings and parasites?
Egypt! from whose all dateless tombs arose
Forgotten Pharoahs from their long repose,
And shook within their pyramids to hear
A new Cambyses thundering in their ear;
While the dark shades of forty ages stood
Like startled giants by Nile's famous flood;
Or from the pyramid's tall pinnacle
Beheld the desert peopled, as from hell,
With clashing hosts, who strew'd the barren sand
To re-manure the uncultivated land!
Spain! which, a moment mindless of the Cid,
Beheld his banner flouting thy Madrid!
Austria! which saw thy twice-ta'en capital
Twice spared, to be the traitress of his fall!
Ye race of Frederic!—Frederics but in name
And falsehood—heirs to all except his fame;
Who, crush'd at Jena, crouch'd at Berlin, fell
First, and but rose to follow; ye who dwell
Where Kosciusko dwelt, remembering yet
The unpaid amount of Catherine's bloody debt!
Poland! o'er which the avenging angel pass'd,
But left thee as he found thee, still a waste:
Forgetting all thy still enduring claim,
Thy lotted people and extinguish'd name;
Thy sigh for freedom, thy long-flowing tear,
That sound that crashes in the tyrant's ear:
Kosciusko! on—on—on—the thirst of war
Gasps for the gore of serfs and of their czar;
The half barbaric Moscow's minarets
Gleam in the sun, but 't is a sun that sets!
Moscow! thou limit of his long career,
For which rude Charles had wept his frozen tear
To see in vain—*he* saw thee—how? with spire
And palace fuel to one common fire.
To this the soldier lent his kindling match,
To this the peasant gave his cottage thatch,
To this the merchant flung his hoarded store,
The prince his hall—and Moscow was no more!
Sublimest of volcanos! Etna's flame
Pales before thine, and quenchless Hecla 's tame;
Vesuvius shows his blaze, an usual sight
For gaping tourists, from his hackney'd height:
Thou stand'st alone unrivall'd, till the fire
To come, in which all empires shall expire.
Thou other element! as strong and stern
To teach a lesson conquerors will not learn,
Whose icy wing flapp'd o'er the faltering foe,
Till fell a hero with each flake of snow;
How did thy numbing beak and silent fang
Pierce, till hosts perish'd with a single pang!
In vain shall Seine look up along his banks
For the gay thousands of his dashing ranks;
In vain shall France recal beneath her vines
Her youth—their blood flows faster than her wines,
Or stagnant in their human ice remains
In frozen mummies on the polar plains.
In vain will Italy's broad sun awaken
Her offspring chill'd; its beams are now forsaken.
Of all the trophies gather'd from the war,
What shall return? The conqueror's broken car!
The conqueror's yet unbroken heart! Again
The horn of Roland sounds, and not in vain.
Lutzen, where fell the Swede of victory,
Beholds him conquer, but, alas! not die:
Dresden surveys three despots fly once more
Before their sovereign,—sovereign, as before;
But there exhausted Fortune quits the field,
And Leipsic's treason bids the unvanquish'd yield;
The Saxon jackal leaves the lion's side
To turn the bear's, and wolf's, and fox's guide;
And backward to the den of his despair
The forest monarch shrinks, but finds no lair!
Oh ye! and each, and all! oh, France! who found
Thy long fair fields plough'd up as hostile ground,
Disputed foot by foot, till treason, still
His only victor, from Montmartre's hill
Look'd down o'er trampled Paris; and thou, isle,
Which see'st Etruria from thy ramparts smile,
Thou momentary shelter of his pride,
Till woo'd by danger, his yet weeping bride;
Oh, France! retaken by a single march,
Whose path was through one long triumphal arch!
Oh, bloody and most bootless Waterloo,
Which proves how fools may have their fortune too
Won, half by blunder, half by treachery;
Oh, dull Saint Helen! with thy jailor nigh—
Hear! hear! Prometheus[1] from his rock appeal
To earth, air, ocean, all that felt or feel
His power and glory, all who yet shall hear
A name eternal as the rolling year;
He teaches them the lesson taught so long
So oft, so vainly—learn to do no wrong!
A single step into the right had made
This man the Washington of worlds betray'd;
A single step into the wrong has given
His name a doubt to all the winds of heaven;
The reed of fortune and of thrones the rod,
Of fame the Moloch or the demi-god;
His country's Cæsar, Europe's Hannibal,
Without their decent dignity of fall.
Yet vanity herself had better taught
A surer path even to the fame he sought,
By pointing out on history's fruitless page
Ten thousand conquerors for a single sage.
While Franklin's quiet memory climbs to heaven,
Calming the lightning which he thence hath riven,
Or drawing from the no less kindled earth
Freedom and peace to that which boasts his birth:
While Washington 's a watch-word, such as ne'er
Shall sink while there 's an echo left to air:
While even the Spaniard's thirst of gold and war
Forgets Pizarro to shout Bolivar!
Alas! why must the same Atlantic wave
Which wafted freedom gird a tyrant's grave,—
The king of kings, and yet of slaves the slave,
Who burst the chains of millions to renew
The very fetters which his arm broke through,
And crush'd the rights of Europe and his own
To flit between a dungeon and a throne?

VI.

But 't will not be—the spark 's awaken'd—lo!
The swarthy Spaniard feels his former glow;

[1] I refer the reader to the first address of Prometheus in Æschylus, when he is left alone by his attendants, and before the arrival of the Chorus of Sea-nymphs.

The same high spirit which beat back the Moor
Through eight long ages of alternate gore,
Revives—and where? in that avenging clime
Where Spain was once synonymous with crime,
Where Cortes' and Pizarro's banner flew;
The infant world redeems her name of «*New*.»
'T is the *old* aspiration breathed afresh,
To kindle souls within degraded flesh,
Such as repulsed the Persian from the shore
Where Greece *was*—No! she still is Greece once more.
One common cause makes myriads of one breast,
Slaves of the east, or Helots of the west;
On Andes' and on Athos' peaks unfurl'd,
The self-same standard streams o'er either world;
The Athenian wears again Harmodius' sword;
The Chili chief abjures his foreign lord;
The Spartan knows himself once more a Greek;
Young freedom plumes the crest of each Cacique;
Debating despots, hemm'd on either shore,
Shrink vainly from the roused Atlantic's roar;
Through Calpe's strait the rolling tides advance,
Sweep slightly by the half-tamed land of France,
Dash o'er the old Spaniard's cradle, and would fain
Unite Ausonia to the mighty main:
But driven from thence awhile, yet not for aye,
Break o'er th' Ægean, mindful of the day
Of Salamis—there, there, the waves arise,
Not to be lull'd by tyrant victories.
Lone, lost, abandon'd in their utmost need
By Christians unto whom they gave their creed,
The desolated lands, the ravaged isle,
The foster'd feud encouraged to beguile,
The aid evaded, and the cold delay,
Prolong'd but in the hope to make a prey;—
These, these shall tell the tale, and Greece can show
The false friend worse than the infuriate foe.
But this is well: Greeks only should free Greece,
Not the barbarian, with his mask of peace.
How should the autocrat of bondage be
The king of serfs, and set the nations free?
Better still serve the haughty Mussulman,
Than swell the Cossaque's prowling caravan;
Better still toil for masters, than await,
The slave of slaves, before a Russian gate,—
Number'd by hordes, a human capital,
A live estate, existing but for thrall,
Lotted by thousands, as a meet reward
For the first courtier in the czar's regard;
While their immediate owner never tastes
His sleep, *sans* dreaming of Siberia's wastes;
Better succumb even to their own despair,
And drive the camel than purvey the bear.

VII.

But not alone within the hoariest clime,
Where freedom dates her birth with that of time;
And not alone where, plunged in night, a crowd
Of Incas darken to a dubious cloud,
The dawn revives: renown'd, romantic Spain
Holds back the invader from her soil again.
Not now the Roman tribe nor Punic horde
Demand her fields as lists to prove the sword;
Not now the Vandal or the Visigoth
Pollute the plains, alike abhorring both;
Nor old Pelayo on his mountain rears
The warlike fathers of a thousand years.
That seed is sown and reap'd, as oft the Moor
Sighs to remember on his dusky shore.
Long in the peasant's song or poet's page
Has dwelt the memory of Abencerage,
The Zegri, and the captive victors, flung
Back to the barbarous realm from whence they sprung.
But these are gone—their faith, their swords, their sway,
Yet left more anti-christian foes than they:
The bigot monarch and the butcher priest,
The inquisition, with her burning feast,
The faith's red «auto,» fed with human fuel,
While sat the Catholic Moloch, calmly cruel,
Enjoying, with inexorable eye,
That fiery festival of agony!
The stern or feeble sovereign, one or both
By turns; the haughtiness whose pride was sloth;
The long degenerate noble; the debased
Hidalgo, and the peasant less disgraced
But more degraded; the unpeopled realm;
The once proud navy which forgot the helm;
The once impervious phalanx disarray'd;
The idle forge that form'd Toledo's blade;
The foreign wealth that flow'd on every shore,
Save her's who earn'd it with the natives' gore;
The very language, which might vie with Rome's,
And once was known to nations like their home's,
Neglected or forgotten:—such was Spain;
But such she is not, nor shall be again.
These worst, these *home* invaders, felt and feel
The new Numantine soul of Old Castile.
Up! up again! undaunted Tauridor!
The bull of Phalaris renews his roar;
Mount, chivalrous Hidalgo! not in vain
Revive the cry—«Iago! and close Spain!»[1]
Yes, close her with your armed bosoms round,
And form the barrier which Napoleon found,—
The exterminating war; the desert plain;
The streets without a tenant, save the slain;
The wild Sierra, with its wilder troop
Of vulture-plumed guerillas, on the stoop
For their incessant prey; the desperate wall
Of Saragossa, mightiest in her fall;
The man nerved to a spirit, and the maid
Waving her more than Amazonian blade:
The knife of Arragon,[2] Toledo's steel;
The famous lance of chivalrous Castile;
The unerring rifle of the Catalan;
The Andalusian courser in the van;
The torch to make a Moscow of Madrid;
And in each heart the spirit of the Cid:—
Such have been, such shall be, such are. Advance,
And win—not Spain, but thine own freedom, France!

VIII.

But lo! a congress! What, that hallow'd name
Which freed the Atlantic? May we hope the same
For outworn Europe? With the sound arise,
Like Samuel's shade to Saul's monarchic eyes,
The prophets of young freedom, summon'd far
From climes of Washington and Bolivar;
Henry, the forest-born Demosthenes,
Whose thunder shook the Philip of the seas;

[1] «St Iago! and close Spain!» the old Spanish war-cry.

[2] The Arragonians are peculiarly dextrous in the use of this weapon, and displayed it particularly in former French wars.

And turn'd the royal entrails to a prison?
And stoic Franklin's energetic shade,
Robed in the lightnings which his hand allay'd;
And Washington, the tyrant-tamer, wake,
To bid us blush for these old chains, or break.
But *who* compose this senate of the few
That should redeem the many? *Who* renew
This consecrated name, till now assign'd
To councils held to benefit mankind?
Who now assemble at the holy call?—
The bless'd alliance, which says three are all!
An earthly trinity! which wears the shape
Of Heaven's, as man is mimick'd by the ape.
A pious unity! in purpose one,
To melt three fools to a Napoleon.
Why, Egypt's gods were rational to these;
Their dogs and oxen knew their own degrees,
And, quiet in their kennel or their shed,
Cared little, so that they were duly fed:
But these, more hungry, must have something more—
The power to bark and bite, to toss and gore.
Ah, how much happier were good Æsop's frogs
Than we! for ours are animated logs,
With ponderous malice swaying to and fro,
And crushing nations with a stupid blow,
All dully anxious to leave little work
Unto the revolutionary stork.

IX.

Thrice bless'd Verona! since the holy three
With their imperial presence shine on thee;
Honour'd by them, thy treacherous site forgets
The vaunted tomb of «all the Capulets;»
Thy Scaligers—for what was «Dog the Great,»
«Can' Grande» (which I venture to translate)
To these sublimer pugs? Thy poet too,
Catullus, whose old laurels yield to new;
Thine amphitheatre, where Romans sate;
And Dante's exile, shelter'd by thy gate;
Thy good old man,[1] whose world was all within
Thy wall, nor knew the country held him in:
Would that the royal guests it girds about
Were so far like, as never to get out!
Ay, shout! inscribe! rear monuments of shame,
To tell oppression that the world is tame!
Crowd to the theatre with loyal rage—
The comedy is not upon the stage;
The show is rich in ribbonry and stars—
Then gaze upon it through thy dungeon bars;
Clasp thy permitted palms, kind Italy,
For thus much still thy fetter'd hands are free!

X.

Resplendent sight! behold the coxcomb czar,
The autocrat of waltzes and of war!
As eager for a plaudit as a realm,
And just as fit for flirting as the helm;
A Calmuck beauty with a Cossack wit,
And generous spirit, when 't is not frost-bit;
Now half dissolving to a liberal thaw,
But harden'd back whene'er the morning 's raw;
With no objection to true liberty,
Except that it would make the nations free.
How well the imperial dandy prates of peace,
How fain, if Greeks would be his slaves, free Greece!
How nobly gave he back the Poles their Diet,
Then told pugnacious Poland to be quiet!
How kindly would he send the mild Ukraine,
With all her pleasant pulks, to lecture Spain;
How royally show off in proud Madrid
His goodly person, from the south long hid,—
A blessing cheaply purchased, the world knows,
By having Muscovites for friends or foes.
Proceed, thou namesake of great Philip's son!
La Harpe, thine Aristotle, beckons on;
And that which Scythia was to him of yore,
Find with thy Scythians on Iberia's shore.
Yet think upon, thou somewhat aged youth,
Thy predecessor on the banks of Pruth;
Thou hast to aid thee, should his lot be thine,
Many an old woman, but no Catherine.[1]
Spain too hath rocks, and rivers, and defiles—
The bear may rush into the lion's toils.
Fatal to Goths are Xeres' sunny fields;
Think'st thou to thee Napoleon's victor yields?
Better reclaim thy deserts, turn thy swords
To ploughshares, shave and wash thy Bashkir hordes,
Redeem thy realms from slavery and the knout,
Than follow headlong in the fatal route,
To infest the clime, whose skies and laws are pure,
With thy foul legions. Spain wants no manure;
Her soil is fertile, but she feeds no foe;
Her vultures, too, were gorged not long ago:
And wouldst thou furnish them with fresher prey?
Alas! thou wilt not conquer, but purvey.
I am Diogenes, though Russ and Hun
Stand between mine and many a myriad's sun;
But were I not Diogenes, I 'd wander
Rather a worm than *such* an Alexander!
Be slaves who will, the Cynic shall be free;
His tub hath tougher walls than Sinopè:
Still will he hold his lanthorn up to scan
The face of monarchs for an «honest man.»

XI.

And what doth Gaul, the all-prolific land
Of *ne plus ultra* Ultras and their band
Of mercenaries? and her noisy Chambers
And Tribune, which each orator first clambers
Before he finds a voice, and, when 't is found,
Hears «the lie» echo for his answer round?
Our British Commons sometimes deign to hear;
A Gallic senate hath more tongue than ear;
Even Constant, their sole master of debate,
Must fight next day, his speech to vindicate.
But this costs little to true Franks, who had rather
Combat than listen, were it to their father.
What is the simple standing of a shot,
To listening long, and interrupting not!
Though this was not the method of old Rome,
When Tully fulmined o'er each vocal dome,
Demosthenes has sanction'd the transaction,
In saying eloquence meant «Action, action!»

XII.

But where's the monarch? hath he dined? or yet
Groans beneath indigestion's heavy debt?
Have revolutionary pâtés risen,

[1] The famous old man of Verona.

[1] The dexterity of Catherine extricated Peter (called the Great by courtesy) when surrounded by the Mussulmans on the banks of the river Pruth.

Have discontented movements stirr'd the troops?
Or have *no* movements follow'd traiterous soups?
Have Carbonaro cooks not carbonadoed
Each course enough? or doctors dire dissuaded
Repletion? Ah! in thy dejected looks
I read all ——'s treason in her cooks!
Good classic ———! is it, canst thou say,
Desirable to be the « ———?»
Why wouldst thou leave calm ———'s green abode,
Apician table and Horatian ode,
To rule a people who will not be ruled,
And love much rather to be scourg'd than school'd?
Ah! thine was not the temper or the taste
For thrones—the table sees thee better placed:
A mild Epicurean, form'd, at best,
To be a kind host and as good a guest,
To talk of letters, and to know by heart
One *half* the poet's, *all* the gourmand's art:
A scholar always, now and then a wit,
And gentle when digestion may permit—
But not to govern lands enslaved or free;
The gout was martyrdom enough for thee!

XIII.

Shall noble Albion pass without a phrase
From a bold Briton in her wonted praise?
« Arts—arms—and George—and glory and the isles—
And happy Britain—wealth and freedom's smiles—
White cliffs, that held invasion far aloof—
Contented subjects, all alike tax-proof—
Proud Wellington, with eagle beak so curl'd,
That nose, the hook where he suspends the world![1]
And Waterloo—and trade—and——(hush! not yet
A syllable of imposts or of debt)——
And ne'er (enough) lamented Castlereagh,
Whose pen-knife slit a goose-quill t' other day—
And 'pilots who have weather'd every storm'—
(But, no, not even for rhyme's sake, name reform).»
These are the themes thus sung so oft before,
Methinks we need not sing them any more;
Found in so many volumes far and near,
There 's no occasion you should find them here.
Yet something may remain perchance to chime
With reason, and, what 's stranger still, with rhyme;
Even this thy genius, Canning! may permit,
Who, bred a statesman, still was born a wit,
And never, even in that dull house, couldst tame
To unleaven'd prose thine own poetic flame;
Our last, our best, our only orator,
Even I can praise thee—Tories do no more,
Nay, not so much;—they hate thee, man, because
Thy spirit less upholds them than it awes.—
The hounds will gather to their huntsman's hollo,
And, where he leads, the duteous pack will follow;
But not for love mistake their yelling cry,
Their yelp for game is not an eulogy;
Less faithful far than the four-footed pack,
A dubious scent would lure the bipeds back.
Thy saddle girths are not yet quite secure,
Nor royal stallion's feet extremely sure;
The unwieldy old white horse is apt at last
To stumble, kick, and now and then stick fast
With his great self and rider in the mud;
But what of that? the animal shows blood.

XIV.

Alas, the country!—how shall tongue or pen
Bewail her now uncountry gentlemen?—
The last to bid the cry of warfare cease,
The first to make a malady of peace.
For what were all these country patriots born?
To hunt, and vote, and raise the price of corn?
But corn, like every mortal thing, must fall—
Kings, conquerors, and markets most of all.
And must ye fall with every ear of grain?
Why would you trouble Bonaparte's reign?
He was your great Triptolemus; his vices
Destroy'd but realms, and still maintain'd your prices;
He amplified, to every lord's content,
The grand agrarian alchymy—high *rent*.
Why did the tyrant stumble on the Tartars,
And lower wheat to such desponding quarters?
Why did you chain him on yon isle so lone?
The man was worth much more upon his throne.
True, blood and treasure boundlessly were spilt,
But what of that? the Gaul may bear the guilt;
But bread was high, the farmer paid his way,
And acres told upon the appointed day.
But where is now the goodly audit ale?
The purse-proud tenant never known to fail?
The farm which never yet was left on hand?
The marsh reclaim'd to most improving land?
The impatient hope of the expiring lease?
The doubling rental? What an evil 's peace!
In vain the prize excites the ploughman's skill,
In vain the Commons pass their patriot bill;
The *landed interest*—(you may understand
The phrase much better leaving out the *land*)—
The land self-interest groans from shore to shore,
For fear that plenty should attain the poor.
Up! up again! ye rents, exalt your notes,
Or else the ministry will lose their votes,
And patriotism, so delicately nice,
Her loaves will lower to the market price;
For ah! « the loaves and fishes,» once so high,
Are gone—their oven closed, their ocean dry;
And nought remains of all the millions spent,
Excepting to grow moderate and content.
They who are not so, *had* their turn—and turn
About still flows from fortune's equal urn;
Now let their virtue be its own reward,
And share the blessings which themselves prepared.
See these inglorious Cincinnati swarm,
Farmers of war, dictators of the farm!
Their ploughshare was the sword in hireling hands,
Their fields manured by gore of other lands;
Safe in their barns, these Sabine tillers sent
Their brethren out to battle—why? for rent!
Year after year they voted cent. per cent.
Blood, sweat, and tear-wrung millions—why? for rent!
They roar'd, they dined, they drank, they swore they meant
To die for England—why then live? for rent!
The peace has made one general malcontent
Of these high-market patriots; war was rent!
Their love of country, millions all mis-spent,
How reconcile?—by reconciling rent.
And will they not repay the treasures lent?

[1] « Naso suspendit adunco.» —Horace.

The Roman applies it to one who merely was imperious to his acquaintance.

No: down with every thing, and up with rent!
Their good, ill, health, wealth, joy, or discontent,
Being, end, aim, religion—Rent, rent, rent!
Thou sold'st thy birth-right, Esau! for a mess:
Thou shouldst have gotten more, or eaten less;
Now thou hast swill'd thy pottage, thy demands
Are idle; Israel says the bargain stands.
Such, landlords, was your appetite for war,
And, gorged with blood, you grumble at a scar!
What, would they spread their earthquake even o'er cash?
And when land crumbles, bid firm paper crash?
So rent may rise, bid bank and nation fall,
And found on 'Change a *foundling* hospital!
Lo, mother church, while all religion writhes,
Like Niobe, weeps o'er her offspring, tithes;
The prelates go to—where the saints have gone,
And proud pluralities subside to one;
Church, state, and faction, wrestle in the dark,
Toss'd by the deluge in their common ark.
Shorn of her bishops, banks, and dividends,
Another Babel soars—but Britain ends.
And why? to pamper the self-seeking wants,
And prop the hill of these agrarian ants.
«Go to these ants, thou sluggard, and be wise;»
Admire their patience through each sacrifice,
Till taught to feel the lesson of their pride,
The price of taxes and of homicide;
Admire their justice, which would fain deny
The debt of nations: pray, *who made it high?*

XV.

Or turn to sail between those shifting rocks,
The new Symplegades—the crushing Stocks,
Where Midas might again his wish behold
In real paper or imagined gold.
That magic palace of Alcina shows
More wealth than Britain ever had to lose,
Were all her atoms of unleaven'd ore,
And all her pebbles from Pactolus' shore.
There Fortune plays, while Rumour holds the stake,
And the world trembles to bid brokers break.
How rich is Britain! not indeed in mines,
Or peace, or plenty, corn, or oil, or wines;
No land of Canaan, full of milk and honey,
Nor (save in paper shekels) ready money:
But let us not to own the truth refuse,
Was ever Christian land so rich in Jews?
Those parted with their teeth to good King John,
And now, ye kings! they kindly draw your own;
All states, all things, all sovereigns they controul,
And waft a loan «from Indus to the Pole.»
The banker—broker—baron—brethren, speed
To aid these bankrupt tyrants in their need.
Nor these alone; Columbia feels no less
Fresh speculations follow each success;
And philanthropic Israel deigns to drain
Her mild per centage from exhausted Spain.
Not without Abraham's seed can Russia march—
'T is gold, not steel, that rears the conqueror's arch.
Two Jews, a chosen people, can command
In every realm their scripture-promised land:
Two Jews keep down the Romans, and uphold
The accursed Hun, more brutal than of old:
Two Jews—but not Samaritans—direct
The world, with all the spirit of their sect.
What is the happiness of earth to them?
A congress forms their «New Jerusalem,»
Where baronies and orders both invite—
Oh, holy Abraham! dost thou see the sight?
Thy followers mingling with these royal swine,
Who spit not «on their Jewish gaberdine,»
But honour them as portion of the show—
(Where now, oh, Pope! is thy forsaken toe?
Could it not favour Judah with some kicks?
Or has it ceased to «kick against the pricks?»)
On Shylock's shore behold them stand afresh,
To cut from nations' hearts their «pound of flesh.»

XVI.

Strange sight this congress! destined to unite
All that's incongruous, all that 's opposite.
I speak not of the sovereigns—they 're alike,
A common coin as ever mint could strike:
But those who sway the puppets, pull the strings,
Have more of motley than their heavy kings.
Jews, authors, generals, charlatans, combine,
While Europe wonders at the vast design:
There Metternich, power's foremost parasite,
Cajoles; there Wellington forgets to fight;
There Chateaubriand forms new books of martyrs;[1]
And subtle Greeks intrigue for stupid Tartars;
There Montmorency, the sworn foe to charters,
Turns a diplomatist of great eclat,
To furnish articles for the «Debats;»
Of war so certain—yet not quite so sure
As his dismissal in the «Moniteur.»
Alas! how could his cabinet thus err?
Can peace be worth an ultra-minister?
He falls, indeed,—perhaps to rise again,
«Almost as quickly as he conquer'd Spain.»

XVII.

Enough of this—a sight more mournful woos
The averted eye of the reluctant muse.
The imperial daughter, the imperial bride,
The imperial victim—sacrifice to pride;
The mother of the hero's hope, the boy,
The young Astyanax of modern Troy;
The still pale shadow of the loftiest queen
That earth has yet to see, or e'er hath seen;
She flits amidst the phantoms of the hour,
The theme of pity, and the wreck of power.
Oh, cruel mockery! Could not Austria spare
A daughter? What did France's widow there?
Her fitter place was by St Helen's wave—
Her only throne is in Napoleon's grave.
But, no,—she still must hold a petty reign,
Flank'd by her formidable chamberlain;
The martial Argus, whose not hundred eyes
Must watch her through these paltry pageantries.
What though she share no more, and shared in vain,
A sway surpassing that of Charlemagne,
Which swept from Moscow to the Southern seas,
Yet still she rules the pastoral realm of cheese,

[1] Monsieur Chateaubriand, who has not forgotten the author in the minister, received a handsome compliment at Verona from a literary sovereign: «Ah! Monsieur C——, are you related to that Chateaubriand who—who—who has written *something*» (ecrit *quelque chose*)? It is said that the author of Atala repented him for a moment of his legitimacy.

Where Parma views the traveller resort
To note the trappings of her mimic court.
But she appears! Verona sees her shorn
Of all her beams—while nations gaze and mourn—
Ere yet her husband's ashes have had time
To chill in their inhospitable clime
(If ere those awful ashes can grow cold—
But no,—their embers soon will burst the mould);
She comes!—the Andromache (but not Racine's,
Nor Homer's); lo! on Pyrrhus' arm she leans!
Yes! the right arm, yet red from Waterloo,
Which cut her lord's half-shatter'd sceptre through,
Is offer'd and accepted! Could a slave
Do more? or less?—and *he* in his new grave!
Her eye, her cheek, betray no inward strife,
And the *Ex*-empress grows as *Ex* a wife!
So much for human ties in royal breasts!
Why spare men's feelings, when their own are jests?

XVIII.

But, tired of foreign follies, I turn home,
And sketch the group—the picture's yet to come.
My Muse 'gan weep, but, ere a tear was spilt,
She caught Sir William Curtis in a kilt!
While throng'd the Chiefs of every Highland clan
To hail their brother, Vich Ian Alderman!
Guildhall grows Gael, and echoes with Erse roar,
While all the Common Council cry, «Claymore!»
To see proud Albyn's Tartans as a belt
Gird the gross sirloin of a City Celt,
She burst into a laughter so extreme,
That I awoke—and lo! it was *no* dream!

Here, reader, will we pause:—if there 's no harm in
This first—you'll have, perhaps, a second «Carmen.»

The Vision of Judgment.

BY QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF «WAT TYLER.»

«A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.»

I.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late;
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era «eighty-eight,»
The devils had taken a longer, stronger pull,
And «a pull altogether,» as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

II.

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

III.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky
Save the recording angel's black bureau;
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV.

His business so augmented of late years,
That he was forced, against his will, no doubt
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers),
For some resource to turn himself about,
And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out
By the increased demand for his remarks:
Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

V.

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven;
And yet they had even then enough to do,
So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
Each day, too, slew its thousands six or seven,
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
They threw their pens down in divine disgust—
The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust.

VI.

This by the way; 't is not mine to record
What angels shrink from: even the very devil
On this occasion his own work abhorr'd,
So surfeited with the infernal revel;
Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,
It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.
(Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—
'T is, that he has both generals in reversion.)

VII.

Let 's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,
And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease,
With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't;
'T will one day finish: meantime they increase,
"With seven heads and ten horns," and all in front,
Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born
Less formidable in the head than horn.

VIII.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn
Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun:
A better farmer ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,
A worse king never left a realm undone!
He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t' other no less blind.

IX.

He died!—his death made no great stir on earth;
His burial made some pomp; there was profusion
Of velvet, gilding, brass, and no great dearth
Of aught but tears—save those shed by collusion;
For these things may be bought at their true worth:
Of elegy there was the due infusion—
Bought also; and the torches, cloaks, and banners,
Heralds, and relics of old Gothic manners,

X.

Form'd a sepulchral melo-drame. Of all
The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe.
There throbb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall;
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

XI.

So mix his body with the dust! It might
Return to what it *must* far sooner, were
The natural compound left alone to fight
Its way back into earth, and fire, and air;
But the unnatural balsams merely blight
What nature made him at his birth, as bare
As the mere million's base unmummied clay—
Yet all his spices but prolong decay.

XII.

He 's dead—and upper earth with him has done:
He 's buried; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
For him, unless he left a German will;
But where 's the proctor who will ask his son?
In whom his qualities are reigning still,
Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.

XIII.

"God save the king!" It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still:
I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV.

I know this is unpopular; I know
'T is blasphemous; I know one may be damn'd
For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
I know my catechism; I know we are cramm'd
With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
I know that all save England's church have shamm'd,
And that the other twice two hundred churches
And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

XV.

God help us all! God help me, too! I am,
God knows, as helpless as the devil can wish,
And not a whit more difficult to damn
Than is to bring to land a late-hook'd fish,
Or to the butcher to purvey the lamb;
Not that I 'm fit for such a noble dish
As one day will be that immortal fry
Of almost every body born to die.

XVI.

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate,
And nodded o'er his keys; when lo! there came
A wonderous noise he had not heard of late—
A rushing sound of wind, and stream, and flame;
In short, a roar of things extremely great,
Which would have made aught save a saint exclaim;
But he, with first a start and then a wink,
Said, "There 's another star gone out, I think!"

XVII.

But ere he could return to his repose,
A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his eyes—
At which Saint Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd his nose:
"Saint porter," said the angel, "prithee rise!"
Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as glows
An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes;
To which the saint replied, "Well, what 's the matter;
Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?

XVIII.

"No," quoth the cherub; "George the Third is dead."
"And who is George the Third?" replied the apostle;
"*What George? what Third?*" "The King of England," said
The angel. "Well! he wont find kings to jostle
Him on his way; but does he wear his head?
Because the — we saw here had a tussle,
And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX.

"He was, if I remember, king of——:
That head of his, which could not keep a crown
On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:
If I had had my sword, as I had once
When I cut ears off, I had cut him down;
But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

XX.

"And then he set up such a headless howl,
That all the saints came out, and took him in;
And there he sits by Saint Paul, cheek by jowl;
That fellow Paul—the parvenu! The skin
Of Saint Bartholomew, which makes his cowl
In heaven, and upon earth redeem'd his sin
So as to make a martyr, never sped
Better than did this weak and wooden head.

XXI.

« But had it come up here upon its shoulders,
There would have been a different tale to tell:
The fellow-feeling in the saints beholders
Seems to have acted on them like a spell,
And so this very foolish head Heaven solders
Back on its trunk: it may be very well,
And seems the custom here to overthrow
Whatever has been wisely done below.»

XXII.

The angel answer'd, « Peter! do not pout;
The king who comes has head and all entire,
And never knew much what it was about—
He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,
And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:
My business and your own is not to inquire
Into such matters, but to mind our cue—
Which is to act as we are bid to do.»

XXIII.

While thus they spake, the angelic caravan,
Arriving like a rush of mighty wind,
Cleaving the fields of space, as doth the swan
Some silver stream (say Ganges, Nile, or Inde,
Or Thames, or Tweed), and midst them an old man
With an old soul, and both extremely blind,
Halted before the gate, and in his shroud
Seated their fellow-traveller on a cloud.

XXIV.

But bringing up the rear of this bright host,
A spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved;
His brow was like the deep when tempest-tost;
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
Eternal wrath on his immortal face,
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

XXV.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate,
Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or sin,
With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
He potter'd with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his apostolic skin:
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,
Or some such other spiritual liquor.

XXVI.

The very cherubs huddled altogether,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And form'd a circle, like Orion's belt,
Around their poor old charge, who scarce knew whither
His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
With royal manes (for, by many stories,
And true, we learn the angels all are Tories).

XXVII.

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue
Of many-colour'd flame, until its tinges
Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made a new
Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crews, in « Melville's Sound.»

XXVIII.

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
A beautiful and mighty thing of light,
Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight:
My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
With earthly likenesses, for here the night
Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
Johanna Southcote, or Bob Southey raving.

XXIX.

'T was the archangel Michael: all men know
The make of angels and archangels, since
There 's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.
There also are some altar-pieces, though
I really can't say that they much evince
One 's inner notions of immortal spirits;
But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good;
A goodly work of him from whom all glory
And good arise; the portal pass'd—he stood;
Before him the young cherubs and saint hoary,
(I say *young*, begging to be understood
By looks, not years; and should be very sorry
To state, they were not older than Saint Peter,
But merely that they seem'd a little sweeter.)

XXXI.

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down before
That arch-angelic hierarch, the first
Of essences angelical, who wore
The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nursed
Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst
Intrude, however glorified and high;
He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

XXXII.

He and the sombre silent spirit met—
They knew each other both for good and ill;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
His former friend and future foe, but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 't were less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their « Champ Clos» the spheres.

XXXIII.

But here they were in neutral space: we know
From Job, that Sathan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
And that « the sons of God,» like those of clay,
Must keep him company; and we might show,
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the powers
Of good and evil—but 't would take up hours.

XXXIV.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic
If Job be allegory or a fact,
But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'T is every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

XXXV.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
The gate of heaven; like eastern thresholds is
The place where death's grand cause is argued o'er,
And souls dispatch'd to that world or to this;
And therefore Michael and the other wore
A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
There pass'd a mutual glance of great politeness.

XXXVI.

The archangel bow'd, not like a modern beau,
But with a graceful Oriental bend,
Pressing one radiant arm just where below
The heart in good men is supposed to tend.
He turn'd as to an equal, not too low,
But kindly; Sathan met his ancient friend
With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
An instant; and then, raising it, he stood
In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
Cause why King George by no means could or should
Make out a case to be exempt from woe
Eternal, more than other kings endued
With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,
Who long have «paved hell with their good intentions.»

XXXVIII.

Michael began: «What wouldst thou with this man,
Now dead, and brought before the Lord? What ill
Hath he wrought since his mortal race began,
That thou canst claim him? Speak! and do thy will,
If it be just: if in this earthly span
He hath been greatly failing to fulfil
His duties as a king and mortal, say,
And he is thine; if not, let him have way.»

XXXIX.

«Michael!» replied the prince of air, «even here,
Before the gate of Him thou servest, must
I claim my subject; and will make appear
That as he was my worshipper in dust,
So shall he be in spirit, although dear
To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust
Were of his weaknesses! yet on the throne
He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL.

«Look to *our* earth, or rather *mine;* it was,
Once, more thy Master's: but I triumph not
In this poor planet's conquest, nor, alas!
Need he thou servest envy me my lot:
With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass
In worship round him, he may have forgot
Yon weak creation of such paltry things;
I think few worth damnation save their kings,

XLI.

«And these but as a kind of quit-rent, to
Assert my right as lord; and even had
I such an inclination, 't were (as you
Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,
That hell has nothing better left to do
Than leave them to themselves: so much more mad
And evil be their own internal curse,
Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

XLII.

«Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor worm
Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
The world and he both wore a different form,
And much of earth and all the watery plain
Of ocean call'd him king: through many a storm
His isles had floated on the abyss of time;
For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

XLIII.

«He came to his sceptre, young; he leaves it, old:
Look to the state in which he found his realm,
And left it; and his annals, too, behold,
How to a minion first he gave the helm;
How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
The meanest hearts; and, for the rest, but glance
Thine eye along America and France!

XLIV.

«'T is true, he was a tool from first to last
(I have the workmen safe); but as a tool
So let him be consumed! From out the past
Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass'd
Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsar's school,
Take the worst pupil, and produce a reign
More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd with the slain.

XLV.

«He ever warr'd with freedom and the free:
Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
So that they utter'd the word 'Liberty!'
Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose
History was ever stain'd as his will be
With national and individual woes?
I grant his household abstinence; I grant
His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

XLVI.

«I know he was a constant consort; own
He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
All this is much, and most upon a throne;
As temperance, if at Apicius' board,
Is more than at an anchorite's supper shown.
I grant him all the kindest can accord;
And this was well for him, but not for those
Millions who found him what oppression chose.

XLVII.

The new world shook him off; the old yet groans
Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones
To all his vices, without what begot
Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones
Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot
A lesson which shall be re-taught them, wake
Upon the throne of earth; but let them quake!

XLVIII.

«Five millions of the primitive, who hold
The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored
A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—
Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,
Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! Cold
Must be your souls, if you have not abhorr'd
The foe to Catholic participation
In all the license of a Christian nation.

XLIX.

«True! he allow'd them to pray God; but, as
A consequence of prayer, refused the law
Which would have placed them upon the same base
With those who did not hold the saints in awe.»
But here Saint Peter started from his place,
And cried, «You may the prisoner withdraw:
Ere Heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelf,
While I am guard, may I be damn'd myself!

L.

«Sooner will I with Cerberus exchange
My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
Than see this royal Bedlam bigot range
The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!»
«Saint!» replied Sathan, «you do well to avenge
The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
And if to this exchange you should be given,
I 'll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven.»

LI.

Here Michael interposed: «Good saint! and devil!
Pray not so fast; you both out-run discretion.
Saint Peter! you were wont to be more civil:
Sathan! excuse this warmth of his expression,
And condescension to the vulgar's level:
Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.
Have you got more to say?»—«No!»—«If you please,
I 'll trouble you to call your witnesses.»

LII.

Then Sathan turn'd and waved his swarthy hand,
Which stirr'd with its electric qualities
Clouds farther off than we can understand,
Although we find him sometimes in our skies;
Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
In all the planets, and hell's batteries
Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions
As one of Sathan's most sublime inventions.

LIII.

This was a signal unto such damn'd souls
As have the privilege of their damnation
Extended far beyond the mere controls
Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station
Is theirs particularly in the rolls
Of hell assigned; but where their inclination
Or business carries them in search of game,
They may range freely—being damn'd the same.

LIV.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,
It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
Stuck in their loins; or like to an «entrée»
Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry:
I borrow my comparisons from clay,
Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be
Offended with such base low likenesses;
We know their posts are nobler far than these.

LV.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell,—
About ten million times the distance reckon'd
From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
How much time it takes up, even to a second,
For every ray that travels to dispel
The fogs of London; through which, dimly beacon'd,
The weathercocks are gilt, some thrice a year,
If that the *summer* is not too severe:—

LVI.

I say that I can tell—'t was half a minute;
I know the solar beams take up more time
Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;
But then their telegraph is less sublime,
And if they ran a race, they would not win it
'Gainst Sathan's couriers bound for their own clime.
The sun takes up some years for every ray
To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

LVII.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
Of half-a-crown, a little speck appear'd
(I 've seen a something like it in the skies
In the Ægean, ere a squall); it near'd,
And, growing bigger, took another guise;
Like an aërial ship it tack'd, and steer'd
Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar
Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

LVIII.

But take your choice); and then it grew a cloud,
And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.
But such a cloud! No land e'er saw a crowd
Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;
They shadow'd with their myriads space; their loud
And varied cries were like those of wild-geese
(If nations may be liken'd to a goose),
And realized the phrase of «hell broke loose.»

LIX.

Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,
Who damn'd away his eyes, as heretofore:
There Paddy brogued «by Jasus!»—«What's your wull?»
The temperate Scot exclaim'd: the French ghost swore
In certain terms I shant translate in full,
As the first coachman will; and 'midst the war
The voice of Jonathan was heard to express,
«*Our* President is going to war, I guess.»

LX.

Besides, there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
In short, an universal shoal of shades
From Otaheite's Isle to Salisbury Plain,
Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:
All summon'd by this grand «subpœna,» to
Try if kings mayn 't de damn'd, like me or you.

LXI.

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,
As angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
He turn'd all colours—as a peacock's tail,
Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight
In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
Or distant lightning on the horizon *by* night,
Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

LXII.

Then he address'd himself to Sathan: «Why—
My good old friend, for such I deem you, though
Our different parties make us fight so shy,
I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;
Our difference is *political*, and I
Trust that, whatever may occur below,
You know my great respect for you; and this
Makes me regret whate'er you do amiss—

LXIII.

« Why, my dear Lucifer, would you abuse
My call for witnesses? I did not mean
That you should half of earth and hell produce;
'T is even superfluous, since two honest, clean,
True testimonies are enough: we lose
Our time, nay, our eternity, between
The accusation and defence: if we
Hear both, 't will stretch our immortality.»

LXIV.

Sathan replied, « To me the matter is
Indifferent, in a personal point of view:
I can have fifty better souls than this
With far less trouble than we have gone through
Already; and I merely argued his
Late Majesty of Britain's case with you
Upon a point of form: you may dispose
Of him; I 've kings enough below, God knows!»

LXV.

Thus spoke the demon (late call'd « multifaced»
By multo-scribbling Southey). « Then we'll call
One or two persons of the myriads placed
Around our congress, and dispense with all
The rest,» quoth Michael: « Who may be so graced
As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
It be?» Then Sathan answer'd, « There are many;
But you may choose Jack Wilkes as well as any.»

LXVI.

A merry, cock-eyed, curious looking sprite
Upon the instant started from the throng,
Dress'd in a fashion now forgotten quite;
For all the fashions of the flesh stick long
By people in the next world; where unite
All the costumes since Adam's right or wrong,
From Eve's fig-leaf down to the petticoat,
Almost as scanty, of days less remote.

LXVII.

The spirit look'd around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaim'd, « My friends of all
The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;
So let 's to business: why this general call!
If those are freeholders I see in shrouds,
And 't is for an election that they bawl,
Behold a candidate with unturn'd-coat!
Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?»

LXVIII.

« Sir,» replied Michael, « you mistake: these things
Are of a former life, and what we do
Above is more august; to judge of kings
Is the tribunal met; so now you know.»
« Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,»
Said Wilkes, « are cherubs; and that soul below
Looks much like George the Third; but to my mind
A good deal older—Bless me! is he blind?»

LXIX.

« He is what you behold him, and his doom
Depends upon his deeds,» the angel said.
« If you have aught to arraign in him, the tomb
Gives license to the humblest beggar's head
To lift itself against the loftiest.»—« Some,»
Said Wilkes, « don't wait to see them laid in lead,
For such a liberty—and I, for one,
Have told them what I thought beneath the sun.»

LXX.

« *Above* the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
To urge against him,» said the archangel. « Why,»
Replied the spirit, « since old scores are past,
Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,
With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky
I don't like ripping up old stories, since
His conduct was but natural in a prince.

LXXI.

« Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
But then I blame the man himself much less
Than Bute and Grafton, and shall be unwilling
To see him punish'd here for their excess,
Since they were both damn'd long ago, and still in
Their place below; for me, I have forgiven,
And vote his 'habeas corpus' into heaven.»

LXXII.

« Wilkes,» said the devil, « I understand all this;
You turn'd to half a courtier ere you died,
And seem to think it would not be amiss
To grow a whole one on the other side
Of Charon's ferry; you forget that *his*
Reign is concluded; whatsoe'er betide,
He won't be sovereign more: you've lost your labour,
For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

LXXIII.

« However, I knew what to think of it,
When I beheld you, in your jesting way,
Flitting and whispering round about the spit
Where Belial, upon duty for the day,
With Fox's lard was basting William Pitt,
His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
That fellow even in hell breeds farther ills;
I 'll have him *gagg'd*—'t was one of his own bills.

LXXIV.

« Call Junius!» From the crowd a shadow stalk'd,
And at the name there was a general squeeze,
So that the very ghosts no longer walk'd
In comfort, at their own aërial ease,
But were all ramm'd, and jamm'd (but to be balk'd,
As we shall see) and jostled hands and knees,
Like wind compress'd and pent within a bladder,
Or like a human cholic, which is sadder.

LXXV.

The shadow came! a tall, thin, gray-hair'd figure,
That look'd as it had been a shade on earth;
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
But nought to mark its breeding or its birth:
Now it wax'd little, then again grew bigger,
With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth;
But as you gazed upon its features, they
Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say.

LXXVI.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
Could they distinguish whose the features were;
The devil himself seem'd puzzled even to guess;
They varied like a dream—now here, now there;
And several people swore from out the press,
They knew him perfectly; and one could swear
He was his father; upon which another
Was sure he was his mother's cousin's brother:

LXXVII.

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
A nabob, a man-midwife; but the wight
Mysterious changed his countenance at least
As oft as they their minds: though in full sight
He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
The man was a phantasmagoria in
Himself—he was so volatile and thin!

LXXVIII.

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,
Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
And when that change was hardly well put on,
It varied, till I don't think his own mother
(If that he had a mother) would her son
Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other,
Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
At this epistolary «iron mask.»

LXXIX.

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—
«Three gentlemen at once» (as sagely says
Good Mrs Malaprop); then you might deem
That he was not even *one;* now many rays
Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam
Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days:
Now Burke, now Tooke, he grew to people's fancies,
And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.

LXXX.

I 've an hypothesis—'t is quite my own;
I never let it out till now, for fear
Of doing people harm about the throne,
And injuring some minister or peer
On whom the stigma might perhaps be blown;
It is—my gentle public, lend thine ear!
'T is, that what Junius we are wont to call,
Was *really, truly*, nobody at all.

LXXXI.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
Written without hands, since we daily view
Them written without heads; and books we see
Are fill'd as well without the latter too:
And really till we fix on somebody
For certain sure to claim them as his due,
Their author, like the Niger's mouth, will bother
The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII.

«And who and what art thou?» the archangel said.
«For *that*, you may consult my title-page,»
Replied this mighty shadow of a shade:
«If I have kept my secret half an age,
I scarce shall tell it now.»—«Canst thou upbraid,»
Continued Michael, «George Rex, or allege
Aught further?» Junius answer'd, «You had better
First ask him for *his* answer to my letter.

LXXXIII.

«My charges upon record will outlast
The brass of both his epitaph and tomb.»
«Repent'st thou not,» said Michael, «of some past
Exaggeration? something which may doom
Thyself, if false, as him if true? Thou wast
Too bitter—is it not so? in thy gloom
Of passion?» «Passion!» cried the phantom dim,
«I loved my country, and I hated him.

LXXXIV.

«What I have written, I have written: let
The rest be on his head or mine!» So spoke
Old «nominis umbra;» and while speaking yet,
Away he melted in celestial smoke.
Then Sathan said to Michael, «Don't forget
To call George Washington, and John Horne Tooke,
And Franklin:»—but at this time there was heard
A cry for room, though not a phantom stirr'd.

LXXXV.

At length, with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
Of cherubim appointed to that post,
The devil Asmodeus to the circle made
His way, and look'd as if his journey cost
Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
«What's this?» cried Michael; «why, 't is not a ghost!»
«I know it,» quoth the incubus; «but he
Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI.

«Confound the renegado! I have sprain'd
My left wing, he's so heavy; one would think
Some of his works about his neck were chain'd.
But to the point: while hovering o'er the brink
Of Skiddaw (where, as usual, it still rain'd),
I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
And, stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—
No less on history than the holy bible.

LXXXVII.

«The former is the devil's scripture, and
The latter yours, good Michael; so the affair
Belongs to all of us, you understand.
I snatch'd him up just as you see him there,
And brought him off for sentence out of hand:
I 've scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
At least a quarter it can hardly be:
I dare say that his wife is still at tea.»

LXXXVIII.

Here Sathan said, «I know this man of old,
And have expected him for some time here;
A sillier fellow you will scarce behold,
Or more conceited in his petty sphere:
But surely it was not worth while to fold
Such trash below your wing, Asmodeus dear!
We had the poor wretch safe (without being bored
With carriage) coming of his own accord.

LXXXIX.

«But since he 's here, let 's see what he has done.»
«Done!» cried Asmodeus, «he anticipates
The very business you are now upon,
And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.
Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates?»
«Let 's hear,» quoth Michael, «what he has to say;
You know we're bound to that in every way.»

XC.

Now the bard, glad to get an audience, which
By no means often was his case below,
Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
His voice into that awful note of woe
To all unhappy hearers within reach
Of poets when the tide of rhyme 's in flow;
But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

XCI.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd
Into recitative, in great dismay
Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
To murmur loudly through their long array;
And Michael rose ere he could get a word
Of all his founder'd verses under way,
And cried, « For God's sake stop, my friend! 't were best—
'*Non Di, non homines*—' you know the rest.»

XCII.

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation;
The angels had of course enough of song
When upon service; and the generation
Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
Before, to profit by a new occasion;
The monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd « What! what!
Pye come again? No more—no more of that!»

XCIII.

The tumult grew, an universal cough
Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
When Castlereagh has been up long enough
(Before he was first minister of state,
I mean—the *slaves hear now*), some cried « off, off,»
As at a farce; till, grown quite desperate,
The bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose
(Himself an author) only for his prose.

XCIV.

The varlet was not an ill-favour'd knave;
A good deal like a vulture in the face,
With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
A smart and sharper looking sort of grace
To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
Was by no means so ugly as his case;
But that indeed was hopeless as can be,
Quite a poetic felony « *de se*.»

XCV.

Then Michael blew his trump, and still'd the noise
With one still greater, as is yet the mode
On earth besides; except some grumbling voice,
Which now and then will make a slight inroad
Upon decorous silence, few will twice
Lift up their lungs when fairly overcrow'd;
And now the bard could plead his own bad cause,
With all the attitudes of self-applause.

XCVI.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
He meant no harm in scribbling; 't was his way
Upon all topics; 't was, besides, his bread,
Of which he butter'd both sides; 't would delay
Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread),
And take up rather more time than a day,
To name his works—he would but cite a few—
Wat Tyler—rhymes on Blenheim—Waterloo.

XCVII.

He had written praises of a regicide;
He had written praises of all kings whatever:
He had written for republics, far and wide,
And then against them, bitterer than ever;
For pantisocracy he once had cried
Aloud, a scheme less moral than 't was clever;
Then grew a hearty anti-jacobin—
Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

XCVIII.

He had sung against all battles, and again
In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
Reviewing[1] « the ungentle craft,» and then
Become as base a critic as e'er crawl'd—
Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd:
He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
And more of both than any body knows.

XCIX.

He had written Wesley's life:—here, turning round
To Sathan, « Sir, I 'm ready to write yours,
In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
With notes and preface, all that most allures
The pious purchaser; and there 's no ground
For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
So let me have the proper documents,
That I may add you to my other saints.»

C.

Sathan bow'd, and was silent. « Well, if you,
With amiable modesty, decline
My offer, what says Michael? There are few
Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.
Mine is a pen of all work; not so new
As it was once, but I would make you shine
Like your own trumpet; by the way, my own
Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.

CI.

« But talking about trumpets, here 's my Vision!
Now you shall judge, all people; yes, you shall
Judge with my judgment! and by my decision
Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall!
I settle all these things by intuition,
Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all,
Like king Alfonso![2] When I thus see double,
I save the deity some worlds of trouble.»

CII.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints,
Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
He read the first three lines of the contents;
But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
Had vanish'd with variety of scents,
Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
Like lightning, off from his « melodious twang.»[3]

CIII.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell:
The angels stopp'd their ears and plied their pinions:
The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to hell;
The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions
(For 't is not yet decided where they dwell,
And I leave every man to his opinions);
Michael took refuge in his trump—but lo!
His teeth were set on edge,—he could not blow!

[1] See « Life of H. Kirke White.»

[2] King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that « had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities.»

[3] See Aubrey's account of the apparition which disappeared « with a curious perfume and a melodious twang;» or see the Antiquary, vol. I.

CIV.

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
And at the fifth line knock'd the poet down;
Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,
Into his lake, for there he did not drown,
A different web being by the destinies
Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er
Refor[illegible] shall happen either here or there.

CV.

He first sunk to the bottom—like his works,
But soon rose to the surface—like himself:
For all corrupted things are buoy'd, like corks, [1]
By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
It may be, still; like dull books on a shelf,
In his own den, to scrawl some « Life» or « Vision,»
As Wellborn says—« the devil turn'd precisian.»

[1] A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know.

CVI.

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone
Which kept my optics free from all delusion,
And show'd me what I in my turn have shown:
All I saw further in the last confusion,
Was, that King George slipp'd into heaven for one;
And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

Morgante Maggiore.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF PULCI.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Morgante Maggiore, of the first canto of which this translation is offered, divides with the Orlando Innamorato the honour of having formed and suggested the style and story of Ariosto. The great defects of Boiardo were his treating too seriously the narratives of chivalry, and his harsh style. Ariosto, in his continuation, by a judicious mixture of the gaiety of Pulci, has avoided the one, and Berni, in his reformation of Boiardo's poem, has corrected the other. Pulci may be considered as the precursor and model of Berni altogether, as he has partly been to Ariosto, however inferior to both his copyists. He is no less the founder of a new style of poetry very lately sprung up in England. I allude to that of the ingenious Whistlecraft. The serious poems on Roncesvalles in the same language, and more particularly the excellent one of Mr Merivale, are to be traced to the same source. It has never yet been decided entirely, whether Pulci's intention was or was not to deride the religion, which is one of his favourite topics. It appears to me, that such an intention would have been no less hazardous to the poet than to the priest, particularly in that age and country; and the permission to publish the poem, and its reception among the classics of Italy, prove that it neither was nor is so interpreted. That he intended to ridicule the monastic life, and suffered his imagination to play with the simple dulness of his converted giant, seems evident enough; but surely it were as unjust to accuse him of irreligion on this account, as to denounce Fielding for his Parson Adams, Barnabas, Thwackum, Supple, and the Ordinary in Jonathan Wild,—or Scott, for the exquisite use of his Covenanters in the «Tales of my Landlord.»

In the following translation I have used the liberty of the original with the proper names; as Pulci uses Gan, Ganellon, or Ganelloue; Carlo, Carlomagno, or Carlomano; Rondel, or Rondello, etc. as it suits his convenience, so has the translator. In other respects the version is faithful to the best of the translator's ability in combining his interpretation of the one language with the not very easy task of reducing it to the same versification in the other. The reader is requested to remember that the antiquated language of Pulci, however pure, is not easy to the generality of Italians themselves, from its great mixture of Tuscan proverbs; and he may therefore be more indulgent to the present attempt. How far the translator has succeeded, and whether or no he shall continue the work, are questions which the public will decide. He was induced to make the experiment partly by his love for, and partial intercourse with, the Italian language, of which it is so easy to acquire a slight knowledge, and with which it is so nearly impossible for a foreigner to become accurately conversant. The Italian language is like a capricious beauty, who accords her smiles to all, her favours to few, and sometimes least to those who have courted her longest. The translator wished also to present in an English dress a part at least of a poem never yet rendered into a northern language; at the same time that it has been the original of some of the most celebrated productions on this side of the Alps, as well as of those recent experiments in poetry in England which have been already mentioned.

MORGANTE MAGGIORE.

CANTO I.

I.

In the beginning was the Word next God;
God was the Word, the Word no less was he;
This was in the beginning, to my mode
Of thinking, and without him nought could be:
Therefore, just Lord! from out thy high abode,
Benign and pious, bid an angel flee,
One only, to be my companion, who
Shall help my famous, worthy, old song through.

II.

And thou, oh Virgin! daughter, mother, bride,
Of the same Lord, who gave to you each key
Of heaven, and hell, and every thing beside,
The day thy Gabriel said, « All hail!» to thee,
Since to thy servants pity 's ne'er denied,
With flowing rhymes, a pleasant style and free,
Be to my verses then benignly kind,
And to the end illuminate my mind.

III.

'T was in the season when sad Philomel
Weeps with her sister, who remembers and
Deplores the ancient woes which both befel,
And makes the nymphs enamour'd, to the hand
Of Phaeton by Phœbus loved so well
His car (but temper'd by his sire's command)
Was given, and on the horizon's verge just now
Appear'd, so that Tithonus scratch'd his brow:

IV.

When I prepared my bark first to obey,
As it should still obey, the helm, my mind,
And carry prose or rhyme, and this my lay
Of Charles the Emperor, whom you will find
By several pens already praised; but they
Who to diffuse his glory were inclined,
For all that I can see in prose or verse,
Have understood Charles badly—and wrote worse.

V.

Leonardo Aretino said already,
That if, like Pepin, Charles had had a writer
Of genius quick, and diligently steady,
No hero would in history look brighter;
He in the cabinet being always ready,
And in the field a most victorious fighter,
Who for the church and Christian faith had wrought,
Certes far more than yet is said or thought.

VI.

You still may see at Saint Liberatore,
The abbey no great way from Manopell,
Erected in the Abruzzi to his glory,
Because of the great battle in which fell
A pagan king, according to the story,
And felon people whom Charles sent to hell:
And there are bones so many, and so many,
Near them Giusaffa's would seem few, if any.

VII.

But the world, blind and ignorant, don't prize
His virtues as I wish to see them: thou,
Florence, by his great bounty don't arise,
And hast, and may have, if thou wilt allow,
All proper customs and true courtesies:
Whate'er thou hast acquired from then till now,
With knightly courage, treasure, or the lance,
Is sprung from out the noble blood of France.

VIII.

Twelve paladins had Charles in court, of whom
The wisest and most famous was Orlando;
Him traitor Gan conducted to the tomb
In Roncesvalles, as the villain plann'd too,
While the horn rang so loud, and knell'd the doom
Of their sad rout, though he did all knight can do,
And Dante in his comedy has given
To him a happy seat with Charles in heaven.

IX.

'T was Christmas-day; in Paris all his court
Charles held; the chief, I say, Orlando was,
The Dane; Astolfo there too did resort,
Also Ansuigi, the gay time to pass
In festival and in triumphant sport,
The much renown'd Saint Dennis being the cause;
Angiolin of Bayonne, and Oliver,
And gentle Belinghieri too came there:

X.

Avolio, and Arino, and Othone
Of Normandy, and Richard Paladin,
Wise Hamo, and the ancient Salemone,
Walter of Lion's Mount and Baldovin,
Who was the son of the sad Ganellone,
Were there, exciting too much gladness in
The son of Pepin:—when his knights came hither,
He groan'd with joy to see them altogether.

XI.

But watchful fortune lurking, takes good heed
Ever some bar 'gainst our intents to bring.
While Charles reposed him thus, in word and deed,
Orlando ruled court, Charles, and every thing;
Curst Gan, with envy bursting, had such need
To vent his spite, that thus with Charles the king,
One day he openly began to say,
« Orlando must we always then obey?

XII.

« A thousand times I 've been about to say,
Orlando too presumptuously goes on;
Here are we, counts, kings, dukes, to own thy sway,
Hamo, and Otho, Ogier, Solomon,
Each have to honour thee and to obey;
But he has too much credit near the throne,
Which we won't suffer, but are quite decided
By such a boy to be no longer guided.

XIII.

« And even at Aspramont thou didst begin
To let him know he was a gallant knight,
And by the fount did much the day to win;
But I know *who* that day had won the fight
If it had not for good Gherardo been;
The victory was Almonte's else; his sight
He kept upon the standard, and the laurels
In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles.

XIV.

« If thou rememberest being in Gascony,
When there advanced the nations out of Spain,
The christian cause had suffer'd shamefully,
Had not his valour driven them back again.
Best speak the truth when there 's a reason why:
Know then, oh emperor! that all complain:
As for myself, I shall repass the mounts
O'er which I cross'd with two and sixty counts.

XV.

« 'T is fit thy grandeur should dispense relief,
So that each here may have his proper part,
For the whole court is more or less in grief:
Perhaps thou deem'st this lad a Mars in heart?»
Orlando one day heard this speech in brief,
As by himself it chanced he sate apart:
Displeased he was with Gan because he said it,
But much more still that Charles should give him credit.

XVI.

And with the sword he would have murder'd Gan,
But Oliver thrust in between the pair,
And from his hand extracted Durlindan,
And thus at length they separated were.
Orlando, angry too with Carloman,
Wanted but little to have slain him there;
Then forth alone from Paris went the chief,
And burst and madden'd with disdain and grief.

XVII.

From Ermellina, consort of the Dane,
He took Cortana, and then took Rondell,
And on towards Brara prick'd him o'er the plain;
And when she saw him coming, Aldabelle
Stretch'd forth her arms to clasp her lord again:
Orlando, in whose brain all was not well,
As «Welcome my Orlando home,» she said,
Raised up his sword to smite her on the head.

XVIII.

Like him a fury counsels; his revenge
On Gan in that rash act he seem'd to take,
Which Aldabella thought extremely strange,
But soon Orlando found himself awake;
And his spouse took his bridle on this change,
And he dismounted from his horse, and spake
Of every thing which pass'd without demur,
And then reposed himself some days with her.

XIX.

Then full of wrath departed from the place,
And far as Pagan countries roam'd astray,
And while he rode, yet still at every pace
The traitor Gan remember'd by the way;
And wandering on in error a long space,
An abbey which in a lone desert lay,
'Midst glens obscure, and distant lands he found,
Which form'd the Christian's and the Pagan's bound.

XX.

The abbot was call'd Clermont, and by blood
Descended from Angrante: under cover
Of a great mountain's brow the abbey stood,
But certain savage giants look'd him over!
One Passament was foremost of the brood,
And Alabaster and Morgante hover
Second and third, with certain slings, and throw
In daily jeopardy the place below.

XXI.

The monks could pass the convent gate no more,
Nor leave their cells for water or for wood.
Orlando knock'd, but none would ope, before
Unto the prior it at length seem'd good;
Enter'd, he said that he was taught to adore
Him who was born of Mary's holiest blood,
And was baptized a christian; and then show'd
How to the abbey he had found his road.

XXII.

Said the abbot, «You are welcome; what is mine
We give you freely, since that you believe
With us in Mary Mother's son divine;
And that you may not cavalier, conceive
The cause of our delay to let you in
To be rusticity, you shall receive
The reason why our gate was barr'd to you:
Thus those who in suspicion live must do.

XXIII.

«When hither to inhabit first we came
These mountains, albeit that they are obscure,
As you perceive, yet without fear or blame
They seem'd to promise an asylum sure:
From savage brutes alone, too fierce to tame,
'T was fit our quiet dwelling to secure;
But now, if here we 'd stay, we needs must guard
Against domestic beasts with watch and ward.

XXIV.

«These make us stand, in fact, upon the watch,
For late there have appear'd three giants rough;
What nation or what kingdom bore the batch
I know not, but they are all of savage stuff;
When force and malice with some genius match,
You know, they can do all—*we* are not enough:
And these so much our orisons derange,
I know not what to do till matters change.

XXV.

«Our ancient fathers living the desert in,
For just and holy works were duly fed;
Think not they lived on locusts sole, 't is certain
That manna was rain'd down from heaven instead;
But here 't is fit we keep on the alert in
Our bounds, or taste the stones shower'd down for bread,
From off yon mountain daily raining faster,
And flung by Passamont and Alabaster.

XXVI.

The third, Morgante, 's savagest by far; he
Plucks up pines, beeches, poplar-trees, and oaks,
And flings them, our community to bury,
And all that I can do but more provokes.»
While thus they parley in the cemetery,
A stone from one of their gigantic strokes,
Which nearly crush'd Rondell, came tumbling over,
So that he took a long leap under cover.

XXVII.

«For God sake, cavalier, come in with speed,
The manna 's falling now,» the abbot cried:
«This fellow does not wish my horse should feed,
Dear Abbot,» Roland unto him replied;
«Of restiveness he 'd cure him had he need;
That stone seems with good-will and aim applied.»
The holy father said, «I don't deceive;
They 'll one day fling the mountain, I believe.»

XXVIII.

Orlando bade them take care of Rondello,
And also made a breakfast of his own:
«Abbot,» he said, «I want to find that fellow
Who flung at my good horse yon corner-stone.»
Said the abbot, «Let not my advice seem shallow,
As to a brother dear I speak alone;
I would dissuade you, baron, from this strife,
As knowing sure that you will lose your life.

XXIX.

«That Passamont has in his hand three darts—
Such slings, clubs, ballast-stones, that yield you must;
You know that giants have much stouter hearts
Than us, with reason, in proportion just;
If go you will, guard well against their arts,
For these are very barbarous and robust.»
Orlando answer'd, «This I 'll see, be sure,
And walk the wild on foot to be secure.»

XXX.

The abbot sign'd the great cross on his front,
«Then go you with God's benison and mine;»
Orlando, after he had scaled the mount,
As the abbot had directed, kept the line
Right to the usual haunt of Passamont;
Who, seeing him alone in this design,
Survey'd him fore and aft with eyes observant,
Then asked him, «If he wish'd to stay as servant?»

XXXI.

And promised him an office of great ease;
But, said Orlando, «Saracen insane!
I come to kill you, if it shall so please
God, not to serve as footboy in your train;
You with his monks so oft have broke the peace—
Vile dog! 't is past his patience to sustain.»
The giant ran to fetch his arms, quite furious,
When he received an answer so injurious.

XXXII.

And being return'd to where Orlando stood,
Who had not moved him from the spot, and swinging
The cord, he hurl'd a stone with strength so rude,
As show'd a sample of his skill in slinging;
It roll'd on Count Orlando's helmet good
And head, and set both head and helmet ringing,
So that he swoon'd with pain as if he died,
But more than dead, he seem'd so stupified.

XXXIII.

Then Passamont, who thought him slain outright,
Said, «I will go, and while he lies along,
Disarm me: why such craven did I fight?»
But Christ his servants ne'er abandons long,
Especially Orlando, such a knight,
As to desert would almost be a wrong.
While the giant goes to put off his defences,
Orlando has recall'd his force and senses:

XXXIV.

And loud he shouted, «Giant, where dost go?
Thou thought'st me doubtless for the bier outlaid;
To the right about—without wings thou 'rt too slow
To fly my vengeance—currish renegade!
'T was but by treachery thou laid'st me low.»
The giant his astonishment betray'd,
And turn'd about, and stopp'd his journey on,
And then he stoop'd to pick up a great stone.

XXXV.

Orlando had Cortana bare in hand,
To split the head in twain was what he schemed—
Cortana clave the skull like a true brand,
And pagan Passamont died unredeem'd.
Yet harsh and haughty, as he lay he bann'd,
And most devoutly Macon still blasphemed;
But while his crude, rude blasphemies he heard,
Orlando thank'd the Father and the Word,—

XXXVI.

Saying, «What grace to me thou 'st given!
And I to thee, oh Lord, am ever bound.
I know my life was saved by thee from heaven,
Since by the giant I was fairly down'd.
All things by thee are measured just and even;
Our power without thine aid would nought be found:
I pray thee take heed of me, till I can
At least return once more to Carloman.»

XXXVII.

And having said thus much, he went his way;
And Alabaster he found out below,
Doing the very best that in him lay
To root from out a bank a rock or two.
Orlando, when he reach'd him, loud 'gan say,
«How think'st thou, glutton, such a stone to throw?»
When Alabaster heard his deep voice ring,
He suddenly betook him to his sling,

XXXVIII.

And hurl'd a fragment of a size so large,
That if it had in fact fulfill'd its mission,
And Roland not avail'd him of his targe,
There would have been no need of a physician.
Orlando set himself in turn to charge,
And in his bulky bosom made incision
With all his sword. The lout fell; but, o'erthrown, he
However by no means forgot Macone.

XXXIX.

Morgante had a palace in his mode,
Composed of branches, logs of wood, and earth,
And stretch'd himself at ease in this abode,
And shut himself at night within his birth.
Orlando knock'd, and knock'd, again to goad
The giant from his sleep; and he came forth,
The door to open, like a crazy thing,
For a rough dream had shook him slumbering.

XL.

He thought that a fierce serpent had attack'd him,
And Mahomet he call'd, but Mahomet
Is nothing worth, and not an instant back'd him;
But praying blessed Jesu, he was set
At liberty from all the fears which rack'd him;
And to the gate he came with great regret—
«Who knocks here?» grumbling all the while, said he:
«That,» said Orlando, «you will quickly see.

XLI.

«I come to preach to you, as to your brothers,
Sent by the miserable monks—repentance;
For Providence divine, in you and others,
Condemns the evil done by new acquaintance.
'T is writ on high—your wrong must pay another's;
From heaven itself is issued out this sentence;
Know then, that colder now than a pilaster
I left your Passamont and Alabaster.»

XLII.

Morgante said, «O gentle cavalier?
Now by thy God say me no villany;
The favour of your name I fain would hear,
And if a Christian, speak for courtesy.»
Replied Orlando, «So much to your ear
I by my faith disclose contentedly;
Christ I adore, who is the genuine Lord,
And, if you please, by you may be adored.»

XLIII.

The Saracen rejoin'd in humble tone,
«I have had an extraordinary vision;
A savage serpent fell on me alone,
And Macon would not pity my condition;
Hence to thy God, who for ye did atone
Upon the cross, preferr'd I my petition;
His timely succour set me safe and free,
And I a Christian am disposed to be.»

XLIV.

Orlando answer'd, «Baron just and pious,
If this good wish your heart can really move
To the true God, who will not then deny us
Eternal honour, you will go above,
And, if you please, as friends we will ally us,
And I will love you with a perfect love.
Your idols are vain liars full of fraud,
The only true God is the Christian's God.

XLV.

«The Lord descended to the virgin breast
Of Mary Mother, sinless and divine;
If you acknowledge the Redeemer blest,
Without whom neither sun or star can shine,
Abjure bad Macon's false and felon test,
Your renegado God, and worship mine,—
Baptise yourself with zeal, since you repent.»
To which Morgante answer'd, «I 'm content.»

XLVI.

And then Orlando to embrace him flew,
And made much of his convert, as he cried,
«To the abbey I will gladly marshal you:»
To whom Morgante, «Let us go,» replied;
«I to the friars have for peace to sue.»
Which thing Orlando heard with inward pride,
Saying, «My brother, so devout and good,
Ask the abbot pardon, as I wish you would:

XLVII.

«Since God has granted your illumination,
Accepting you in mercy for his own,
Humility should be your first oblation.»
Morgante said, «For goodness' sake make known—
Since that your God is to be mine—your station,
And let your name in verity be shown,
Then will I every thing at your command do.»
On which the other said, he was Orlando.

XLVIII.

«Then,» quoth the giant, «blessed be Jesu,
A thousand times with gratitude and praise!
Oft, perfect baron! have I heard of you
Through all the different period of my days:
And, as I said, to be your vassal too
I wish, for your great gallantry always.»
Thus reasoning, they continued much to say,
And onwards to the abbey went their way.

XLIX.

And by the way, about the giants dead
Orlando with Morgante reason'd: «Be,
For their decease, I pray you, comforted,
And, since it is God's pleasure, pardon me;
A thousand wrongs unto the monks they bred,
And our true scripture soundeth openly—
Good is rewarded, and chastised the ill,
Which the Lord never faileth to fulfil:

L.

«Because his love of justice unto all
Is such, he wills his judgment should devour
All who have sin, however great or small;
But good he well remembers to restore:
Nor without justice holy could we call
Him, whom I now require you to adore.
All men must make his will their wishes sway,
And quickly and spontaneously obey.

LI.

«And here our doctors are of one accord,
Coming on this point to the same conclusion—
That in their thoughts who praise in heaven the Lord,
If pity e'er was guilty of intrusion
For their unfortunate relations stored
In hell below, and damn'd in great confusion,—
Their happiness would be reduced to nought,
And thus unjust the Almighty's self be thought.

LII.

«But they in Christ have firmest hope, and all
Which seems to him, to them too must appear
Well done; nor could it otherwise befal;
He never can in any purpose err:
If sire or mother suffer endless thrall,
They don't disturb themselves for him or her;
What pleases God to them must joy inspire;—
Such is the observance of the eternal choir.»

LIII.

«A word unto the wise,» Morgante said,
«Is wont to be enough, and you shall see
How much I grieve about my brethren dead;
And if the will of God seem good to me,
Just, as you tell me, 't is in heaven obey'd—
Ashes to ashes,—merry let us be!
I will cut off the hands from both their trunks,
And carry them unto the holy monks.

LIV.

«So that all persons may be sure and certain
That they are dead, and have no further fear
To wander solitary this desert in,
And that they may perceive my spirit clear
By the Lord's grace, who hath withdrawn the curtain
Of darkness, making his bright realm appear.»
He cut his brethren's hands off at these words,
And left them to the savage beasts and birds.

LV.

Then to the abbey they went on together,
Where waited them the abbot in great doubt.
The monks who knew not yet the fact, ran thither
To their superior, all in breathless rout,
Saying, with tremor, «Please to tell us whether
You wish to have this person in or out?»
The abbot, looking through upon the giant,
Too greatly fear'd, at first, to be compliant.

LVI.

Orlando, seeing him thus agitated,
Said quickly, «Abbot, be thou of good cheer;
He Christ believes, as Christian must be rated,
And hath renounced his Macon false;» which here
Morgante with the hands corroborated,
A proof of both the giants' fate quite clear:
Thence, with due thanks, the abbot God adored,
Saying, «Thou hast contented me, oh Lord!»

LVII.

He gazed; Morgante's height he calculated,
And more than once contemplated his size;
And then he said, «Oh giant celebrated,
Know, that no more my wonder will arise,
How you could tear and fling the trees you late did
When I behold your form with my own eyes.
You now a true and perfect friend will show
Yourself to Christ, as once you were a foe.

LVIII.

« And one of our apostles, Saul once named,
Long persecuted sore the faith of Christ,
Till one day by the Spirit being inflamed,
'Why dost thou persecute me thus?' said Christ;
And then from his offence he was reclaimed,
And went for ever after preaching Christ;
And of the faith became a trump, whose sounding
O'er the whole earth is echoing and rebounding.

LIX.

« So, my Morgante, you may do likewise;
He who repents,—thus writes the Evangelist,—
Occasions more rejoicing in the skies
Than ninety-nine of the celestial list.
You may be sure, should each desire arise
With just zeal for the Lord, that you 'll exist
Among the happy saints for evermore;
But you were lost and damn'd to hell before!»

LX.

And thus great honour to Morgante paid
The abbot: many days they did repose.
One day, as with Orlando they both stray'd,
And saunter'd here and there, where'er they chose,
The abbot show'd a chamber, where array'd
Much armour was, and hung up certain bows;
And one of these Morgante for a whim,
Girt on, though useless, he believed, to him.

LXI.

There being a want of water in the place,
Orlando, like a worthy brother, said,
« Morgante, I could wish you in this case
To go for water.» « You shall be obey'd
In all commands,» was the reply, « straightways.»
Upon his shoulder a great tub he laid,
And went out on his way unto a fountain,
Where he was wont to drink below the mountain.

LXII.

Arrived there, a prodigious noise he hears,
Which suddenly along the forest spread;
Whereat from out his quiver he prepares
An arrow for his bow, and lifts his head;
And lo! a monstrous herd of swine appears,
And onward rushes with tempestuous tread,
And to the fountain's brink precisely pours,
So that the giant 's join'd by all the boars.

LXIII.

Morgante at a venture shot an arrow,
Which pierced a pig precisely in the ear,
And pass'd unto the other side quite thorough
So that the boar, defunct, lay tripp'd up near.
Another, to revenge his fellow farrow,
Against the giant rush'd in fierce career,
And reach'd the passage with so swift a foot,
Morgante was not now in time to shoot.

LXIV.

Perceiving that the pig was on him close,
He gave him such a punch upon the head
As floor'd him, so that he no more arose—
Smashing the very bone; and he fell dead
Next to the other. Having seen such blows,
The other pigs along the valley fled;
Morgante on his neck the bucket took,
Full from the spring, which neither swerved nor shook.

LXV.

The tun was on one shoulder, and there were
The hogs on t' other, and he brush'd apace
On to the abbey, though by no means near,
Nor spilt one drop of water in his race.
Orlando, seeing him so soon appear
With the dead boars, and with that brimful vase,
Marvell'd to see his strength so very great;—
So did the abbot, and set wide the gate.

LXVI.

The monks, who saw the water fresh and good,
Rejoiced, but much more to perceive the pork;
All animals are glad at sight of food:
They lay their breviaries to sleep, and work
With greedy pleasure, and in such a mood,
That the flesh needs no salt beneath their fork.
Of rankness and of rot there is no fear,
For all the fasts are now left in arrear.

LXVII.

As though they wish'd to burst at once, they ate;
And gorged so that, as if the bones had been
In water, sorely grieved the dog and cat,
Perceiving that they all were pick'd too clean.
The abbot, who to all did honour great,
A few days after this convivial scene,
Gave to Morgante a fine horse well train'd,
Which he long time had for himself maintain'd.

LXVIII.

The horse Morgante to a meadow led,
To gallop, and to put him to the proof,
Thinking that he a back of iron had,
Or to skim eggs unbroke was light enough;
But the horse, sinking with the pain, fell dead,
And burst, while cold on earth lay head and hoof.
Morgante said, « Get up, thou sulky cur!»
And still continued pricking with the spur.

LXIX.

But finally he thought fit to dismount,
And said, « I am as light as any feather,
And he has burst—to this what say you, count?»
Orlando answered, « Like a ship's mast rather
You seem to me, and with the truck for front:—
Let him go; fortune wills that we together
Should march, but you on foot, Morgante, still.»
To which the giant answered, « So I will.

LXX.

« When there shall be occasion, you shall see
How I approve my courage in the fight.»
Orlando said, « I really think you 'll be,
If it should prove God's will, a goodly knight,
Nor will you napping there discover me:
But never mind your horse, though out of sight
'T were best to carry him into some wood,
If but the means or way I understood.»

LXXI.

The giant said, « Then carry him I will,
Since that to carry me he was so slack—
To render, as the gods do, good for ill;
But lend a hand to place him on my back.»
Orlando answer'd, « If my counsel still
May weigh, Morgante, do not undertake
To lift or carry this dead courser, who,
As you have done to him, will do to you.

LXXII.

«Take care he don't revenge himself, though dead,
As Nessus did of old beyond all cure;
I don't know if the fact you 've heard or read,
But he will make you burst, you may be sure.»
«But help him on my back,» Morgante said,
«And you shall see what weight I can endure:
In place, my gentle Roland, of this palfrey,
With all the bells, I 'd carry yonder belfry.»

LXXIII.

The abbot said, «The steeple may do well,
But, for the bells, you 've broken them, I wot.»
Morgante answered, «Let them pay in hell
The penalty, who lie dead in yon grot:»
And hoisting up the horse from where he fell,
He said, «Now look if I the gout have got,
Orlando, in the legs—or if I have force;»—
And then he made two gambols with the horse.

LXXIV.

Morgante was like any mountain framed;
So if he did this, 't is no prodigy;
But secretly himself Orlando blamed,
Because he was one of his family;
And, fearing that he might be hurt or maim'd,
Once more he bade him lay his burthen by:
«Put down, nor bear him further the desert in.»
Morgante said, «I 'll carry him for certain.»

LXXV.

He did; and stow'd him in some nook away,
And to the abbey then return'd with speed.
Orlando said, «Why longer do we stay?
Morgante, here is nought to do indeed.»
The abbot by the hand he took one day,
And said with great respect, he had agreed
To leave his reverence; but for this decision
He wish'd to have his pardon and permission.

LXXVI.

The honours they continued to receive
Perhaps exceeded what his merits claim'd:
He said, «I mean, and quickly, to retrieve
The lost days of time past, which may be blamed;
Some days ago I should have ask'd your leave,
Kind father, but I really was ashamed,
And know not how to show my sentiment,
So much I see you with our stay content.

LXXVII.

«But in my heart I bear through every clime,
The abbot, abbey, and this solitude—
So much I love you in so short a time;
For me, from heaven reward you with all good,
The God so true, the eternal Lord sublime!
Whose kingdom at the last hath open stood:
Meanwhile we stand expectant of your blessing,
And recommend us to your prayers with pressing.»

LXXVIII.

Now when the abbot Count Orlando heard,
His heart grew soft with inner tenderness,
Such fervour in his bosom bred each word;
And, «Cavalier,» he said, «if I have less
Courteous and kind to your great worth appear'd,
Than fits me for such gentle blood to express,
I know I 've done too little in this case;
But blame our ignorance, and this poor place.

LXXIX.

«We can indeed but honour you with masses,
And sermons, thanksgivings, and pater-nosters,
Hot suppers, dinners (fitting other places
In verity much rather than the cloisters);
But such a love for you my heart embraces,
For thousand virtues which your bosom fosters,
That wheresoe'er you go, I too shall be,
And, on the other part, you rest with me.

LXXX.

«This may involve a seeming contradiction,
But you, I know, are sage, and feel, and taste,
And understand my speech with full conviction.
For your just pious deeds may you be graced
With the Lord's great reward and benediction,
By whom you were directed to this waste:
To his high mercy is our freedom due,
For which we render thanks to him and you.

LXXXI.

«You saved at once our life and soul: such fear
The giants caused us, that the way was lost
By which we could pursue a fit career
In search of Jesus and the saintly host;
And your departure breeds such sorrow here,
That comfortless we all are to our cost;
But months and years you could not stay in sloth,
Nor are you form'd to wear our sober cloth;

LXXXII.

«But to bear arms and wield the lance; indeed,
With these as much is done as with this cowl,
In proof of which the Scripture you may read.
This giant up to heaven may bear his soul
By your compassion: now in peace proceed.
Your state and name I seek not to unroll,
But, if I 'm ask'd, this answer shall be given,
That here an angel was sent down from heaven.

LXXXIII.

«If you want armour or aught else, go in,
Look o'er the wardrobe, and take what you choose,
And cover with it o'er this giant's skin.»
Orlando answer'd, «If there should lie loose
Some armour, ere our journey we begin,
Which might be turn'd to my companion's use,
The gift would be acceptable to me.»
The abbot said to him, «Come in and see.»

LXXXIV.

And in a certain closet, where the wall
Was cover'd with old armour like a crust,
The abbot said to them, «I give you all.»
Morgante rummaged piecemeal from the dust
The whole, which, save one cuirass, was too small,
And that too had the mail inlaid with rust.
They wonder'd how it fitted him exactly,
Which ne'er had suited others so compactly.

LXXXV.

'T was an immeasurable giant's, who
By the great Milo of Agrante fell
Before the abbey many years ago.
The story on the wall was figured well;
In the last moment of the abbey's foe,
Who long had waged a war implacable:
Precisely as the war occurr'd they drew him,
And there was Milo as he overthrew him.

LXXXVI.

Seeing this history, Count Orlando said
In his own heart, «Oh God! who in the sky
Know'st all things, how was Milo hither led,
Who caused the giant in this place to die?»
And certain letters, weeping, then he read,
So that he could not keep his visage dry,—
As I will tell in the ensuing story.
From evil keep you the high King of Glory!

Note 1. Page 500, line 57.

He gave him such a punch upon the head.

«Gli dette in sulla testa un gran punzone.» It is strange that Pulci should have literally anticipated the technical terms of my old friend and master, Jackson, and the art which he has carried to its highest pitch. «*A punch on the head*,» or «*a punch* in *the head*,» «un punzone in sulla testa,» is the exact and frequent phrase of our best pugilists, who little dream that they are talking the purest Tuscan.

Waltz,

AN APOSTROPHIC HYMN.

Qualis in Eurotæ ripis, aut per juga Cynthi
Exercet Diana choros.
VIRGIL.

Such on Eurotas' banks, or Cynthia's height,
Diana seems: and so she charms the sight,
When in the dance the graceful goddess leads
The quire of nymphs, and overtops their heads.
DRYDEN'S VIRGIL.

TO THE PUBLISHER.

Sir,

I am a country gentleman of a midland county. I might have been a parliament-man for a certain borough, having had the offer of as many votes as General T. at the general election in 1812.[1] But I was all for domestic happiness; as fifteen years ago, on a visit to London, I married a middle-aged maid of honour. We lived happily at Hornem Hall till last season, when my wife and I were invited by the Countess of Waltzaway (a distant relation of my spouse) to pass the winter in town. Thinking no harm, and our girls being come to a marriageable (or as they call it, *marketable*) age, and having besides a chancery suit inveterately entailed upon the family estate, we came up in our old chariot, of which, by the bye, my wife grew so much ashamed in less than a week, that I was obliged to buy a second-hand barouche, of which I might mount the box, Mrs. H. says, if I could drive, but never see the inside—that place being reserved for the honourable Augustus Tiptoe, her partner-general and opera-knight. Hearing great praises of Mrs H.'s dancing (she was famous for birth-night minuets in the latter end of the last century), I unbooted, and went to a ball at the countess's, expecting to see a country dance, or, at most, cotillions, reels, and all the old paces to the newest tunes. But, judge of my surprize, on arriving, to see poor dear Mrs Hornem with her arms half round the loins of a huge hussar-looking gentleman I never set eyes on before; and his, to say truth, rather more than half round her waist, turning round, and round, and round, to a d——d see-saw up and down sort of tune, that reminded me of the «black joke» only more «*affettuoso*,» till it made me quite giddy with wondering they were not so. By and bye they stopped a bit, and I thought they would sit or fall down:—but, no; with Mrs H.'s hand on his shoulder, «*quam familiariter*,»[2] (as Terence said when I was at school), they walked about a minute, and then at it again, like two cock-chafers spitted on the same bodkin. I asked what all this meant, when, with a loud laugh, a child no older than our Wilhelmina (a name I never heard but in the Vicar of Wakefield, though her mother would call her after the Princess of Swappenbach), said, «Lord, Mr Hornem, can't you see they are valtzing,» or waltzing (I forget which); and then up she got, and her mother and sister, and away they went, and round-abouted it till supper-time. Now that I know what it is, I like it of all things, and so does Mrs H. (though I have broken my shins, and four times overturned Mrs Hornem's maid in practising the preliminary steps in a morning.) Indeed, so much do I like it, that having a turn for rhyme, tastily displayed in some election ballads, and songs in honour of all the victories (but till lately I have had little practise in that way), I sat down, and with the aid of W. F. Esq. and a few hints from Dr B. (whose recitations I attend, and am monstrous fond of Master B.'s manner of delivering his father's late successful D. L. address), I composed the following hymn, wherewithal to make my sentiments known to the public, whom, nevertheless, I heartily despise as well as the critics.

I am, Sir, yours, etc. etc.

HORACE HORNEM.

WALTZ.

Muse of the many-twinkling feet![3] whose charms
Are now extended up from legs to arms;
Terpsichore![1]—too long misdeem'd a maid—
Reproachful term—bestow'd but to upbraid—
Henceforth in all the bronze of brightness shine,
The least a vestal of the virgin Nine.
Far be from thee and thine the name of prude;
Mock'd, yet triumphant; sneer'd at, unsubdued;
Thy legs must move to conquer as they fly,
If but thy coats are reasonably high;
Thy breast—if bare enough—requires no shield;
Dance forth—*sans armour* thou shalt take the field,
And own—impregnable to *most* assaults,
Thy not too lawfully begotten «Waltz.»

Hail, nimble nymph! to whom the young hussar,
The whisker'd votary of waltz and war—
His night devotes, despite of spur and boots,
A sight unmatch'd since Orpheus and his brutes:
Hail spirit-stirring Waltz!—beneath whose banners
A modern hero fought for modish manners;
On Hounslow's heath to rival Wellesley's[4] fame,
Cock'd—fired—and miss'd his man—but gain'd his aim.
Hail moving muse! to whom the fair one's breast
Gives all it can, and bids us take the rest.
Oh! for the flow of Busby, or of Fitz,
The latter's loyalty, the former's wits,
To «energize the object I pursue,»
And give both Belial and his dance their due!—

Imperial Waltz! imported from the Rhine
(Famed for the growth of pedigrees and wine),
Long be thine import from all duty free,
And hock itself be less esteem'd than thee;
In some few qualities alike—for hock
Improves our cellar—*thou* our living stock.
The head to hock belongs—thy subtler art
Intoxicates alone the heedless heart:
Through the full veins thy gentler poison swims,
And wakes to wantonness the willing limbs.

Oh, Germany! how much to thee we owe,
As heaven-born Pitt can testify below;
Ere cursed confederation made thee France's,
And only left us thy d——d debts and dances;
Of subsidies and Hanover bereft,
We bless thee still—for George the third is left!
Of kings the best—and last, not least in worth,
For graciously begetting George the fourth.
To Germany, and highnesses serene,
Who owe us millions—don't we owe the queen?
To Germany, what owe we not besides?
So oft bestowing Brunswickers and brides;
Who paid for vulgar, with her royal blood,
Drawn from the stem of each Teutonic stud:
Who sent us—so be pardon'd all her faults—
A dozen dukes—some kings—a queen—and Waltz.

But peace to her—her emperor and diet,
Though now transferr'd to Bonaparte's «fiat;»
Back to my theme—O! Muse of motion say,
How first to Albion found thy waltz her way?

Borne on the breath of hyperborean gales,
From Hamburg's port (while Hamburg yet had *mails*),
Ere yet unlucky fame—compell'd to creep
To snowy Gottenburg—was chill'd to sleep;
Or, starting from her slumbers, deign'd arise,
Heligoland! to stock thy mart with lies;
While unburnt Moscow[5] yet had news to send,
Nor owed her fiery exit to a friend,
She came—Waltz came—and with her certain sets
Of true dispatches, and as true gazettes;
Then flamed of Austerlitz the blest dispatch,
Which Moniteur nor Morning Post can match;
And—almost crush'd beneath the glorious news—
Ten plays, and forty tales of Kotzebue's;
One envoy's letters, six composers' airs,
And loads from Frankfort and from Leipsic fairs;
Meiner's four volumes upon womankind,
Like Lapland witches to ensure a wind;
Brunck's heaviest tome for ballast, and to back it,
Of Heyné, such as should not sink the packet.
Fraught with this cargo—and her fairest freight,
Delightful Waltz, on tiptoe for a mate,
The welcome vessel reach'd the genial strand,
And round her flock'd the daughters of the land.
Not decent David, when, before the ark,
His grand pas-seul excited some remark;
Not love-lorn Quixote, when his Sancho thought
The knight's fandango friskier than it ought;
Not soft Herodias, when with winning tread
Her nimble feet danced off another's head;
Not Cleopatra on her galley's deck,
Display'd so much of *leg*, or more of *neck*,
Than thou, ambrozial Waltz, when first the moon
Beheld thee twirling to a Saxon tune!

To you—ye husbands of ten years! whose brows
Ache with the annual tributes of a spouse;
To you, of nine years less—who only bear
The budding sprouts of those that you *shall* wear,
With added ornaments around them roll'd,
Of native brass, or law-awarded gold;
To you, ye matrons, ever on the watch
To mar a son's, or make a daughter's match;
To you, ye children of—whom chance accords—
Always the ladies, and *sometimes* their lords;
To you—ye single gentlemen! who seek
Torments for life, or pleasures for a week;
As Love or Hymen your endeavours guide,
To gain your own, or snatch another's bride;
To one and all the lovely stranger came,
And every ball-room echoes with her name.

Endearing Waltz—to thy more melting tune
Bow Irish jig, and ancient rigadoon;
Scotch reels avaunt! and country dance, forego
Your future claims to each fantastic toe;
Waltz—Waltz—alone both legs and arms demands,
Liberal of feet, and lavish of her hands;
Hands which may freely range in public sight
Where ne'er before—but—pray «put out the light.»
Methinks the glare of yonder chandelier
Shines much too far—or I am much too near;
And true, though strange—Waltz whispers this remark,
«My slippery steps are safest in the dark!»
But here the muse with due decorum halts,
And lends her longest petticoat to Waltz.

Observant travellers! of every time;
Ye quartos! publish'd upon every clime;
O say, shall dull Romaika's heavy round,
Fandango's wriggle, or Bolero's bound;
Can Egypt's Almas[6]—tantalizing group—
Columbia's caperers to the warlike whoop—
Can aught from cold Kamschatka to Cape Horn
With Waltz compare, or after Waltz be borne?
Ah, no! from Morier's pages down to Galt's,
Each tourist pens a paragraph for «Waltz.»

Shades of those belles, whose reign began of yore,
With George the Third's—and ended long before—
Though in your daughters' daughters yet you thrive,
Burst from your lead, and be yourselves alive!
Back to the ball-room speed your spectred host;
Fool's Paradise is dull to that you lost.
No treacherous powder bids conjecture quake;
No stiff starch'd stays make meddling fingers ache;
(Transferr'd to those ambiguous things that ape
Goats in their visage,[7] women in their shape);
No damsel faints when rather closely press'd,
But more caressing seems when most caress'd;
Superfluous hartshorn, and reviving salts,
Both banish'd by the sovereign cordial «Waltz.»

Seductive Waltz!—though on thy native shore
Even Werter's self proclaim'd thee half a whore;
Werter—to decent vice though much inclined;
Yet warm, not wanton; dazzled, but not blind—
Though gentle Genlis, in her strife with Stael,
Would even proscribe thee from a Paris ball;
The fashion hails—from countesses to queens,
And maids and valets waltz behind the scenes;
Wide and more wide thy witching circle spreads,
And turns—if nothing else—at least our *heads;*
With thee even clumsy cits attempt to bounce,
And cockneys practise what they can't pronounce.
Gods! how the glorious theme my strain exalts,
And rhyme finds partner rhyme in praise of «Waltz.»

Blest was the time Waltz chose for her *début;*
The court, the R——t, like herself were new;[8]
New face for friends, for foes some new rewards,
New ornaments for black and royal guards;
New laws to hang the rogues that roar'd for bread;
New coins (most new[9]) to follow those that fled;
New victories—nor can we prize them less,
Though Jenky wonders at his own success;
New wars, because the old succeed so well,
That most survivors envy those who fell;
New mistresses—no—old—and yet 't is true,
Though they be *old,* the *thing* is something new;
Each new, quite new—(except some ancient tricks[10]),
New white-sticks, gold-sticks, broom-sticks, all new sticks!
With vests or ribands—deck'd alike in hue,
New troopers strut, new turncoats blush in blue;
So saith the muse—my——[11], what say you?
Such was the time when Waltz might best maintain
Her new preferments in this novel reign;
Such was the time, nor ever yet was such,
Hoops are *no more,* and petticoats *not much;*
Morals and minuets, virtue and her stays,
And tell-tale powder—all have had their days.

The ball begins—the honours of the house
First duly done by daughter or by spouse,
Some potentate—or royal or serene—
With K—t's gay grace, or sapient G—st—r's mien,
Leads forth the ready dame, whose rising flush
Might once have been mistaken for a blush.
From where the garb just leaves the bosom free,
That spot where hearts[12] were once supposed to be;
Round all the confines of the yielded waist,
The strangest hand may wander undisplaced;
The lady's in return may grasp as much
As princely paunches offer to her touch.
Pleased round the chalky floor how well they trip,
One hand reposing on the royal hip;
The other to the shoulder no less royal
Ascending with affection truly loyal;
Thus front to front the partners move or stand,
The foot may rest, but none withdraw the hand;
And all in turn may follow in their rank,
The Earl of—Asterisk—and Lady—Blank;
Sir—such a one—with those of fashion's host,
For whose blest surnames—vide «Morning Post;»
(Or if for that *impartial* print too late,
Search Doctors' Commons six months from my date)—
Thus all and each, in movement swift or slow,
The genial contact gently undergo;
Till some might marvel, with the modest Turk,
If «nothing follows all this palming work?»[13]
True, honest Mirza—you may trust my rhyme—
Something does follow at a fitter time;
The breast thus publicly resign'd to man,
In private may resist him——if it can.

O ye! who loved our grandmothers of yore,
F-tz—t—k, Sh-r—d—n, and many more!
And thou, my prince! whose sovereign taste and will
It is to love the lovely beldames still;
Thou, ghost of Q————! whose judging sprite
Satan may spare to peep a single night,
Pronounce—if ever in your days of bliss—
Asmodeus struck so bright a stroke as this;
To teach the young ideas how to rise,
Flush in the cheek and languish in the eyes;
Rush to the heart, and lighten through the frame,
With half-told wish, and ill-dissembled flame;
For prurient nature still will storm the breast—
Who, tempted thus, can answer for the rest?

But ye—who never felt a single thought
For what our morals are to be or ought;
Who wisely wish the charms you view to reap,
Say—would you make those beauties quite so cheap?
Hot from the hands promiscuously applied,
Round the slight waist; or down the glowing side;
Where were the rapture then to clasp the form,
From this lewd grasp, and lawless contact warm?
At once love's most endearing thought resign,
To press the hand so press'd by none but thine;
To gaze upon that eye which never met
Another's ardent look without regret;
Approach the lip which all, without restraint,
Come near enough—if not to touch—to taint;
If such thou lovest—love her then no more,
Or give—like her—caresses to a score;
Her mind with these is gone, and with it go
The little left behind it to bestow.

Voluptuous Waltz! and dare I thus blaspheme?
Thy bard forgot thy praises were his theme.
Terpsichore forgive!—at every ball
My wife *now* waltzes—and my daughters *shall;*
My son (or stop—'t is needless to inquire—
These little accidents should ne'er transpire;
Some ages hence our genealogic tree
Will wear as green a bough for him as me),
Waltzing shall rear, to make our name amends,
Grandsons for me—in heirs to all his friends.

NOTES.

Note 1. Page 502, line 4.

State of the poll (last day) 5.

Note 2. Page 502, line 6.

My latin is all forgotten, if a man can be said to have forgotten what he never remembered; but I bought my title-page motto of a Catholic priest for a three shilling bank token, after much haggling for the *even* sixpence. I grudged the money to a papist, being all for the memory of Perceval, and «No popery;» and quite regretting the downfall of the pope, because we can't burn him any more.

Note 3. Page 503, line 1.

«Glance their many-twinkling feet.»—Gray.

Note 4. Page 503, line 21.

To rival Lord W.'s, or his nephew's, as the reader pleases:—the one gained a pretty woman, whom he deserved, by fighting for; and the other has been fighting in the Peninsula many a long day, «by Shrewsbury clock,» without gaining any thing in *that* country but the title of «the Great Lord,» and «the Lord,» which savours of profanation, having been hitherto applied only to that Being, to whom «*Te Deums*» for carnage are the rankest blasphemy.—It is to be presumed the general will one day return to his Sabine farm, there

«To tame the genius of the stubborn plain,
Almost as quickly as he conquer'd Spain!»

The Lord Peterborough conquered continents in a summer; we do more—we contrive both to conquer and lose them in a shorter season. If the «great Lord's» *Cincinnatian* progress in agriculture be no speedier than the proportional average of time in Pope's couplet, it will, according to the farmer's proverb, be «ploughing with dogs.»

By the bye—one of this illustrious person's new titles is forgotten—it is, however, worth remembering—«*Salvador del mundo!*»—*credite, posteri!* If this be the appellation annexed by the inhabitants of the Peninsula to the name of a *man* who has not yet saved them—query—are they worth saving even in this world? for, according to the mildest modifications of any Christian creed, those three words make the odds much against them in the next.—«Saviour of the world,» quotha!—it were to be wished that he, or any one else, could save a corner of it—his country. Yet this stupid misnomer, although it shows the near connexion between superstition and impiety, so far has its use, that it proves there can be little to dread from those Catholics (inquisitorial Catholics too) who can confer such an appellation on a *Protestant*. I suppose next year he will be entitled the «Virgin Mary:» if so, Lord George Gordon himself would have nothing to object to such liberal bastards of our Lady of Babylon.

Note 5. Page 503, line 7.

The patriotic arson of our amiable allies cannot be sufficiently commended—nor subscribed for. Amongst other details omitted in the various dispatches of our eloquent ambassador, he did not state (being too much occupied with the exploits of Colonel C——, in swimming rivers frozen, and galloping over roads impassable), that one entire province perished by famine in the most melancholy manner, as follows:—In General Rostopchin's consummate conflagration, the consumption of tallow and train oil was so great, that the market was inadequate to the demand: and thus one hundred and thirty-three thousand persons were starved to death, by being reduced to wholesome diet! The lamplighters of London have since subscribed a pint (of oil) a piece, and the tallow-chandlers have unanimously voted 'a quantity of best moulds (four to the pound), to the relief of the surviving Scythians—the scarcity will soon, by such exertions, and a proper attention to the *quality* rather than the quantity of provision, be totally alleviated. It is said, in return, that the untouched Ukraine has subscribed sixty thousand beeves for a day's meal to our suffering manufacturers.

Note 6. Page 504, line 5.

Dancing girls—who do for hire what waltz doth gratis.

Note 7. Page 504, line 20.

It cannot be complained now, as in the Lady Baussiere's time, of the «Sieur de la Croix,» that there be «no whiskers;» but how far these are indications of valour in the field, or elsewhere, may *still* be questionable. Much may be and hath been avouched on both sides. In the olden time philosophers had whiskers, and soldiers none—Scipio himself was shaven—Hannibal thought his one eye handsome enough without a beard; but Adrian, the Emperor, wore a beard (having warts on his chin, which neither the Empress Sabina, nor even the courtiers could abide)—Turenne had whiskers, Marlborough none—Buonaparte is unwhiskered, the R—— whiskered; «*argal*» greatness of mind and whiskers may or may not go together; but certainly the different occurrences, since the growth of the last-mentioned, go further in behalf of whiskers than the anathema of Anselm did *against* long hair in the reign of Henry I.

Formerly *red* was a favourite colour. See Lodowick Barrey's comedy of Ram Alley, 1661, act I. scene 1.

«*Taffeta.* Now, for a wager—What coloured beard comes next by the window?

«*Adriana.* A black man's, I think.

«*Taffeta.* I think not so: I think a *red,* for that is most in fashion.»

There is «nothing new under the sun;» but *red,* then a *favourite,* has now subsided into a *favourite's* colour.

Note 8. Page 504, line 40.

An anachronism—Waltz, and the battle of Austerlitz, are before said to have opened the ball together: the bard means (if he means any thing, waltz was not so much in vogue till the R——t attained the acmé of his popularity. Waltz, the comet, whiskers, and the new government, illuminated heaven and earth, in all

their glory, much about the same time; of these the comet only has disappeared; the other three continue to astonish us still.

PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Note 9. Page 504, line 44.

Amongst others a new ninepence—a creditable coin now forthcoming, worth a pound, in paper, at the fairest calculation.

Note 10. Page 504, line 51.

«Oh that *right* should thus overcome *might!*» Who does not remember the «delicate Investigation» in the «Merry Wives of Windsor?»

«*Ford.* Pray you come near: if I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me; then let me be your jest; I deserve it. How now? whither bear you this?»

«*Mrs Ford.* What have you to do whither they bear it?—you were best meddle with buck-washing.»

Note 11. Page 504, line 56.

The gentle, or ferocious reader, may fill up the blank as he pleases—there are several dissyllabic names at *his* service (being already in the R——t's): it would not be fair to back any peculiar initial against the alphabet, as every month will add to the list now entered for the sweepstakes—a distinguished consonant is said to be the favourite, much against the wishes of the *knowing ones.*

Note 12. Page 504, line 74.

«We have changed all that,» says the Mock Doctor, «'t is all gone—Asmodeus knows where. After all, it is of no great importance how women's hearts are disposed of; they have nature's privilege to distribute them as absurdly as possible. But there are also some men with hearts so thoroughly bad, as to remind us of those phenomena often mentioned in natural history; viz. a mass of solid stone—only to be opened by force—and when divided, you discover a *toad* in the centre, lively, and with the reputation of being venomous.»

Note 13. Page 504, line 94.

In Turkey a pertinent—here an impertinent and superfluous question—literally put, as in the text, by a Persian to Morier, on seeing a waltz in Pera.—*Vide Morier's Travels.*

The Lament of Tasso.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AT Ferrara (in the library) are preserved the original MSS. of Tasso's Gierusalemme and of Guarini's Pastor Fido, with letters of Tasso, one from Titian to Ariosto; and the inkstand and chair, the tomb and the house of the latter. But as misfortune has a greater interest for posterity, and little or none for the cotemporary, the cell where Tasso was confined in the hospital of St Anna attracts a more fixed attention than the residence or the monument of Ariosto—at least it had this effect on me. There are two inscriptions, one on the outer gate, the second over the cell itself, inviting, unnecessarily, the wonder and the indignation of the spectator. Ferrara is much decayed and depopulated; the castle still exists entire; and I saw the court where Parisina and Hugo were beheaded, according to the annal of Gibbon.

THE LAMENT OF TASSO.

I.

LONG years!—It tries the thrilling frame to bear
And eagle-spirit of a Child of song—
Long years of outrage, calumny and wrong;
Imputed madness, prison'd solitude,
And the mind's canker in its savage mood,
When the impatient thirst of light and air
Parches the heart; and the abhorr'd grate,
Marring the sunbeams with its hideous shade,
Works through the throbbing eyeball to the brain
With a hot sense of heaviness and pain;
And bare, at once, captivity display'd
Stands scoffing through the never-open'd gate,
Which nothing through its bars admits, save day
And tasteless food, which I have eat alone
Till its unsocial bitterness is gone;
And I can banquet like a beast of prey,
Sullen and lonely, couching in the cave
Which is my lair, and—it may be—my grave.
All this hath somewhat worn me, and may wear,
But must be borne. I stoop not to despair;
For I have battled with mine agony,
And made me wings wherewith to overfly
The narrow circus of my dungeon wall,
And freed the Holy Sepulchre from thrall;
And revell'd among men and things divine,
And pour'd my spirit over Palestine,
In honour of the sacred war for him,
The God who was on earth and is in heaven,
For he hath strengthen'd me in heart and limb.
That through this sufferance I might be forgiven,
I have employ'd my penance to record
How Salem's shrine was won, and how adored.

II.

But this is o'er—my pleasant task is done:
My long-sustaining friend of many years!
If I do blot thy final page with tears,
Know that my sorrows have wrung from me none.
But thou, my young creation! my soul's child!
Which ever playing round me came and smiled,
And woo'd me from myself with thy sweet sight,
Thou too art gone—and so is my delight:
And therefore do I weep and inly bleed
With this last bruise upon a broken reed.
Thou too art ended—what is left me now?
For I have anguish yet to bear—and now?
I know not that—but in the innate force
Of my own spirit shall be found resource.
I have not sunk, for I had no remorse,

Nor cause for such: they call'd me mad—and why?
Oh Leonora! wilt not *thou* reply?
I was indeed delirious in my heart
To lift my love so lofty as thou art;
But still my frenzy was not of the mind;
I knew my fault, and feel my punishment
Not less because I suffer it unbent.
That thou wert beautiful, and I not blind,
Hath been the sin which shuts me from mankind;
But let them go, or torture as they will,
My heart can multiply thine image still;
Successful love may sate itself away,
The wretched are the faithful; 't is their fate
To have all feeling save the one decay,
And every passion into one dilate,
As rapid rivers into ocean pour;
But ours is fathomless, and hath no shore.

III.

Above me, hark! the long and maniac cry
Of minds and bodies in captivity.
And hark! the lash and the increasing howl,
And the half-inarticulate blasphemy!
There be some here with worse than frenzy foul,
Some who do still goad on the o'er-labour'd mind,
And dim the little light that 's left behind
With needless torture, as their tyrant will
Is wound up to the lust of doing ill:
With these and with their victims am I class'd,
'Mid sounds and sights like these long years have pass'd;
'Mid sights and sounds like these my life may close:
So let it be—for then I shall repose.

IV.

I have been patient, let me be so yet;
I had forgotten half I would forget,
But it revives—oh! would it were my lot
To be forgetful as I am forgot!—
Feel I not wroth with those who bade me dwell
In this vast lazar-house of many woes?
Where laughter is not mirth, nor thought the mind,
Nor words a language, nor even men mankind;
Where cries reply to curses, shrieks to blows,
And each is tortured in his separate hell—
For we are crowded in our solitudes—
Many, but each divided by the wall,
Which echoes Madness in her babbling moods;—
While all can hear, none heed his neighbour's call—
None! save that One, the veriest wretch of all,
Who was not made to be the mate of these,
Nor bound between distraction and disease.
Feel I not wroth with those who placed me here?
Who have debased me in the minds of men,
Debarring me the usage of my own,
Blighting my life in best of its career,
Branding my thoughts as things to shun and fear?
Would I not pay them back these pangs again,
And teach them inward sorrow's stifled groan?
The struggle to be calm, and cold distress,
Which undermines our stoical success?
No!—still too proud to be vindictive—I
Have pardon'd princes' insults, and would die.
Yes, sister of my sovereign! for thy sake
I weed all bitterness from out my breast,
It hath no business where *thou* art a guest;
Thy brother hates—but I can not detest,
Thou pitiest not—but I can not forsake.

V.

Look on a love which knows not to despair,
But all unquench'd is still my better part,
Dwelling deep in my shut and silent heart
As dwells the gather'd lightning in its cloud,
Encompass'd with its dark and rolling shroud,
Till struck,—forth flies the all-etherial dart!
And thus at the collision of thy name
The vivid thought still flashes through my frame.
And for a moment all things as they were
Flit by me;—they are gone—I am the same.
And yet my love without ambition grew;
I knew thy state, my station, and I knew
A princess was no love-mate for a bard;
I told it not, I breathed it not, it was
Sufficient to itself, its own reward;
And if my eyes reveal'd it, they, alas!
Were punish'd by the silentness of thine,
And yet I did not venture to repine.
Thou wert to me a crystal-girded shrine,
Worshipp'd at holy distance, and around
Hallow'd and meekly kiss'd the saintly ground;
Not for thou wert a princess, but that love
Had robed thee with a glory, and array'd
Thy lineaments in beauty that dismay'd—
Oh! not dismay'd—but awed, like one above;
And in that sweet severity there was
A something which all softness did surpass—
I know not how—thy genius master'd mine—
My star stood still before thee:—if it were
Presumptuous thus to love without design,
That sad fatality hath cost me dear;
But thou art dearest still, and I should be
Fit for this cell, which wrongs me, but for *thee*.
The very love which lock'd me to my chain
Hath lighten'd half its weight; and for the rest,
Though heavy, lent me vigour to sustain,
And look to thee with undivided breast,
And foil the ingenuity of pain.

VI.

It is no marvel—from my very birth
My soul was drunk with love, which did pervade
And mingle with whate'er I saw on earth;
Of objects all inanimate I made
Idols, and out of wild and lonely flowers,
And rocks, whereby they grew, a paradise,
Where I did lay me down within the shade
Of waving trees, and dream'd uncounted hours,
Though I was chid for wandering; and the wise
Shook their white aged heads o'er me, and said
Of such materials wretched men were made,
And such a truant boy would end in woe,
And that the only lesson was a blow;
And then they smote me, and I did not weep,
But cursed them in my heart, and to my haunt
Return'd and wept alone, and dream'd again
The visions which arise without a sleep.
And with my years my soul began to pant
With feelings of strange tumult and soft pain;
And the whole heart exhaled into one want,
But undefined and wandering, till the day

I found the thing I sought—and that was thee;
And then I lost my being all to be
Absorb'd in thine—the world was past away—
Thou didst annihilate the earth to me!

VII.

I loved all solitude—but little thought
To spend I know not what of life, remote
From all communion with existence, save
The maniac and his tyrant; had I been
Their fellow, many years ere this had seen
My mind like theirs corrupted to its grave;
But who hath seen me writhe, or heard me rave?
Perchance in such a cell we suffer more
Than the wreck'd sailor on his desert shore;
The world is all before him—*mine* is *here*,
Scarce twice the space they must accord my bier.
What though *he* perish, he may lift his eye
And with a dying glance upbraid the sky—
I will not raise my own in such reproof,
Although 't is clouded by my dungeon roof.

VIII.

Yet do I feel at times my mind decline,
But with a sense of its decay:—I see
Unwonted lights along my prison shine,
And a strange demon, who is vexing me
With pilfering pranks and petty pains, below
The feeling of the healthful and the free;
But much to one, who long hath suffer'd so,
Sickness of heart, and narrowness of place,
And all that may be borne, or can debase.
I thought mine enemies had been but man,
But spirits may be leagued with them—all earth
Abandons—Heaven forgets me;—in the dearth
Of such defence the powers of evil can,
It may be, tempt me further, and prevail
Against the outworn creature they assail.
Why in this furnace is my spirit proved
Like steel in tempering fire? because I loved?
Because I loved what not to love; and see,
Was more or less than mortal, and than me.

IX.

I once was quick in feeling—that is o'er;—
My scars are callous, or I should have dash'd
My brain against these bars as the sun flash'd
In mockery through them;—if I bear and bore
The much I have recounted, and the more
Which hath no words, 't is that I would not die
And sanction with self-slaughter the dull lie
Which snared me here, and with the brand of shame
Stamp madness deep into my memory,
And woo compassion to a blighted name,
Sealing the sentence which my foes proclaim.
No—it shall be immortal!—and I make
A future temple of my present cell,
Which nations yet shall visit for my sake.
While thou, Ferrara! when no longer dwell
The ducal chiefs within thee, shalt fall down,
And crumbling piecemeal view thy hearthless halls,
A poet's wreath shall be thine only crown,
A poet's dungeon thy most far renown,
While strangers wonder o'er thy unpeopled walls!
And thou Leonora! thou—who wert ashamed
That such as I could love—who blush'd to hear
To less than monarchs that thou couldst be dear,
Go! tell thy brother that my heart, untamed
By grief, years, weariness—and it may be
A taint of that he would impute to me—
From long infection of a den like this,
Where the mind rots congenial with the abyss,
Adores thee still;—and add—that when the towers
And battlements which guard his joyous hours
Of banquet, dance, and revel, are forgot,
Or left untended in a dull repose,
This—this shall be a consecrated spot!
But thou—when all that birth and beauty throws
Of magic round thee is extinct—shalt have
One half the laurel which o'ershades my grave.
No power in death can tear our names apart,
As none in life could rend thee from my heart.
Yes, Leonora! it shall be our fate
To be entwined for ever—but too late!

Hebrew Melodies.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The subsequent poems were written at the request of my friend, the Hon. D. Kinnaird, for a Selection of Hebrew Melodies, and have been published, with the music, arranged by Mr Braham and Mr Nathan.

HEBREW MELODIES.

SHE WALKS IN BEAUTY.

She walks in beauty, like the night
  Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
  Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
  Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
  Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
  Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
  How pure, how dear their dwelling place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
  So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
  But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
  A heart whose love is innocent!

THE HARP THE MONARCH MINSTREL SWEPT.

The harp the monarch minstrel swept,
The king of men, the loved of Heaven,
Which Music hallow'd while she wept
O'er tones her heart of hearts had given.
Redoubled be her tears, its chords are riven!
It soften'd men of iron mould,
It gave them virtues not their own;
No ear so dull, no soul so cold,
That felt not, fired not to the tone,
Till David's lyre grew mightier than his throne!

It told the triumphs of our king,
It wafted glory to our God;
It made our gladden'd valleys ring,
The cedars bow, the mountains nod;
Its sound aspired to heaven and there abode!
Since then, though heard on earth no more,
Devotion and her daughter Love
Still bid the bursting spirit soar
To sounds that seem as from above,
In dreams that day's broad light can not remove.

IF THAT HIGH WORLD.

If that high world, which lies beyond
Our own, surviving love endears;
If there the cherish'd heart be fond,
The eye the same, except in tears—
How welcome those untrodden spheres!
How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth, and find all fears
Lost in thy light—Eternity!

It must be so: 'tis not for self
That we so tremble on the brink;
And striving to o'erleap the gulph,
Yet cling to being's severing link.
Oh! in that future let us think
To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!

THE WILD GAZELLE.

The wild gazelle on Judah's hills
Exulting yet may bound,
And drink from all the living rills
That gush on holy ground;
Its airy step and glorious eye
May glance in tameless transport by:—

A step as fleet, an eye more bright,
Hath Judah witness'd there;
And o'er her scenes of lost delight
Inhabitants more fair.
The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah's statelier maids are gone!

More blest each palm that shades those plains
Than Israel's scatter'd race;
For, taking root, it there remains
In solitary grace:
It cannot quit its place of birth,
It will not live in other earth.

But we must wander witheringly,
In other lands to die;
And where our fathers' ashes be,
Our own may never lie:
Our temple hath not left a stone,
And Mockery sits on Salem's throne.

OH! WEEP FOR THOSE.

Oh! weep for those that wept by Babel's stream,
Whose shrines are desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell;
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the godless dwell!

And where shall Israel lave her bleeding feet?
And when shall Zion's songs again seem sweet?
And Judah's melody once more rejoice
The hearts that leap'd before its heavenly voice?

Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest!
The wild-dove hath her nest, the fox his cave,
Mankind their country—Israel but the grave!

ON JORDAN'S BANKS.

On Jordan's banks the Arabs' camels stray,
On Sion's hill the False One's votaries pray,
The Baal-adorer bows on Sinai's steep—
Yet there—even there—Oh God! thy thunders sleep:

There—where thy finger scorch'd the tablet stone!
There—where thy shadow to thy people shone!
Thy glory shrouded in its garb of fire:
Thyself—none living see and not expire!

Oh! in the lightning let thy glance appear!
Sweep from his shiver'd hand the oppressor's spear:
How long by tyrants shall thy land be trod?
How long thy temple worshipless, Oh God?

JEPHTHA'S DAUGHTER.

Since our country, our God—Oh, my sire!
Demand that thy daughter expire;
Since thy triumph was bought by thy vow—
Strike the bosom that's bared for thee now!

And the voice of my mourning is o'er,
And the mountains behold me no more:
If the hand that I love lay me low,
There cannot be pain in the blow!

And of this, oh, my father! be sure—
That the blood of thy child is as pure
As the blessing I beg ere it flow,
And the last thought that soothes me below.

Though the virgins of Salem lament,
Be the judge and the hero unbent!
I have won the great battle for thee,
And my father and country are free!

When this blood of thy giving hath gush'd,
When the voice that thou lovest is hush'd,
Let my memory still be thy pride,
And forget not I smiled as I died!

OH! SNATCH'D AWAY IN BEAUTY'S BLOOM.

Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread:
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

Away; we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

MY SOUL IS DARK.

My soul is dark.—Oh! quickly string
The harp I yet can brook to hear;
And let thy gentle fingers fling
Its melting murmurs o'er mine ear.
If in this heart a hope be dear,
That sound shall charm it forth again;
If in these eyes there lurk a tear,
'T will flow, and cease to burn my brain:

But bid the strain be wild and deep,
Nor let thy notes of joy be first:
I tell thee, minstrel, I must weep,
Or else this heavy heart will burst;
For it hath been by sorrow nurst,
And ached in sleepless silence long;
And now 'tis doom'd to know the worst,
And break at once—or yield to song.

I SAW THEE WEEP.

I saw thee weep—the big bright tear
Came o'er that eye of blue;
And then methought it did appear
A violet dropping dew:
I saw thee smile—the sapphire's blaze
Beside thee ceased to shine,
It could not match the living rays
That fill'd that glance of thine.

As clouds from yonder sun receive
A deep and mellow die,
Which scarce the shade of coming eve
Can banish from the sky,
Those smiles unto the moodiest mind
Their own pure joy impart;
Their sunshine leaves a glow behind
That lightens o'er the heart.

THY DAYS ARE DONE.

Thy days are done, thy fame begun;
Thy country's strains record
The triumphs of her chosen son,
The slaughters of his sword!
The deeds he did, the fields he won,
The freedom he restored!

Though thou art fall'n, while we are free
Thou shalt not taste of death!
The generous blood that flow'd from thee
Disdain'd to sink beneath:
Within our veins its currents be,
Thy spirit on our breath!

Thy name, our charging hosts along,
Shall be the battle-word!
Thy fall, the theme of choral song
From virgin voices pour'd!
To weep would do thy glory wrong!
Thou shalt not be deplored.

SONG OF SAUL BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE

Warriors and chiefs! should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path:
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath!

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet!
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death, which awaits us to-day!

SAUL.

Thou whose spell can raise the dead,
Bid the prophet's form appear.
«Samuel, raise thy buried head!
King, behold the phantom seer!»
Earth yawn'd; he stood the centre of a cloud:
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud:
Death stood all glassy in his fixed eye;
His hand was wither'd and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glitter'd there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare:
From lips that moved not and unbreathing frame,
Like cavern'd winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth, as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder-stroke.

«Why is my sleep disquieted?
Who is he that calls the dead?
Is it thou, oh king? Behold,
Bloodless are these limbs, and cold:
Such are mine; and such shall be
Thine, to-morrow, when with me:
Ere the coming day is done,
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
Fare thee well, but for a day;
Then we mix our mouldering clay.
Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
Pierced by shafts of many a bow:

And the falchion by thy side
To thy heart, thy hand shall guide:
Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul!»

«ALL IS VANITY, SAITH THE PREACHER.»

Fame, wisdom, love, and power were mine,
And health and youth possess'd me;
My goblets blush'd from every vine,
And lovely forms caress'd me;
I sunn'd my heart in beauty's eyes,
And felt my soul grow tender;
All earth can give, or mortal prize,
Was mine of regal splendour.

I strive to number o'er what days
Remembrance can discover,
Which all that life or earth displays
Would lure me to live over.
There rose no day, there roll'd no hour
Of pleasure unembitter'd;
And not a trapping deck'd my power
That gall'd not while it glitter'd.

The serpent of the field, by art
And spells, is won from harming;
But that which coils around the heart,
Oh! who hath power of charming?
It will not list to wisdom's lore,
Nor music's voice can lure it;
But there it stings for evermore
The soul that must endure it.

WHEN COLDNESS WRAPS THIS SUFFERING CLAY.

When coldness wraps this suffering clay,
Ah, whither strays the immortal mind?
It cannot die, it cannot stay,
But leaves its darken'd dust behind.
Then, unembodied, doth it trace
By steps each planet's heavenly way?
Or fill at once the realms of space,
A thing of eyes, that all survey?

Eternal, boundless, undecay'd,
A thought unseen, but seeing all,
All, all in earth, or skies display'd,
Shall it survey, shall it recal:
Each fainter trace that memory holds,
So darkly of departed years,
In one broad glance the soul beholds,
And all, that was, at once appears.

Before creation peopled earth,
Its eye shall roll through chaos back;
And where the furthest heaven had birth,
The spirit trace its rising track.
And where the future mars or makes,
Its glance dilate o'er all to be,
While sun is quench'd or system breaks,
Fix'd in its own eternity.

Above or love, hope, hate, or fear,
It lives all passionless and pure:
An age shall fleet like earthly year;
Its years as moments shall endure.
Away, away, without a wing,
O'er all, through all, its thought shall fly;
A nameless and eternal thing,
Forgetting what it was to die.

VISION OF BELSHAZZAR.

The king was on his throne,
The satraps throng'd the hall;
A thousand bright lamps shone
O'er that high festival.
A thousand cups of gold,
In Judah deem'd divine—
Jehovah's vessels hold
The godless heathen's wine!

In that same hour and hall,
The fingers of a hand
Came forth against the wall,
And wrote as if on sand:
The fingers of a man;—
A solitary hand
Along the letters ran,
And traced them like a wand.

The monarch saw, and shook,
And bade no more rejoice;
All bloodless wax'd his look
And tremulous his voice.
«Let the men of lore appear,
The wisest of the earth,
And expound the words of fear,
Which mar our royal mirth.»

Chaldea's seers are good,
But here they have no skill:
And the unknown letters stood,
Untold and awful still.
And Babel's men of age
Are wise and deep in lore;
But now they were not sage,
They saw—but knew no more.

A captive in the land,
A stranger and a youth,
He heard the king's command,
He saw that writing's truth.
The lamps around were bright,
The prophecy in view;
He read it on that night,—
The morrow proved it true.

«Belshazzar's grave is made,
His kingdom pass'd away,
He in the balance weigh'd,
Is light and worthless clay.
The shroud, his robe of state,
His canopy, the stone;
The Mede is at his gate!
The Persian on his throne!»

SUN OF THE SLEEPLESS!

Sun of the sleepless! melancholy star!
Whose tearful beam glows tremulously far,

That show'st the darkness thou canst not dispel,
How like art thou to joy remember'd well!
So gleams the past, the light of other days,
Which shines, but warms not with its powerless rays;
A night-beam sorrow watcheth to behold,
Distinct, but distant—clear—but, oh how cold!

WERE MY BOSOM AS FALSE AS THOU DEEM'ST IT TO BE.

Were my bosom as false as thou deem'st it to be,
I need not have wander'd from far Galilee;
It was but abjuring my creed to efface
The curse which, thou say'st, is the crime of my race.

If the bad never triumph, then God is with thee!
If the slave only sin, thou art spotless and free!
If the exile on earth is an outcast on high,
Live on in thy faith, but in mine I will die.

I have lost for that faith more than thou canst bestow,
As the God who permits thee to prosper doth know;
In his hand is my heart and my hope—and in thine
The land and the life which for him I resign.

HEROD'S LAMENT FOR MARIAMNE.

Oh, Mariamne! now for thee
The heart for which thou bled'st is bleeding;
Revenge is lost in agony,
And wild remorse to rage succeeding.
Oh, Mariamne! where art thou?
Thou canst not hear my bitter pleading:
Ah, couldst thou—thou wouldst pardon now,
Though Heaven were to my prayer unheeding.

And is she dead?—and did they dare
Obey my phrenzy's jealous raving?
My wrath but doom'd my own despair:
The sword that smote her 's o'er me waving.—
But thou art cold, my murder'd love!
And this dark heart is vainly craving
For her who soars alone above,
And leaves my soul unworthy saving.

She 's gone, who shared my diadem!
She sunk, with her my joys entombing;
I swept that flower from Judah's stem
Whose leaves for me alone were blooming.
And mine 's the guilt, and mine the hell,
This bosom's desolation dooming;
And I have earn'd those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consuming!

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

From the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, oh Sion! when render'd to Rome:
'T was thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come;
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed;
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away;
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

But the gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign;
And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,
Our worship, oh Father! is only for thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN AND WEPT.

We sat down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

On the willow that harp is suspended,
Oh Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended,
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

FROM JOB.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of immortality unveil'd—
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

«Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
Than he who deems even seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to wisdom's wasted light!»

Miscellaneous Poems.

ODE
TO
NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

"Expende Annibalem:—quot libras in duce summo
Invenies?——" JUVENAL, Sat. X.

"The Emperor Nepos was acknowledged by the *Senate*, by the *Italians*, and by the provincials of *Gaul*; his moral virtues and military talents, were loudly celebrated; and those who derived any private benefit from his government, announced in prophetic strains the restoration of public felicity.

* * * * * * *
* * * * * * *

By this shameful abdication, he protracted his life a few years, in a very ambiguous state, between an emperor and an exile, till——"
GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, vol. vi. p. 220.

ODE TO NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE.

'T is done—but yesterday a king!
And arm'd with kings to strive—
And now thou art a nameless thing
So abject—yet alive!
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew'd our earth with hostile bones?
And can he thus survive?
Since he, miscall'd the morning star,
Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man! why scourge thy kind,
Who bow'd so low the knee?
By gazing on thyself grown blind,
Thou taught'st the rest to see.
With might unquestion'd,—power to save—
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp'd thee;
Nor, till thy fall, could mortals guess
Ambition's less than littleness!

Thanks for that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high philosophy can preach,
And vainly preach'd before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those pagod things of sabre-sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.

The triumph, and the vanity,
The rapture of the strife—[1]
The earthquake shout of Victory,
To thee the breath of life;
The sword, the sceptre, and that sway
Which man seem'd made but to obey,
Wherewith renown was rife—
All quell'd!—Dark spirit! what must be
The madness of thy memory!

The desolator desolate!
The victor overthrown!
The arbiter of others' fate
A suppliant for his own!
Is it some yet imperial hope
That with such change can calmly cope?
Or dread of death alone?
To die a prince—or live a slave—
Thy choice is most ignobly brave!

He[2] who of old would rend the oak
Dream'd not of the rebound;
Chain'd by the trunk he vainly broke,
Alone—how look'd he round?—
Thou, in the sternness of thy strength
An equal deed hast done at length,
And darker fate hast found:
He fell, the forest-prowlers' prey;
But thou must eat thy heart away!

The Roman,[3] when his burning heart
Was slaked with blood of Rome,
Threw down the dagger—dared depart,
In savage grandeur, home.
He dared depart, in utter scorn
Of men that such a yoke had borne,
Yet left him such a doom!
His only glory was that hour
Of self-upheld abandon'd power.

The Spaniard,[4] when the lust of sway
Had lost its quickening spell,
Cast crowns for rosaries away,
An empire for a cell;
A strict accountant of his beads,
A subtle disputant on creeds,
His dotage trifled well:

[1] Certaminis *gaudia*, the expression of Attila, in his harangue to his army, previous to the battle of Chalons, given in Cassiodorus.
[2] Milo.
[3] Sylla.
[4] Charles V.

Yet better had he neither known
A bigot's shrine, nor despot's throne.

But thou—from thy reluctant hand
The thunderbolt is wrung—
Too late thou leavest the high command
To which thy weakness clung;
All evil spirit as thou art,
It is enough to grieve the heart,
To see thine own unstrung;
To think that God's fair world hath been
The footstool of a thing so mean;

And earth hath spilt her blood for him,
Who thus can hoard his own!
And monarchs bow'd the trembling limb,
And thank'd him for a throne!
Fair freedom! we may hold thee dear,
When thus thy mightiest foes their fear
In humblest guise have shown.
Oh! ne'er may tyrant leave behind
A brighter name to lure mankind!

Thine evil deeds are writ in gore,
Nor written thus in vain—
Thy triumphs tell of fame no more,
Or deepen every stain.
If thou hadst died as honour dies,
Some new Napoleon might arise,
To shame the world again—
But who would soar the solar height,
To set in such a starless night?

Weigh'd in the balance, hero dust
Is vile as vulgar clay;
Thy scales, mortality! are just
To all that pass away;
But yet, methought, the living great
Some higher sparks should animate,
To dazzle and dismay;
Nor deem'd contempt could thus make mirth
Of these, the conquerors of the earth.

And she, proud Austria's mournful flower,
Thy still imperial bride;
How bears her breast the torturing hour?
Still clings she to thy side?
Must she too bend, must she too share
Thy late repentance, long despair,
Thou throneless homicide?
If still she loves thee, hoard that gem,
'T is worth thy vanish'd diadem!

Then haste thee to thy sullen isle,
And gaze upon the sea;
That element may meet thy smile,
It ne'er was ruled by thee!
Or trace with thine all-idle hand,
In loitering mood, upon the sand,
That earth is now as free!
That Corinth's pedagogue hath now
Transferr'd his by-word to thy brow.

Thou, Timour! in his captive's cage [1]
What thoughts will there be thine,
While brooding in thy prison'd rage?
But one—"The world *was* mine:"
Unless, like he of Babylon,
All sense is with thy sceptre gone,
Life will not long confine
That spirit pour'd so widely forth—
So long obey'd—so little worth!

Or like the thief of fire from heaven,[1]
Wilt thou withstand the shock?
And share with him, the unforgiven,
His vulture and his rock!
Foredoom'd by God—by man accurst,
And that last act, though not thy worst,
The very fiend's arch mock;[2]
He in his fall preserved his pride,
And, if a mortal, had as proudly died!

[1] The cage of Bajazet, by order of Tamerlane.

[1] Prometheus.

[2] "The fiend's arch mock—
To lip a wanton, and suppose her chaste."
SHAKESPEARE.

MONODY

ON THE

DEATH OF THE RIGHT HON. R. B. SHERIDAN.

SPOKEN AT DRURY-LANE THEATRE.

When the last sunshine of expiring day
In summer's twilight weeps itself away,
Who hath not felt the softness of the hour
Sink on the heart, as dew along the flower?
With a pure feeling which absorbs and awes
While Nature makes that melancholy pause,
Her breathing moment on the bridge where Time
Of light and darkness forms an arch sublime,
Who hath not shared that calm so still and deep,
The voiceless thought which would not speak but weep,
A holy concord and a bright regret,
A glorious sympathy with suns that set?
'T is not harsh sorrow—but a tenderer woe,
Nameless, but dear to gentle hearts below,
Felt without bitterness—but full and clear,
A sweet dejection—a transparent tear,
Unmix'd with wordly grief or selfish stain,
Shed without shame—and secret without pain.

Even as the tenderness that hour instils
When summer's day declines along the hills,
So feels the fulness of our heart and eyes
When all of genius which can perish dies.
A mighty spirit is eclipsed—a power
Hath pass'd from day to darkness—to whose hour
Of light no likeness is bequeath'd—no name,
Focus at once of all the rays of fame!
The flash of wit—the bright intelligence,
The beam of song—the blaze of eloquence,
Set with their sun—but still have left behind
The enduring produce of immortal Mind;
Fruits of a genial morn, and glorious noon,
A deathless part of him who died too soon.
But small that portion of the wondrous whole,
These sparkling segments of that circling soul,
Which all embraced—and lighten'd over all,
To cheer—to pierce—to please—or to appal.
From the charm'd council to the festive board,
Of human feelings the unbounded lord;
In whose acclaim the loftiest voices vied,
The praised—the proud—who made his praise their pride.

When the loud cry of trampled Hindostan[1]
Arose to Heaven in her appeal from man,
His was the thunder—his the avenging rod,
The wrath—the delegated voice of God!
Which shook the nations through his lips—and blazed
Till vanquish'd senates trembled as they praised.

And here, oh! here, where yet all young and warm
The gay creations of his spirit charm,
The matchless dialogue—the deathless wit,
Which knew not what it was to intermit;
The glowing portraits, fresh from life that bring
Home to our hearts the truth from which they spring;
These wondrous beings of his fancy, wrought
To fulness by the fiat of his thought,
Here in their first abode you still may meet,
Bright with the hues of his Promethean heat;
A halo of the light of other days,
Which still the splendour of its orb betrays.
But should there be to whom the fatal blight
Of failing wisdom yields a base delight,
Men who exult when minds of heavenly tone
Jar in the music which was born their own,
Still let them pause—Ah! little do they know
That what to them seem'd vice might be but woe.
Hard is his fate on whom the public gaze
Is fix'd for ever to detract or praise;
Repose denies her requiem to his name,
And Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame.
The secret enemy whose sleepless eye
Stands sentinel—accuser—judge—and spy,
The foe—the fool—the jealous—and the vain,
The envious who but breathe in others' pain,
Behold the host! delighting to deprave,
Who track the steps of glory to the grave,
Watch every fault that daring genius owes
Half to the ardour which its birth bestows,
Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the pyramid of calumny!
These are his portion—but if join'd to these
Gaunt Poverty should league with deep Disease,
If the high spirit must forget to soar,
And stoop to strive with misery at the door,
To soothe indignity—and face to face
Meet sordid rage—and wrestle with disgrace,
To find in hope but the renew'd caress,
The serpent-fold of further faithlessness,—
If such may be the ills which men assail,
What marvel if at last the mightiest fail?
Breasts to whom all the strength of feeling given
Bear hearts electric—charged with fire from heaven,
Black with the rude collision, inly torn,
By clouds surrounded, and on whirlwinds borne,
Driven o'er the lowering atmosphere that nurst
Thoughts which have turn'd to thunder—scorch—and burst.
But far from us and from our mimic scene
Such things should be—if such have ever been;
Ours be the gentler wish, the kinder task,
To give the tribute Glory need not ask,
To mourn the vanish'd beam—and add our mite
Of praise in payment of a long delight.

[1] See Fox, Burke, and Pitt's eulogy on Mr Sheridan's speech on the charges exhibited against Mr Hastings in the House of Commons. Mr Pitt entreated the House to adjourn, to give time for a calmer consideration of the question than could then occur after the immediate effect of that oration.

Ye orators! whom yet our council yield,
Mourn for the veteran hero of your field!
The worthy rival of the wondrous *Three!*[1]
Whose words were sparks of immortality!
Ye bards! to whom the Drama's Muse is dear,
He was your master—emulate him *here!*
Ye men of wit and social eloquence!
He was your brother—bear his ashes hence!
While powers of mind almost of boundless range,
Complete in kind—as various in their change,
While eloquence—wit—poesy and mirth,
That humbler harmonist of care on earth,
Survive within our souls—while lives our sense
Of pride in merit's proud pre-eminence,
Long shall we seek his likeness—long in vain,
And turn to all of him which may remain,
Sighing that Nature form'd but one such man,
And broke the die—in moulding Sheridan!

THE IRISH AVATAR.

Ere the Daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave,
And her ashes still float to their home o'er the tide,
Lo! GEORGE the triumphant speeds over the wave,
To the long cherish'd Isle which he loved like his—bride.

True, the great of her bright and brief era are gone,
The rainbow-like epoch where Freedom could pause
For the few little years, out of centuries won,
Which betray'd not, or crush'd not, or wept not her cause.

True, the chains of the Catholic clank o'er his rags,
The castle still stands, and the senate 's no more,
And the famine, which dwelt on her freedomless crags,
Is extending its steps to her desolate shore.

To her desolate shore—where the emigrant stands
For a moment to gaze ere he flies from his hearth;
Tears fall on his chain, though it drops from his hands,
For the dungeon he quits is the place of his birth.

But he comes! the Messiah of royalty comes!
Like a goodly Leviathan roll'd from the waves!
Then receive him as best such an advent becomes,
With a legion of cooks, and an army of slaves!

He comes in the promise and bloom of three-score,
To perform in the pageant the sovereign's part—
But long live the Shamrock which shadows him o'er!
Could the Green in his *hat* be transferr'd to his *heart!*

Could that long-wither'd spot but be verdant again,
And a new spring of noble affections arise—
Then might Freedom forgive thee this dance in thy chain,
And this shout of thy slavery which saddens the skies.

Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now?
Were he God—as he is but the commonest clay,
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow—
Such servile devotion might shame him away.

Ay, roar in his train! let thine orators lash
Their fanciful spirits to pamper his pride—
Not thus did thy GRATTAN indignantly flash
His soul o'er the freedom implored and denied.

[1] Fox, Pitt, Burke

Ever glorious GRATTAN! the best of the good!
So simple in heart, so sublime in the rest!
With all which Demosthenes wanted, endued,
And his rival or victor in all he possess'd.

Ere TULLY arose in the zenith of Rome,
Though unequall'd, preceded, the task was begun—
But GRATTAN sprung up like a god from the tomb
Of ages, the first, last, the saviour, the *One!*

With the skill of an Orpheus to soften the brute;
With the fire of Prometheus to kindle mankind;
Even Tyranny listening sate melted or mute,
And Corruption shrunk scorch'd from the glance of his mind.

But back to our theme! Back to despots and slaves!
Feasts furnish'd by Famine! rejoicings by Pain!
True Freedom but *welcomes*, while slavery still *raves*,
When a week's Saturnalia hath loosen'd her chain.

Let the poor squalid splendour thy wreck can afford
(As the bankrupt's profusion his ruin would hide),
Gild over the palace, Lo! ERIN, thy lord!
Kiss his foot with thy blessings denied!

Or *if* freedom past hope be extorted at last,
If the Idol of Brass find his feet are of clay,
Must what terror or policy wring forth be class'd
With what monarchs ne'er give, but as wolves yield their prey?

Each brute hath its nature, a king's is to *reign*,—
To *reign!* in that word, see, ye ages, comprised,
The cause of the curses all annals contain,
From CÆSAR the dreaded, to GEORGE the despised!

Wear, FINGAL, thy trapping! O'CONNELL, proclaim
His accomplishments! *His!!!* and thy country convince
Half an age's contempt was an error of Fame,
And that «Hal is the rascaliest sweetest *young* Prince!»

Will thy yard of blue riband, poor FINGAL, recal,
The fetters from millions of Catholic limbs?
Or, has it not bound thee the fastest of all
The slaves, who now hail their betrayer with hymns?

Ay! «Build him a dwelling!» let each give his mite!
Till, like Babel, the new royal dome hath arisen!
Let thy beggars and Helots their pittance unite—
And a palace bestow for a poor-house and prison!

Spread—spread, for VITELLIUS, the royal repast,
Till the gluttonous despot be stuff'd to the gorge!
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last
The Fourth of the fools and oppressors call'd—«GEORGE!»

Let the tables be loaded with feasts till they groan!
Till they *groan* like thy people, through ages of woe!
Let the wine flow around the old Bacchanal's throne
Like their blood which has flow'd, and which yet has to flow.

But let not *his* name be thine idol alone—
On his right hand behold a SEJANUS appears!
Thy own CASTLEREAGH! let him still be thine own!
A wretch, never named but with curses and jeers!

Till now, when the Isle which should blush for his birth,
Deep, deep, as the gore which he shed on her soil,
Seems proud of the reptile which crawl'd from her earth,
And for murder repays him with shouts and a smile!

Without one single ray of her genius, without
The fancy, the manhood, the fire of her race—
The miscreant who well might plunge ERIN in doubt,
If *she* ever gave b to a being so base.

If she did—let her long-boasted proverb be hush'd,
Which proclaims that from ERIN no reptile can spring,—
See the cold-blooded serpent, with venom full flush'd,
Still warming its folds in the breast of a King!

Shout, drink, feast, and flatter! Oh! ERIN how low
Wert thou sunk by misfortune and tyranny, till
Thy welcome of tyrants hath plunged thee below
The depth of thy deep in a deeper gulph still.

My voice, though but humble, was raised for thy right,
My vote as a freeman's still voted thee free,
This hand, though but feeble, would arm, in thy fight,
And this heart, thought outworn, had a throb still for *thee!*

Yes, I loved thee and thine, though thou art not my land,
I have known noble hearts and great souls in thy sons,
And I wept with the world o'er the patriot band
Who are gone, but I weep them no longer as once.

For happy are they now reposing afar,—
Thy GRATTAN, thy CURRAN, thy SHERIDAN, all
Who, for years, were the chiefs in the eloquent war,
And redeem'd, if they have not retarded, thy fall.

Yes, happy are they in their cold English graves!
Their shades cannot start to thy shouts of to-day,—
Nor the steps of enslavers and chain-kissing slaves
Be stamp'd in the turf o'er their fetterless clay.

Till now, I had envied thy sons and thy shore,
Though their virtues were hunted, their liberties fled,
There was something so warm and sublime in the core
Of an Irishman's heart, that I envy—thy *dead.*

Or, if aught in my bosom can quench for an hour
My contempt for a nation so servile, though sore,
Which though trod like the worm will not turn upon Power,
'T is the glory of GRATTAN, and genius of MOORE!

Sept. 16*th*, 1821.

THE DREAM.

I.

OUR life is twofold; sleep hath its own world,
A boundary between the things misnamed
Death and existence: sleep hath its own world,
And a wide realm of wild reality,
And dreams in their developement have breath,
And tears, and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,

And look like heralds of eternity:
They pass like spirits of the past,—they speak
Like sybils of the future; they have power—
The tyranny of pleasure and of pain;
They make us what we were not—what they will,
And shake us with the vision that 's gone by,
The dread of vanish'd shadows—Are they so?
Is not the past all shadow? What are they?
Creations of the mind?—The mind can make
Substance, and people planets of its own
With beings brighter than have been, and give
A breath to forms which can outlive all flesh.
I would recal a vision which I dream'd
Perchance in sleep—for in itself a thought,
A slumbering thought, is capable of years,
And curdles a long life into one hour.

II.

I saw two beings in the hues of youth
Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,
Green and of mild declivity, the last
As 't were the cape of a long ridge of such,
Save that there was no sea to lave its base,
But a most living landscape, and the wave
Of woods and corn-fields, and the abodes of men
Scatter'd at intervals, and wreathing smoke
Arising from such rustic roofs;—the hill
Was crown'd with a peculiar diadem
Of trees, in circular array, so fix'd,
Not by the sport of nature, but of man:
These two, a maiden and a youth, were there
Gazing—the one on all that was beneath
Fair as herself—but the boy gazed on her;
And both were young, and one was beautiful:
And both were young, yet not alike in youth.
As the sweet moon on the horizon's verge,
The maid was on the eve of womanhood;
The boy had fewer summers, but his heart
Had far outgrown his years, and to his eye
There was but one beloved face on earth,
And that was shining on him; he had look'd
Upon it till it could not pass away;
He had no breath, no being, but in her's;
She was his voice; he did not speak to her,
But trembled on her words; she was his sight,
For his eye follow'd her's, and saw with her's,
Which colour'd all his objects:—he had ceased
To live within himself; she was his life,
The ocean to the river of his thoughts,
Which terminated all: upon a tone,
A touch of her's, his blood would ebb and flow,
And his cheek change tempestuously—his heart
Unknowing of its cause of agony.
But she in these fond feelings had no share:
Her sighs were not for him; to her he was
Even as a brother—but no more; 't was much,
For brotherless she was, save in the name
Her infant friendship had bestow'd on him;
Herself the solitary scion left
Of a time-honour'd race.—It was a name
Which pleased him, and yet pleased him not—and why?
Time taught him a deep answer—when she loved
Another; even *now* she loved another,
And on the summit of that hill she stood
Looking afar if yet her lover's steed
Kept pace with her expectancy, and flew.

III.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
There was an ancient mansion, and before
Its walls there was a steed caparison'd:
Within an antique oratory stood
The boy of whom I spake;—he was alone,
And pale, and pacing to and fro; anon
He sate him down, and seized a pen, and traced
Words which I could not guess of; then he lean'd
His bow'd head on his hands, and shook as 't were
With a convulsion—then arose again,
And with his teeth and quivering hands did tear
What he had written, but he shed no tears.
And he did calm himself, and fix his brow
Into a kind of quiet: as he paused,
The lady of his love re-entered there;
She was serene and smiling then, and yet
She knew she was by him beloved,—she knew,
For quickly comes such knowledge, that his heart
Was darken'd with her shadow, and she saw
That he was wretched, but she saw not all.
He rose, and with a cold and gentle grasp
He took her hand; a moment o'er his face
A tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced, and then it faded, as it came;
He dropp'd the hand he held, and with slow steps
Retired, but not as bidding her adieu,
For they did part with mutual smiles; he pass'd
From out the massy gate of that old hall,
And mounting on his steed he went his way;
And ne'er repass'd that hoary threshold more.

IV.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The boy was sprung to manhood: in the wilds
Of fiery climes he made himself a home,
And his soul drank their sunbeams; he was girt
With strange and dusky aspects; he was not
Himself like what he had been; on the sea
And on the shore he was a wanderer;
There was a mass of many images
Crowded like waves upon me, but he was
A part of all; and in the last he lay
Reposing from the noon-tide sultriness,
Couch'd among fallen columns, in the shade
Of ruin'd walls that had survived the names
Of those who rear'd them; by his sleeping side
Stood camels grazing, and some goodly steeds
Were fasten'd near a fountain; and a man
Clad in a flowing garb did watch the while,
While many of his tribe slumber'd around:
And they were canopied by the blue sky,
So cloudless, clear, and purely beautiful,
That God alone was to be seen in heaven.

V.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The lady of his love was wed with one
Who did not love her better:—in her home,
A thousand leagues from his,—her native home,
She dwelt, begirt with growing infancy,
Daughters and sons of beauty,—but behold!
Upon her face there was the tint of grief,
The settled shadow of an inward strife,
And an unquiet drooping of the eye,
As if its lid were charged with unshed tears.

What could her grief be?—she had all she loved,
And he who had so loved her was not there
To trouble with bad hopes, or evil wish,
Or ill-repress'd affliction, her pure thoughts.
What could her grief be?—she had loved him not,
Nor given him cause to deem himself beloved,
Nor could he be a part of that which prey'd
Upon her mind—a spectre of the past.

VI.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The wanderer was return'd.—I saw him stand
Before an altar—with a gentle bride;
Her face was fair, but was not that which made
The starlight of his boyhood;—as he stood
Even at the altar, o'er his brow there came
The selfsame aspect, and the quivering shock
That in the antique oratory shook
His bosom in its solitude; and then—
As in that hour—a moment o'er his face
The tablet of unutterable thoughts
Was traced,—and then it faded as it came,
And he stood calm and quiet, and he spoke
The fitting vows, but heard not his own words,
And all things reel'd around him; he could see
Not that which was, nor that which should have been—
But the old mansion, and the accustom'd hall,
And the remember'd chambers, and the place,
The day, the hour, the sunshine, and the shade,
All things pertaining to that place and hour,
And her who was his destiny, came back,
And thrust themselves between him and the light:
What business had they there at such a time?

VII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The lady of his love;—oh! she was changed
As by the sickness of the soul; her mind
Had wander'd from its dwelling, and her eyes,
They had not their own lustre, but the look
Which is not of the earth; she was become
The queen of a fantastic realm; her thoughts
Were combinations of disjointed things;
And forms impalpable and unperceived
Of others' sight familiar were to her's.
And this the world calls phrensy; but the wise
Have a far deeper madness, and the glance
Of melancholy is a fearful gift;
What is it but the telescope of truth?
Which strips the distance of its phantasies,
And brings life near in utter nakedness,
Making the cold reality too real!

VIII.

A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.
The wanderer was alone as heretofore,
The beings which surrounded him were gone,
Or were at war with him; he was a mark
For blight and desolation, compass'd round
With hatred and contention; pain was mix'd
In all which was served up to him, until
Like to the Pontic monarch of old days, [1]
He fed on poisons, and they had no power,
But were a kind of nutriment; he lived
Through that which had been death to many men,
And made him friends of mountains: with the stars
And the quick spirit of the universe
He held his dialogues; and they did teach
To him the magic of their mysteries;
To him the book of night was open'd wide,
And voices from the deep abyss reveal'd
A marvel and a secret—Be it so.

IX.

My dream was past; it had no further change.
It was of a strange order, that the doom
Of these two creatures should be thus traced out
Almost like a reality—the one
To end in madness—both in misery.

[1] Mithridates of Pontus.

ODE.

I.

Oh Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do?—any thing but weep:
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets.
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap
No mellower harvest! Thirteen hundred years
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,
And mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
And hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
When faintness, the last mortal birth of pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which death is winning,
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'ertortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,
And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;—
And then he talks of life, and how again
He feels his spirits soaring—albeit weak,
And of the fresher air, which he would seek;
And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,

And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy
Chamber swims round and round—and shadows busy
At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,
And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth
That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II.

There is no hope for nations!—Search the page
Of many thousand years—the daily scene,
The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
The everlasting *to be* which *hath been*,
Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean
On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear
Our strength away in wrestling with the air;
For 't is our nature strikes us down: the beasts
Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts
Are of as high an order—they must go
Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.
Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
What have they given your children in return?
A heritage of servitude and woes,
A blindfold bondage where your hire is blows.
What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,
O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
And deem this proof of loyalty the *real;*
Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
All that your sires have left you, all that time,
Bequeaths of free, and history of sublime,
Spring from a different theme!—Ye see and read,
Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!
Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,
And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd
By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,
Gushing from freedom's fountains—when the crowd,
Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,
And trample on each other to obtain
The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they plough'd
The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,
'T was not for them, their necks were too much bow'd,
And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:—
Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds
Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
Those momentary starts from nature's laws,
Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
With all her seasons to repair the blight
With a few summers, and again put forth
Cities and generations—fair, when free—
For, tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

III.

Glory and empire! once upon these towers
With freedom—god-like triad! how ye sate?
The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
When Venice was an envy, might abate,
But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate
All were enwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs knew
And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
Although they humbled—with the kingly few
The many felt, for from all days and climes
She was the voyager's worship;—even her crimes
Were of the softer order—born of love,
She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,
But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;
For these restored the cross, that from above
Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant
Flew between earth and the unholy crescent,
Which, if it waned and dwindled, earth may thank
The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creeking in the ears of those who owe
The name of freedom to her glorious struggles;
Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And call'd the «kingdom» of a conquering foe,—
But knows what all—and, most of all, *we* know—
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The name of commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 't is but for a time,
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion,
As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
Full of the magic of exploded science—
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,
May strike to those whose red right hands have bought
Rights cheeply earn'd with blood. Still, still, for ever
Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
Three paces, and then faltering:—better be
Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,
In their proud charnel of Thermopylæ,
Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
One freeman more, America, to thee!

WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

As o'er the cold sepulchral stone
Some name arrests the passer-by;
Thus when thou view'st this page alone,
May mine attract thy pensive eye!

And when by thee that name is read,
Perchance in some succeeding year,
Reflect on me as on the dead,
And think my heart is buried here.

September 14th, 1809.

ROMANCE MUY DOLOROSO

DEL

SITIO Y TOMA DE ALHAMA,

EL QUAL DEZIA EN ARAVIGO ASSI.

Passeavase el Rey Moro
Por la ciudad de Grenada,
Desde las puertas de Elvira
Hasta las de Bivarambla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Cartas le fueron venidas
Que Alhama era ganada.
Las cartas echò en el fuego,
Y al mensagero matava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Descavalga de una mula
Y en un cavallo cavalga.
Por el Zacatin arriba
Subido se avia al Alhambra.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Como en el Alhambra estuvo,
Al mismo punto mandava.
Que se toquen las trompetas
Con anafiles de plata.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Y que atambores de guerra
Apriessa toquen alarma;
Por que lo oygan sus Moros,
Los de la Vega y Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Los Moros que el son oyeron,
Que al sangriento Marte llama,
Uno a uno, y dos a dos,
Un gran esquadran formavan.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Alli hablò un Moro viejo;
Desta manera hablava:—
Para que nos llamas, Rey?
Para que es este llamada?
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Aveys de saber, amigos,
Una nueva desdichada:
Que Cristianos, con braveza,
Ya nos han tomado Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Alli hablò un viejo Alfaqui,
De barba crecida y cana:—
Bien se te emplea, buen Rey,
Buen Rey; bien se te empleava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Mataste los Bencerrages,
Que era la flor de Granada;
Cogiste los tornadizos
De Cordova la nombrada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

A VERY MOURNFUL BALLAD

ON THE

SIEGE AND CONQUEST OF ALHAMA,

Which, in the Arabic language, is to the following purpose.

[The effect of the original ballad (which existed both in Spanish and Arabic) was such that it was forbidden to be sung by the Moors, on pain of death, within Granada.]

The Moorish king rides up and down
Through Granada's royal town;
From Elvira's gates to those
Of Bivarambla on he goes.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Letters to the monarch tell
How Alhama's city fell;
In the fire the scroll he threw,
And the messenger he slew.
Woe is me, Alhama!

He quits his mule, and mounts his horse,
And through the street directs his course;
Through the street of Zacatin
To the Alhambra spurring in.
Woe is me, Alhama!

When the Alhambra walls he gain'd,
On the moment he ordain'd
That the trumpet straight should sound
With the silver clarion round.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And when the hollow drums of war
Beat the loud alarm afar,
That the Moors of town and plain
Might answer to the martial strain,
Woe is me, Alhama!

Then the Moors, by this aware
That bloody Mars recall'd them there,
One by one, and two by two,
To a mighty squadron grew,
Woe is me, Alhama!

Out then spake an aged Moor
In these words the king before,
«Wherefore call on us, oh king?
What may mean this gathering?»
Woe is me, Alhama!

«Friends! ye have, alas! to know
Of a most disastrous blow,
That the Christians, stern and bold,
Have obtain'd Alhama's hold.»
Woe is me, Alhama!

Out then spake old Alfaqui,
With his beard so white to see,
«Good king! thou art justly served,
Good king! this thou hast deserved.
Woe is me, Alhama!

«By thee were slain, in evil hour,
The Abencerrage, Granada's flower;
And strangers were received by thee
Of Cordova the chivalry.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Por esso mereces, Rey,
Una pena bien doblada;
Que te pierdas tu y el reyno,
Y que se pierda Granada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Si no se respetan leyes,
Es ley que todo se pierda;
Y que se pierda Granada,
Y que te pierdas en ella.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Fuego por los ojos vierte,
El Rey que esto oyera,
Y como el otro de leyes
De leyes tambien hablava.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Sabe un Rey que no ay leyes
De darle a Reyes disgusto.—
Esso dize el Rey Moro
Relinchando de colera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Moro Alfaqui, Moro Alfaqui,
El de la vellida barba,
El Rey te manda prender,
Por la perdida de Alhama.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Y cortarte la cabeza,
Y ponerla en el Alhambra,
Por que a ti castigo sea,
Y otros triemblen en miralla.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Cavalleros, hombres buenos,
Dezid de mi parte al Rey,
Al Rey Moro de Granada,
Como no le devo nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

De averse Alhama perdido
A mi me pesa en el alma.
Que si el Rey perdiò su tierra,
Otro mucho mas perdiera.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Perdieran hijos padres,
Y casados las casadas:
Las cosas que mas amara
Perdiò l' un y el otro fama.
Ay de ..., Alhama!

Perdi una hija donzella
Que era la flor d' esta tierra,
Cien doblas dava por ella,
No me las estimo en nada.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Diziendo assi al hacen Alfaqui,
Le cortaron la cabeça,
Y la elevan al Alhambra,
Assi come el Rey lo manda.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

«And for this, oh king! is sent
On thee a double chastisement,
Thee and thine, thy crown and realm,
One last wreck shall overwhelm.
Woe is me, Alhama!

«He who holds no laws in awe,
He must perish by the law;
And Grenada must be won,
And thyself with her undone.»
Woe is me, Alhama!

Fire flash'd from out the old Moor's eyes,
The monarch's wrath began to rise,
Because he answer'd, and because
He spake exceeding well of laws.
Woe is me, Alhama!

«There is no law to say such things
As may disgust the ear of kings:»—
Thus, snorting with his choler, said
The Moorish king, and doom'd him dead.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Moor Alfaqui! Moor Alfaqui!
Though thy beard so hoary be,
The king hath sent to have thee seized,
For Alhama's loss displeased.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And to fix thy head upon
High Alhambra's loftiest stone;
That this for thee should be the law,
And others tremble when they saw.
Woe is me, Alhama!

«Cavalier! and man of worth!
Let these words of mine go forth;
Let the Moorish monarch know,
That to him I nothing owe:
Woe is me, Alhama!

«But on my soul Alhama weighs,
And on my inmost spirit preys;
And if the king his land hath lost,
Yet others may have lost the most.
Woe is me, Alhama!

«Sires have lost their children, wives
Their lords, and valiant men their lives;
One what best his love might claim
Hath lost, another wealth or fame.
Woe is me, Alhama!

«I lost a damsel in that hour,
Of all the land the loveliest flower;
Doubloons a hundred I would pay,
And think her ransom cheap that day.»
Woe is me, Alhama!

And as these things the old Moor said,
They sever'd from the trunk his head;
And to the Alhambra's wall with speed
'T was carried, as the king decreed.
Woe is me, Alhama!

Hombres, niños y mugeres,
Lloran tan grande perdida.
Lloravan todas las damas
Quantas en Granada avia.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

Por las calles y ventanas
Mucho luto parecia;
Llora el Rey como fembra,
Qu' es mucho lo que perdia.
Ay de mi, Alhama!

SONETTO DI VITTORELLI.

PER MONACA.

Sonetto composto in nome di un genitore, a cui era morta poco innanzi una figlia appena maritata; è diretto al genitore della sacra sposa.

Di due vaghe donzelle, oneste, accorte
Lieti e miseri padri il ciel ne feo,
Il ciel, che degne di più nobil sorte
L' una e l' altra veggendo, ambo chiedeo.
La mia fu tolta da veloce morte
A le fumanti tede d' imeneo:
La tua, Francesco, in sugellate porte
Eterna prigioniera or si rendeo.
Ma tu almeno potrai de la gelosa
Irremeabil soglia, ove s' asconde
La sua tenera udir voce pietosa.
Io verso un fiume d' amarissim' onda,
Corro a quel marmo, in cui la figlia or posa,
Batto, e ribatto, ma nessun risponde.

STANZAS

WRITTEN IN PASSING THE AMBRACIAN GULPH, NOVEMBER, 14, 1809.

Through cloudless skies, in silvery sheen,
Full beams the moon on Actium's coast.
And on these waves, for Egypt's queen,
The ancient world was won and lost.

And now upon the scene I look,
The azure grave of many a Roman;
Where stern Ambition once forsook
His wavering crown to follow woman.

Florence! whom I will love as well
As ever yet was said or sung,
(Since Orpheus sang his spouse from hell)
Whilst thou art fair and I am young;

Sweet Florence! those were pleasant times,
When worlds were staked for ladies' eyes:
Had bards as many realms as rhymes,
Thy charms might raise new Anthonies.

Though Fate forbids such things to be,
Yet, by thine eyes and ringlets curl'd!
I cannot lose a world for thee,
But would not lose thee for a world.

And men and infants therein weep
Their loss, so heavy and so deep;
Granada's ladies, all she rears
Within her walls, burst into tears.
Woe is me, Alhama!

And from the windows o'er the walls
The sable web of mourning falls!
The king weeps as a woman o'er
His loss, for it is much and sore.
Woe is me, Alhama!

TRANSLATION FROM VITTORELLI.

ON A NUN.

Sonnet composed in the name of a father, whose daughter had recently died shortly after her marriage; and addressed to the father of her who had lately taken the veil.

Of two fair virgins, modest, though admired,
Heaven made us happy; and now, wretched sires,
Heaven for a nobler doom their worth desires,
And gazing upon *either*, *both* required.
Mine, while the torch of hymen newly fired
Becomes extinguish'd, soon—too soon expires:
But thine within the closing grate retired,
Eternal captive, to her God aspires.
But *thou* at least from out the jealous door,
Which shuts between your never-meeting eyes,
May'st hear her sweet and pious voice once more:
I to the marble, where *my daughter* lies,
Rush,—the swoln flood of bitterness I pour,
And knock, and knock, and knock—but none replies.

STANZAS

Composed October 11th, 1809, during the night, in a thunder-storm, when the guides had lost the road to Zitza, near the range of mountains formerly called Pindus, in Albania.

Chill and mirk is the nightly blast,
Where Pindus' mountains rise,
And angry clouds are pouring fast
The vengeance of the skies.

Our guides are gone, our hope is lost,
And lightnings, as they play,
But show where rocks our path have crost,
Or gild the torrent's spray.

Is yon a cot I saw, though low?
When lightning broke the gloom—
How welcome were its shade!—ah, no!
'T is but a Turkish tomb.

Through sounds of foaming waterfalls,
I hear a voice exclaim—
My way-worn countryman, who calls
On distant England's name.

A shot is fired—by foe or friend?
Another—'t is to tell
The mountain-peasants to descend,
And lead us where they dwell.

Oh! who in such a night will dare
To tempt the wilderness?
And who 'mid thunder-peals can hear
Our signal of distress?

And who that heard our shouts would rise
To try the dubious road?
Nor rather deem from nightly cries
That outlaws were abroad.

Clouds burst, skies flash, oh, dreadful hour!
More fiercely pours the storm!
Yet here one thought has still the power
To keep my bosom warm.

While wandering through each broken path,
O'er brake and craggy brow:
While elements exhaust their wrath,
Sweet Florence, where art thou?

Not on the sea, not on the sea,
Thy bark hath long been gone:
Oh, may the storm that pours on me,
Bow down my head alone!

Full swiftly blew the swift Siroc,
When last I press'd thy lip;
And long ere now, with foaming shock,
Impell'd thy gallant ship.

Now thou art safe; nay, long ere now
Hast trod the shore of Spain:
'T were hard if ought so fair as thou
Should linger on the main.

And since I now remember thee
In darkness and in dread,
As in those hours of revelry
Which mirth and music sped;

Do thou amidst the fair white walls,
If Cadiz yet be free,
At times from out her latticed halls
Look o'er the dark blue sea;

Then think upon Calypso's isles,
Endear'd by days gone by;
To others give a thousand smiles,
To me a single sigh.

And when the admiring circle mark
The paleness of thy face,
A half form'd tear, a transient spark
Of melancholy grace,

Again thou 'lt smile, and blushing shun
Some coxcomb's raillery;
Nor own for once thou thought'st of one,
Who ever thinks on thee.

Though smile and sigh alike are vain,
When sever'd hearts repine,
My spirit flies o'er mount and main,
And mourns in search of thine.

TO ***

On Lady! when I left the shore,
The distant shore which gave me birth,
I hardly thought to grieve once more,
To quit another spot on earth:

Yet here, amidst this barren isle,
Where panting nature droops the head,
Where only thou art seen to smile,
I view my parting hour with dread.
Though far from Albin's craggy shore,
Divided by the dark blue main;
A few, brief, rolling seasons o'er,
Perchance I view her cliffs again:
But wheresoe'er I now may roam,
Through scorching clime and varied sea,
Though time restore me to my home,
I ne'er shall bend mine eyes on thee:
On thee, in whom at once conspire
All charms which heedless hearts can move,
Whom but to see is to admire,
And, oh! forgive the word—to love.
Forgive the word, in one who ne'er
With such a word can more offend;
And since thy heart I cannot share,
Believe me, what I am, thy friend.
And who so cold as look on thee,
Thou lovely wanderer, and be less?
Nor be, what man should ever be,
The friend of Beauty in distress?
Ah! who would think that form had past
Through Danger's most destructive path,
Had braved the death-wing'd tempest's blast,
And 'scaped a tyrant's fiercer wrath?
Lady! when I shall view the walls
Where free Byzantium once arose;
And Stamboul's Oriental halls
The Turkish tyrants now enclose;
Though mightiest in the lists of fame,
That glorious city still shall be;
On me 't will hold a dearer claim,
As spot of thy nativity:
And though I bid thee now farewell,
When I behold that wondrous scene,
Since where thou art I may not dwell,
'T will soothe to be where thou hast been.

September, 1809.

WRITTEN AT ATHENS,
JANUARY 16, 1810.

The spell is broke, the charm is flown!
Thus is it with life's fitful fever:
We madly smile when we should groan;
Delirium is our best deceiver.

Each lucid interval of thought
Recals the woes of Nature's charter,
And he that acts as wise men ought,
But lives, as saints have died, a martyr.

WRITTEN BENEATH A PICTURE.

Dear object of defeated care!
Though now of love and thee bereft,
To reconcile me with despair
Thine image and my tears are left.

'Tis said with sorrow time can cope;
But this I feel can ne'er be true:
For by the death-blow of my hope
My memory immortal grew.

WRITTEN AFTER SWIMMING FROM SESTOS TO ABYDOS.[1]

MAY 9, 1810.

If, in the month of dark December,
Leander, who was nightly wont
(What maid will not the tale remember?)
To cross thy stream, broad Hellespont!

If, when the wintry tempest roar'd,
He sped to Hero, nothing loth,
And thus of old thy current pour'd,
Fair Venus! how I pity both!

For *me*, degenerate modern wretch,
Though in the genial month of May,
My dripping limbs I faintly stretch,
And think I've done a feat to-day.

But since he cross'd the rapid tide,
According to the doubtful story,
To woo,—and—Lord knows what beside,
And swam for love, as I for glory;

'Twere hard to say who fared the best:
Sad mortals! thus the gods still plague you!
He lost his labour, I my jest;
For he was drown'd, and I've the ague.

Ζώη μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.[2]

ATHENS, 1810.

Maid of Athens, ere we part,
Give, oh, give me back my heart!
Or, since that has left my breast,
Keep it now, and take the rest!
Hear my vow before I go,
Ζώη μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

By those tresses unconfined,
Woo'd by each Ægean wind;
By those lids whose jetty fringe
Kiss thy soft cheeks' blooming tinge,
By those wild eyes like the roe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

By that lip I long to taste;
By that zone-encircled waist;
By all the token-flowers[1] that tell!
What words can never speak so well;
By love's alternate joy and woe,
Ζώη μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

Maid of Athens! I am gone:
Think of me, sweet! when alone.—
Though I fly to Istambol,[2]
Athens holds my heart and soul:
Can I cease to love thee? No!
Ζώη μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ.

TRANSLATION OF THE FAMOUS GREEK WAR SONG,

Δεῦτε παῖδες τῶν Ἑλλήνων,

Written by Riga, who perished in the attempt to revolutionize Greece. The following translation is as literal as the author could make it in verse; it is of the same measure as that of the original.

Sons of the Greeks, arise!
The glorious hour's gone forth,
And, worthy of such ties,
Display who gave us birth.

CHORUS.

Sons of Greeks! let us go
In arms against the foe,
Till their hated blood shall flow
In a river past our feet.

Then manfully despising
The Turkish tyrant's yoke,
Let your country see you rising,
And all her chains are broke.
Brave shades of chiefs and sages,
Behold the coming strife!
Hellénes of past ages,
Oh, start again to life!
At the sound of my trumpet, breaking
Your sleep, oh, join with me!
And the seven-hill'd[3] city seeking,
Fight, conquer, till we're free.
Sons of Greeks, etc.

Sparta, Sparta, why in slumbers
Lethargic dost thou lie!
Awake, and join thy numbers
With Athens, old ally!

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[1] On the 3d of May, 1810, while the Salsette (Captain Bathurst) was lying in the Dardanelles, Lieutenant Ekenhead of that frigate and the writer of these rhymes swam from the European shore to the Asiatic —by-the-bye, from Abydos to Sestos would have been more correct. The whole distance from the place whence we started to our landing on the other side, including the length we were carried by the current, was computed by those on board the frigate at upwards of four English miles; though the actual breadth is barely one. The rapidity of the current is such that no boat can row directly across, and it may in some measure be estimated from the circumstance of the whole distance being accomplished by one of the parties in an hour and five, and by the other in an hour and ten minutes. The water was extremely cold from the melting of the mountain-snows. About three weeks before, in April, we had made an attempt, but having ridden all the way from the Troad the same morning, and the water being of an icy chillness, we found it necessary to postpone the completion till the frigate anchored below the castles, when we swam the straits, as just stated, entering a considerable way above the European, and landing below the Asiatic fort. Chevalier says that a young Jew swam the same distance for his mistress; and Oliver mentions it having been done by a Neapolitan; but our consul, Tarragona, remembered neither of these circumstances, and tried to dissuade us from the attempt. A number of the Salsette's crew were known to have accomplished a greater distance; and the only thing that surprised me was, that, as doubts had been entertained of the truth of Leander's story, no traveller had ever endeavoured to ascertain its practicability.

[2] *Zoë mou, sas agapo*, or Ζώη μοῦ, σὰς ἀγαπῶ, a Romaic expression of tenderness: if I translate it I shall affront the gentlemen, as it may seem that I supposed they could not; and if I do not, I may affront the ladies. For fear of any misconstruction on the part of the latter I shall do so, begging pardon of the learned. It means, "My life, I love you!" which sounds very prettily in all languages, and is as much in fashion in Greece at this day as, Juvenal tells us, the two first words were amongst the Roman ladies, whose exotic expressions were all Hellenized.

[1] In the East (where ladies are not taught to write, lest they should scribble assignations) flowers, cinders, pebbles, etc. convey the sentiments of the parties by that universal deputy of Mercury—an old woman. A cinder says, "I burn for thee;" a bunch of flowers tied with hair, "Take me and fly;" but a pebble declares—what nothing else can.

[2] Constantinople.

[3] Constantinople. "Επταλοφος."

Leonidas recalling,
That chief of ancient song,
Who saved ye once from falling,
The terrible! the strong!
Who made that bold diversion
In old Thermopylæ,
And warring with the Persian
To keep his country free;
With his three hundred waging
The battle, long he stood,
And like a lion raging,
Expired in seas of blood.
Sons of Greeks, etc,

TRANSLATION OF THE ROMAIC SONG,

« Μπενω μες 'τσ πέρβολι
'Ωραίοτατη Χαιδὴ, » etc.

The song from which this is taken is a great favourite with the young girls of Athens of all classes. Their manner of singing it is by verses in rotation, the whole number present joining in the chorus. I have heard it frequently at our « χόρος » in the winter of 1810-11. The air is plaintive and pretty.

I ENTER thy garden of roses,
Beloved and fair Haideé,
Each morning where Flora reposes,
For surely I see her in thee.
Oh, lovely! thus low I implore thee,
Receive this fond truth from my tongue,
Which utters its song to adore thee,
Yet trembles for what it has sung;
As the branch, at the bidding of nature,
Adds fragrance and fruit to the tree,
Through her eyes, through her every feature,
Shines the soul of the young Haideé.

But the loveliest garden grows hateful
When love has abandon'd the bowers;
Bring me hemlock—since mine is ungrateful,
That herb is more fragrant than flowers.
The poison, when pour'd from the chalice,
Will deeply embitter the bowl;
But when drunk to escape from thy malice,
The draught shall be sweet to my soul.
Too cruel! in vain I implore thee
My heart from these horrors to save:
Will nought to my bosom restore thee?
Then open the gates of the grave.

As the chief who to combat advances
Secure of his conquest before,
Thus thou, with those eyes for thy lances,
Hast pierced through my heart to its core.
Ah, tell me, my soul! must I perish
By pangs which a smile would dispel?
Would the hope, which thou once bad'st me cherish,
For torture repay me too well?
Now sad is the garden of roses,
Beloved but false Haideé!
There Flora all wither'd reposes,
And mourns o'er thine absence with me.

ON PARTING.

THE kiss, dear maid! thy lip has left,
Shall never part from mine,
Till happier hours restore the gift
Untainted back to thine.

Thy parting glance, which fondly beams,
An equal love may see:
The tear that from thine eyelid streams
Can weep no change in me.

I ask no pledge to make me blest
In gazing when alone;
Nor one memorial for a breast,
Whose thoughts are all thine own.

Nor need I write—to tell the tale
My pen were doubly weak:
Oh! what can idle words avail,
Unless the heart could speak?

By day or night, in weal or woe,
That heart, no longer free,
Must bear the love it cannot show,
And silent ache for thee.

TO THYRZA.

WITHOUT a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah, wherefore art thou lowly laid?
By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet beloved in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet—no—ne'er again!
Could this have been—a word, a look
That softly said, « We part in peace, »
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.
And didst thou not, since death for thee
Prepared a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?
Oh! who like him had watch'd thee here?
Or sadly mark'd thy glazing eye,
In that dread hour ere death appear,
When silent sorrow fears to sigh,
Till all was past? But when no more
'T was thine to reck of human woe,
Affection's heart-drops, gushing o'er,
Had flow'd as fast—as now they flow.
Shall they not flow, when many a day
In these, to me, deserted towers,
Ere call'd but for a time away,
Affection's mingling tears were ours?
Ours too the glance none saw beside;
The smile none else might understand;
The whisper'd thought of hearts allied,
The pressure of the thrilling hand;
The kiss so guiltless and refined
That love each warmer wish forbore;
Those eyes proclaim'd so pure a mind,
Even passion blush'd to plead for more.
The tone, that taught me to rejoice,
When prone, unlike thee, to repine;
The song celestial from thy voice,
But sweet to me from none but thine;

The pledge we wore—I wear it still,
But where is thine?—ah, where art thou?
Oft have I borne the weight of ill,
But never bent beneath till now!
Well hast thou left in life's best bloom
The cup of woe for me to drain.
If rest alone be in the tomb,
I would not wish thee here again;
But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
To wean me from mine anguish here.
Teach me—too early taught by thee!
To bear, forgiving and forgiven:
On earth thy love was such to me,
It fain would form my hope in heaven!

STANZAS.

Away, away, ye notes of woe!
Be silent, thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence, for, oh!
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days—
But lull the chords, for now, alas!
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am, on what I was.

The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled;
And now their softest notes repeat
A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead!
Yes, Thyrza! yes, they breathe of thee,
Beloved dust! since dust thou art;
And all that once was harmony
Is worse than discord to my heart!

'T is silent all!—but on my ear
The well-remember'd echoes thrill;
I hear a voice I would not hear,
A voice that now might well be still;
Yet oft my doubting soul 't will shake:
Even slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
To listen, though the dream be flown.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
Thou art but now a lovely dream;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.
But he, who through life's dreary way
Must pass, when heaven is veil'd in wrath,
Will long lament the vanish'd ray
That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.

TO THYRZA.

One struggle more, and I am free
From pang that rends my heart in twain,
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again.
It suits me well to mingle now
With things that never pleased before:
Though every joy is fled below,
What future grief can touch me more?
Then bring me wine, the banquet bring;
Man was not form'd to live alone:
I 'll be that light unmeaning thing
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou
Hast fled, and left me lonely here;
Thou 'rt nothing, all are nothing now.

In vain my lyre would lightly breathe!
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill;
Though pleasure fires the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still!

On many a lone and lovely night
It soothed to gaze upon the sky;
For then I deem'd the heavenly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye;
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Ægean wave,
"Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—"
Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave!

When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
"'T is comfort still," I faintly said,
"That Thyrza cannot know my pains:"
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 't is idle then to give,
Relenting Nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceased to live!

My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new!
How different now thou meet'st my gaze!
How tinged by time with sorrow's hue!
The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah, were mine as still!
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!
Though painful, welcome to my breast!
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou 'rt prest!
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallow'd when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?

EUTHANASIA.

When Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

But silent let me sink to earth,
With no officious mourners near:
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

'T were sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see:
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath;
And woman's tears, produced at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan!
For thousands death hath ceased to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.

«Ay, but to die, and go,» alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go!
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe!

Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'T is something better not to be.

STANZAS.

«Heu quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam tui meminisse!»

And thou art dead, as young and fair
As aught of mortal birth;
And form so soft, and charms so rare,
Too soon return'd to earth!
Though Earth received them in her bed,
And o'er the spot the crowd may tread
In carelessness or mirth,
There is an eye which could not brook
A moment on that grave to look.

I will not ask where thou liest low,
Nor gaze upon the spot;
There flowers or weeds at will may grow,
So I behold them not:
It is enough for me to prove
That what I loved, and long must love,
Like common earth can rot;
To me there needs no stone to tell,
'T is nothing that I loved so well.

Yet did I love thee to the last
As fervently as thou,
Who didst not change through all the past,
And canst not alter now.
The love where Death has set his seal,
Nor age can chill, nor rival steal,
Nor falsehood disavow:
And, what were worse, thou canst not see
Or wrong, or change, or fault in me.

The better days of life were ours;
The worst can be but mine:
The sun that cheers, the storm that lowers,
Shall never more be thine.
The silence of that dreamless sleep
I envy now too much to weep;
Nor need I to repine
That all those charms have pass'd away,
I might have watch'd through long decay.

The flower in ripen'd bloom unmatch'd
Must fall the earliest prey;
Though by no hand untimely snatch'd,
The leaves must drop away:
And yet it were a greater grief
To watch it withering, leaf by leaf,
Than see it pluck'd to-day;
Since earthly eye but ill can bear
To trace the change to foul from fair.

I know not if I could have borne
To see thy beauties fade;
The night that follow'd such a morn
Had worn a deeper shade:
Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last;
Extinguish'd, not decay'd;
As stars that shoot along the sky
Shine brightest as they fall from high.

As once I wept, if I could weep,
My tears might well be shed,
To think I was not near to keep
One vigil o'er thy bed;
To gaze, how fondly! on thy face,
To fold thee in a faint embrace,
Uphold thy drooping head;
And show that love, however vain,
Nor thou nor I can feel again.

Yet how much less it were to gain,
Though thou hast left me free,
The loveliest things that still remain,
Than thus remember thee!
The all of thine that cannot die
Through dark and dread eternity,
Returns again to me,
And more thy buried love endears
Than aught, except its living years.

STANZAS.

If sometimes in the haunts of men
Thine image from my breast may fade,
The lonely hour presents again
The semblance of thy gentle shade:
And now that sad and silent hour
Thus much of thee can still restore,
And sorrow unobserved may pour
The plaint she dare not speak before.

Oh, pardon that in crowds awhile,
I waste one thought I owe to thee,
And, self-condemn'd, appear to smile,
Unfaithful to thy memory!

Nor deem that memory less dear,
That then I seem not to repine;
I would not fools should overhear
One sigh that should be wholly *thine*.

If not the goblet pass unquaff'd,
It is not drain'd to banish care,
The cup must hold a deadlier draught
That brings a Lethe for despair.
And could oblivion set my soul
From all her troubled visions free,
I'd dash to earth the sweetest bowl
That drown'd a single thought of thee.

For wert thou vanish'd from my mind,
Where could my vacant bosom turn?
And who would then remain behind
To honour thine abandon'd urn?
No, no—it is my sorrow's pride
That last dear duty to fulfil;
Though all the world forget beside,
'T is meet that I remember still.

For well I know, that such had been
Thy gentle care for him, who now
Unmourn'd shall quit this mortal scene,
Where none regarded him, but thou:
And, oh! I feel in *that* was given
A blessing never meant for me;
Thou wert too like a dream of heaven,
For earthly love to merit thee.

March 14th, 1812.

ON A CORNELIAN HEART WHICH WAS BROKEN.

Ill-fated heart! and can it be
That thou shouldst thus be rent in twain?
Have years of care for thine and thee
Alike been all employ'd in vain?

Yet precious seems each shatter'd part,
And every fragment dearer grown,
Since he who wears thee feels thou art
A fitter emblem of *his own*.

TO A YOUTHFUL FRIEND.

[This poem and the following were written some years ago.]

Few years have pass'd since thou and I
Were firmest friends, at least in name,
And childhood's gay sincerity
Preserved our feelings long the same.

But now, like me, too well thou know'st
What trifles oft the heart recal;
And those who once have loved the most
Too soon forget they loved at all.

And such the change the heart displays,
So frail is early friendship's reign,
A month's brief lapse, perhaps a day's,
Will view thy mind estranged again.

If so, it never shall be mine
To mourn the loss of such a heart;
The fault was Nature's fault, not thine,
Which made thee fickle as thou art.

As rolls the ocean's changing tide,
So human feelings ebb and flow;
And who would in a breast confide
Where stormy passions ever glow?

It boots not, that together bred,
Our childish days were days of joy;
My spring of life has quickly fled;
Thou, too, hast ceased to be a boy.

And when we bid adieu to youth,
Slaves to the specious world's control,
We sigh a long farewell to truth;
That world corrupts the noblest soul.

Ah, joyous season! when the mind
Dares all things boldly but to lie;
When thought, ere spoke, is unconfined,
And sparkles in the placid eye.

Not so in man's maturer years,
When man himself is but a tool;
When interest sways our hopes and fears,
And all must love and hate by rule.

With fools in kindred vice the same,
We learn at length our faults to blend,
And those, and those alone may claim
The prostituted name of friend.

Such is the common lot of man:
Can we then 'scape from folly free?
Can we reverse the general plan,
Nor be what all in turn must be?

No, for myself, so dark my fate
Through every turn of life hath been;
Man and the world I so much hate,
I care not when I quit the scene.

But thou, with spirit frail and light,
Wilt shine awhile and pass away;
As glow-worms sparkle through the night,
But dare not stand the test of day.

Alas! whenever folly calls
Where parasites and princes meet
(For cherish'd first in royal halls,
The welcome vices kindly greet),

Even now thou 'rt nightly seen to add
One insect to the fluttering crowd;
And still thy trifling heart is glad,
To join the vain and court the proud.

There dost thou glide from fair to fair,
Still simpering on with eager haste,
As flies along the gay parterre,
That taint the flowers they scarcely taste.

But say, what nymph will prize the flame
Which seems, as marshy vapours move,
To flit along from dame to dame,
An ignis-fatuus gleam of love?

What friend for thee, howe'er inclined,
Will deign to own a kindred care?
Who will debase his manly mind,
For friendship every fool may share?

In time forbear; amidst the throng
No more so base a thing be seen;
No more so idly pass along:
Be something, any thing, but—mean.

TO *******

Well! thou art happy, and I feel
That I should thus be happy too;
For still my heart regards thy weal
Warmly, as it was wont to do.

Thy husband 's blest—and 't will impart
Some pangs to view his happier lot:
But let them pass—Oh! how my heart
Would hate him, if he loved thee not!

When late I saw thy favourite child,
I thought my jealous heart would break;
But when the unconscious infant smiled,
I kiss'd it, for its mother's sake.

I kiss'd it, and repress'd my sighs
Its father in its face to see;
But then it had its mother's eyes,
And they were all to love and me.

Mary, adieu! I must away:
While thou art blest I 'll not repine;
But near thee I can never stay;
My heart would soon again be thine.

I deem'd that time, I deem'd that pride
Had quench'd at length my boyish flame;
Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save hope, the same.

Yet was I calm: I knew the time
My breast would thrill before thy look;
But now to tremble were a crime—
We met, and not a nerve was shook.

I saw thee gaze upon my face,
Yet meet with no confusion there:
One only feeling couldst thou trace;
The sullen calmness of despair.

Away! away! my early dream
Remembrance never must awake:
Oh! where is Lethe's fabled stream?
My foolish heart, be still, or break.

FROM THE PORTUGUESE.

In moments to delight devoted,
"My life!" with tenderest tone, you cry;
Dear words on which my heart had doted,
If youth could neither fade nor die.

To death even hours like these must roll;
Ah! then repeat those accents never;
Or change "my life!" into "my soul!"
Which, like my love, exists for ever.

IMPROMPTU, IN REPLY TO A FRIEND.

When from the heart where sorrow sits,
Her dusky shadow mounts too high,
And o'er the changing aspect flits,
And clouds the brow, or fills the eye;
Heed not that gloom, which soon shall sink:
My thoughts their dungeon know too well;
Back to my breast the wanderers shrink,
And droop within their silent cell.

ADDRESS,

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF DRURY-LANE THEATRE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1812.

In one dread night our city saw, and sigh'd,
Bow'd to the dust, the Drama's tower of pride:
In one short hour beheld the blazing fane,
Apollo sink, and Shakspeare cease to reign.

Ye who beheld, (oh! sight admired and mourn'd,
Whose radiance mock'd the ruin it adorn'd!)
Through clouds of fire, the massy fragments riven,
Like Israel's pillar, chase the night from heaven;
Saw the long column of revolving flames
Shake its red shadow o'er the startled Thames,
While thousands, throng'd around the burning dome,
Shrank back appall'd, and trembled for their home,
As glared the volumed blaze, and ghastly shone
The skies with lightnings awful as their own,
Till blackening ashes and the lonely wall
Usurp'd the Muse's realm, and mark'd her fall;
Say—shall this new, nor less aspiring pile,
Rear'd where once rose the mightiest in our isle,
Know the same favour which the former knew,
A shrine for Shakspeare—worthy him and *you*?

Yes—it shall be—the magic of that name
Defies the scythe of time, the torch of flame;
On the same spot still consecrates the scene,
And bids the Drama *be* where she hath *been*:
This fabric's birth attests the potent spell—
Indulge our honest pride, and say, *How well!*

As soars this fane to emulate the last,
Oh! might we draw our omens from the past,
Some hour propitious to our prayers may boast
Names such as hallow still the dome we lost.
On Drury first your Siddons' thrilling art
O'erwhelm'd the gentlest, storm'd the sternest heart.
On Drury, Garrick's latest laurels grew;
Here your last tears retiring Roscius drew,
Sigh'd his last thanks, and wept his last adieu:
But still for living wit the wreaths may bloom
That only waste their odours o'er the tomb.
Such Drury claim'd and claims—nor you refuse
One tribute to revive his slumbering muse;
With garlands deck your own Menander's head!
Nor hoard your honours idly for the dead!

Dear are the days which made our annals bright,
Ere Garrick fled, or Brinsley ceased to write.
Heirs to their labours, like all high-born heirs,
Vain of *our* ancestry, as they of *theirs;*
While thus remembrance borrows Banquo's glass
To claim the sceptred shadows as they pass,
And we the mirror hold, where imaged shine
Immortal names, emblazon'd on our line,
Pause—ere their feebler offspring you condemn,
Reflect how hard the task to rival them!

Friends of the stage! to whom both players and plays
Must sue alike for pardon, or for praise,
Whose judging voice and eye alone direct
The boundless power to cherish or reject;
If e'er frivolity has led to fame,
And made us blush that you forbore to blame;
If e'er the sinking stage could condescend
To soothe the sickly taste it dare not mend,
All past reproach may present scenes refute,
And censure, wisely loud, be justly mute!
Oh! since your fiat stamps the drama's laws,
Forbear to mock us with misplaced applause;
So pride shall doubly nerve the actor's powers,
And reason's voice be echo'd back by ours!

This greeting o'er, the ancient rule obey'd,
The Drama's homage by her herald paid,
Receive *our* welcome too, whose every tone
Springs from our hearts, and fain would win your own.
The curtain rises—may our stage unfold
Scenes not unworthy Drury's days of old!
Britons our judges, nature for our guide,
Still may *we* please—long, long may *you* preside!

TO TIME.

Time! on whose arbitrary wing
The varying hours must flag or fly,
Whose tardy winter, fleeting spring,
But drag or drive us on to die—
Hail thou! who on my birth bestow'd
Those boons to all that know thee known;
Yet better I sustain thy load,
For now I bear the weight alone.
I would not one fond heart should share
The bitter moments thou hast given;
And pardon thee, since thou couldst spare,
All that I loved, to peace or heaven.
To them be joy or rest, on me
Thy future ills shall press in vain;
I nothing owe but years to thee,
A debt already paid in pain.
Yet e'en that pain was some relief;
It felt, but still forgot thy power:
The active agony of grief
Retards, but never counts the hour.
In joy I 've sigh'd to think thy flight
Would soon subside from swift to slow;
Thy cloud could overcast the light,
But could not add a night to woe;
For then, however drear and dark,
My soul was suited to thy sky;
One star alone shot forth a spark
To prove thee—not Eternity.
That beam hath sunk; and now thou art
A blank; a thing to count and curse
Through each dull tedious trifling part,
Which all regret, yet all rehearse.
One scene even thou canst not deform;
The limit of thy sloth or speed.
When future wanderers bear the storm
Which we shall sleep too sound to heed:
And I can smile to think how weak
Thine efforts shortly shall be shown,
When all the vengeance thou canst wreak
Must fall upon—a nameless stone!

TRANSLATION OF A ROMAIC LOVE SONG.

Ah! Love was never yet without
The pang, the agony, the doubt,
Which rends my heart with ceaseless sigh,
While day and night roll darkling by.

Without one friend to hear my woe,
I faint, I die beneath the blow.
That Love had arrows, well I knew:
Alas! I find them poison'd too.

Birds, yet in freedom, shun the net,
Which Love around your haunts hath set;
Or, circled by his fatal fire,
Your hearts shall burn, your hopes expire.

A bird of free and careless wing
Was I, through many a smiling spring;
But caught within the subtle snare,
I burn, and feebly flutter there.

Who ne'er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain,
The cold repulse, the look askance,
The lightning of love's angry glance.

In flattering dreams I deem'd thee mine;
Now hope, and he who hoped, decline;
Like melting wax, or withering flower,
I feel my passion, and thy power.

My light of life! ah, tell me why
That pouting lip, and alter'd eye?
My bird of love! my beauteous mate!
And art thou changed, and canst thou hate?

Mine eyes like wintry streams o'erflow:
What wretch with me would barter woe?
My bird! relent: one note could give
A charm, to bid thy lover live.

My curdling blood, my maddening brain,
In silent anguish I sustain!
And still thy heart, without partaking
One pang, exults—while mine is breaking.

Pour me the poison; fear not thou!
Thou canst not murder more than now:
I 've lived to curse my fatal day,
And love, that thus can lingering slay.

My wounded soul, my bleeding breast,
Can patience preach thee into rest?
Alas! too late I dearly know,
That joy is harbinger of woe.

A SONG.

Thou art not false, but thou art fickle,
To those thyself so fondly sought;
The tears that thou hast forced to trickle
Are doubly bitter from that thought:
'T is this which breaks the heart thou grievest,
Too well thou lovest—too soon thou leavest.

The wholly false the heart despises,
And spurns deceiver and deceit;
But she who not a thought disguises,
Whose love is as sincere as sweet,—
When she can change who loved so truly,
It feels what mine has felt so newly.

To dream of joy and wake to sorrow
Is doom'd to all who love or live;
And if, when conscious on the morrow,
We scarce our fancy can forgive,
That cheated us in slumber only,
To leave the waking soul more lonely,

What must they feel whom no false vision,
But truest, tenderest passion warm'd?
Sincere, but swift in sad transition,
As if a dream alone had charm'd?
Ah! sure such grief is fancy's scheming,
And all thy change can be but dreaming!

ON BEING ASKED WHAT WAS THE «ORIGIN OF LOVE?»

The «Origin of Love!»—Ah why
That cruel question ask of me,
When thou may'st read in many an eye
He starts to life on seeing thee?

And shouldst thou seek his *end* to know:
My heart forebodes, my fears foresee,
He 'll linger long in silent woe;
But live—until I cease to be.

REMEMBER HIM, etc.

Remember him, whom passion's power
Severely, deeply, vainly proved:
Remember thou that dangerous hour
When neither fell, though both were loved.

That yielding breast, that melting eye,
Too much invited to be blest:
That gentle prayer, that pleading sigh,
The wilder wish reproved, represt.

Oh! let me feel that all I lost,
But saved thee all that conscience fears;
And blush for every pang it cost
To spare the vain remorse of years.

Yet think of this when many a tongue,
Whose busy accents whisper blame,
Would do the heart that loved thee wrong,
And brand a nearly blighted name.

Think that, whate'er to others, thou
Hast seen each selfish thought subdued:
I bless thy purer soul even now,
Even now, in midnight solitude.

Oh, God! that we had met in time,
Our hearts as fond, thy hand more free;
When thou hadst loved without a crime,
And I been less unworthy thee!

Far may thy days, as heretofore,
From this our gaudy world be past!
And, that too bitter moment o'er,
Oh! may such trial be thy last!

This heart, alas! perverted long,
Itself destroy'd might there destroy;
To meet thee in the glittering throng,
Would wake presumption's hope of joy.

Then to the things whose bliss or woe,
Like mine, is wild and worthless all,
That world resign—such scenes forego,
Where those who feel must surely fall.

Thy youth, thy charms, thy tenderness,
Thy soul from long seclusion pure,
From what even here hath past, may guess,
What there thy bosom must endure.

Oh! pardon that imploring tear,
Since not by virtue shed in vain,
My frenzy drew from eyes so dear;
For me they shall not weep again.

Though long and mournful must it be,
The thought that we no more may meet;
Yet I deserve the stern decree,
And almost deem the sentence sweet.

Still, had I loved thee less, my heart
Had then less sacrificed to thine;
It felt not half so much to part,
As if its guilt had made thee mine.

LINES

INSCRIBED UPON A CUP FORMED FROM A SKULL.

Start not—nor deem my spirit fled:
In me behold the only skull
From which, unlike a living head,
Whatever flows is never dull.

I lived, I loved, I quaff'd, like thee;
I died; let earth my bones resign:
Fill up—thou canst not injure me;
The worm hath fouler lips than thine.

Better to hold the sparkling grape,
Than nurse the earth-worm's slimy brood;
And circle in the goblet's shape
The drink of gods, than reptile's food.

Where once my wit, perchance, hath shone,
In aid of others' let me shine;
And when, alas! our brains are gone,
What nobler substitute than wine!

Quaff while thou canst—another race,
When thou and thine like me are sped,
May rescue thee from earth's embrace,
And rhyme and revel with the dead.

Why not? since through life's little day
Our heads such sad effects produce;
Redeem'd from worms and wasting clay,
This chance is theirs, to be of use.

Newstead Abbey, 1808.

ON THE DEATH OF SIR PETER PARKER, BART.

There is a tear for all that die,
A mourner o'er the humblest grave;
But nations swell the funeral cry,
And triumph weeps above the brave.

For them is sorrow's purest sigh
O'er ocean's heaving bosom sent:
In vain their bones unburied lie,
All earth becomes their monument!

A tomb is theirs on every page,
An epitaph on every tongue.
The present hours, the future age,
For them bewail, to them belong.

For them the voice of festal mirth
Grows hush'd, *their name* the only sound;
While deep remembrance pours to worth
The goblet's tributary round.

A theme to crowds that knew them not,
Lamented by admiring foes,
Who would not share their glorious lot?
Who would not die the death they chose?

And, gallant Parker! thus enshrined
Thy life, thy fall, thy fame shall be;
And early valour, glowing, find
A model in thy memory.

But there are breasts that bleed with thee
In woe, that glory cannot quell;
And shuddering hear of victory,
Where one so dear, so dauntless, fell.

Where shall they turn to mourn thee less?
When cease to hear thy cherish'd name?
Time cannot teach forgetfulness,
While grief's full heart is fed by fame.

Alas! for them, though not for thee,
They can not choose but weep the more;
Deep for the dead the grief must be,
Who ne'er gave cause to mourn before.

TO A LADY WEEPING.

Weep, daughter of a royal line,
A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay;
Ah, happy! if each tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away!

Weep—for thy tears are virtue's tears—
Auspicious to these suffering isles;
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee by thy people's smiles!

March, 1812.

FROM THE TURKISH.

The chain I gave was fair to view,
The lute I added sweet in sound,
The heart that offer'd both was true,
And ill deserved the fate it found.

These gifts were charm'd by secret spell
Thy truth in absence to divine;
And they have done their duty well,
Alas! they could not teach thee thine.

That chain was firm in every link,
But not to bear a stranger's touch;
That lute was sweet—till thou couldst think
In other hands its notes were such.

Let him, who from thy neck unbound
The chain which shiver'd in his grasp,
Who saw that lute refuse to sound,
Restring the chords, renew the clasp.

When thou wert changed, they alter'd too;
The chain is broke, the music mute:
'T is past—to them and thee adieu—
False heart, frail chain, and silent lute.

SONNET.

TO GENEVRA.

Thine eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features—caught
From contemplation—where serenely wrought,
Seem sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair—
Have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air,
That—but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
With mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought—
I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.
With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
When from his beauty-breathing pencil born,
(Except that *thou* hast nothing to repent)
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn—
Such seem'st thou—but how much more excellent!
With nought remorse can claim—nor virtue scorn.

SONNET.

TO GENEVRA.

Thy cheek is pale with thought, but not from woe,
And yet so lovely, that if mirth could flush
Its rose of whiteness with the brightest blush,
My heart would wish away that ruder glow:—
And dazzle not thy deep-blue eyes—but oh!
While gazing on them sterner eyes will gush,
And into mine my mother's weakness rush,
Soft as the last drops round heaven's airy bow.
For, through thy long dark lashes low depending,
The soul of melancholy gentleness
Gleams like a seraph from the sky descending,
Above all pain, yet pitying all distress;
At once such majesty with sweetness blending,
I worship more, but cannot love thee less.

INSCRIPTION

ON THE MONUMENT OF A NEWFOUNDLAND DOG.

When some proud son of man returns to earth,
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,

The sculptor's art exhausts the pomp of woe,
And storied urns record who rests below;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been:
But the poor dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend,
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes for him alone,
Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in heaven the soul he held on earth:
While man, vain insect! hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself a sole exclusive heaven.
Oh man! thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debased by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust!
Thy love is lust, thy friendship all a cheat,
Thy smiles hypocrisy, thy words deceit!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye! who perchance behold this simple urn,
Pass on—it honours none you wish to mourn:
To mark a friend's remains these stones arise,
I never knew but one, and here he lies.

Newstead Abbey, Oct. 30, 1808.

FAREWELL.

FARE thee well! if ever fondest prayer
For other's weal avail'd on high,
Mine will not all be lost in air,
But waft thy name beyond the sky.
'T were vain to speak, to weep, to sigh:
Oh! more than tears of blood can tell,
When wrung from guilt's expiring eye,
Are in that word—Farewell!—Farewell!

These lips are mute, these eyes are dry;
But in my breast, and in my brain,
Awake the pangs that pass not by,
The thought that ne'er shall sleep again.
My soul nor deigns nor dares complain,
Though grief and passion there rebel;
I only know we loved in vain—
I only feel—Farewell!—Farewell!

BRIGHT be the place of thy soul!
No lovelier spirit than thine
E'er burst from its mortal control,
In the orbs of the blessed to shine.
On earth thou wert all but divine,
As thy soul shall immortally be;
And our sorrow may cease to repine,
When we know that thy God is with thee.

Light be the turf of thy tomb!
May its verdure like emeralds be:
There should not be the shadow of gloom
In aught that reminds us of thee.
Young flowers and an evergreen tree
May spring from the spot of thy rest:
But nor cypress nor yew let us see;
For why should we mourn for the blest?

WHEN we two parted
In silence and tears,
Half broken-hearted
To sever for years,
Pale grew thy cheek and cold,
Colder thy kiss;
Truly that hour foretold
Sorrow to this.

The dew of the morning
Sunk chill on my brow—
It felt like the warning
Of what I feel now.
Thy vows are all broken,
And light is thy fame;
I hear thy name spoken,
And share in its shame.

They name thee before me,
A knell to mine ear;
A shudder comes o'er me—
Why wert thou so dear?
They know not I knew thee,
Who knew thee too well:—
Long, long shall I rue thee,
Too deeply to tell.

In secret we met—
In silence I grieve,
That thy heart could forget,
Thy spirit deceive.
If I should meet thee
After long years,
How should I greet thee?—
With silence and tears.

1808.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.[1]

"O Lachrymarum fons, tenero sacros
Ducentium ortus ex animo: quater
Felix! in imo qui scatentem
Pectore te, pia Nympha, sensit."

GRAY'S POEMATA.

THERE'S not a joy the world can give like that it takes away,
When the glow of early thought declines in feeling's dull decay;
'Tis not on youth's smooth cheek the blush alone, which fades so fast,
But the tender bloom of heart is gone, ere youth itself be past.

Then the few whose spirits float above the wreck of happiness,
Are driven o'er the shoals of guilt or ocean of excess:
The magnet of their course is gone, or only points in vain
The shore to which their shiver'd sail shall never stretch again.

Then the mortal coldness of the soul like death itself comes down;
It cannot feel for others' woes, it dare not dream its own;

[1] These Verses were given by Lord Byron to Mr Power, Strand, who has published them, with very beautiful music by Sir John Stevenson.

That heavy chill has frozen o'er the fountain of our tears,
And though the eye may sparkle still, 't is where the ice appears.

Though wit may flash from fluent lips, and mirth distract the breast,
Through midnight hours that yield no more their former hope of rest;
'Tis but as ivy-leaves around the ruin'd turret wreathe,
All green and wildly fresh without, but worn and gray beneath.

Oh could I feel as I have felt,—or be what I have been,
Or weep, as I could once have wept, o'er many a vanish'd scene:
As springs, in deserts found, seem sweet—all brackish though they be,—
So, midst the wither'd waste of life, those tears would flow to me.

1815.

STANZAS FOR MUSIC.

There be none of beauty's daughters
With a magic like thee;
And like music on the waters
Is thy sweet voice to me:
When, as if its sound were causing
The charm'd ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming,

And the midnight moon is weaving
Her bright chain o'er the deep;
Whose breast is gently heaving,
As an infant's asleep:
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee;
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of summer's ocean.

FARE THEE WELL!

Alas! they had been friends in Youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above:
And life is thorny; and youth is vain:
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain:
* * * * * *
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs, which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

COLERIDGE'S *Christabel.*

Fare thee well! and if for ever,
Still for ever, fare *thee well:*
Even though unforgiving, never
'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.
Would that breast were bared before thee
Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o'er thee
Which thou ne'er canst know again:
Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
'T was not well to spurn it so.
Though the world for this commend thee—
Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
Founded on another's woe—
Though my many faults defaced me,
Could no other arm be found
Than the one which once embraced me,
To inflict a cureless wound?
Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not,
Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
Hearts can thus be torn away:
Still thine own its life retaineth—
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
Is—that we no more may meet.
These are words of deeper sorrow
Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
Wake us from a widow'd bed.
And when thou wouldst solace gather,
When our child's first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say "Father!"
Though his care she must forego?
When her little hands shall press thee,
When her lip to thine is prest,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
Think of him thy love had bless'd!
Should her lineaments resemble
Those thou never more may'st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
With a pulse yet true to me.
All my faults perchance thou knowest,
All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where'er thou goest,
Wither—yet with *thee* they go.
Every feeling hath been shaken;
Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
Even my soul forsakes me now:
But 't is done—all words are idle—
Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
Force their way without the will.—
Fare thee well!—thus disunited,
Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear'd in heart, and lone, and blighted—
More than this I scarce can die.

TO ***

When all around grew drear and dark,
And reason half withheld her ray—
And hope but shed a dying spark
Which more misled my lonely way;

In that deep midnight of the mind,
And that internal strife of heart,
When dreading to be deem'd too kind,
The weak despair—the cold depart;

When fortune changed—and love fled far,
And hatred's shafts flew thick and fast,
Thou wert the solitary star
Which rose and set not to the last.

Oh! blest be thine unbroken light!
That watch'd me as a seraph's eye,
And stood between me and the night,
For ever shining sweetly nigh.

And when the cloud upon us came,
Which strove to blacken o'er thy ray—
Then purer spread its gentle flame,
And dash'd the darkness all away.

Still may thy spirit dwell on mine,
And teach it what to brave or brook—
There's more in one soft word of thine,
Than in the world's defied rebuke.

Thou stood'st, as stands a lovely tree,
That still unbroke, though gently bent,
Still waves with fond fidelity
Its boughs above a monument.

The winds might rend—the skies might pour,
But there thou wert—and still wouldst be
Devoted in the stormiest hour,
To shed thy weeping leaves o'er me.

But thou and thine shall know no blight,
Whatever fate on me may fall;
For heaven in sunshine will requite
The kind—and thee the most of all.

Then let the ties of baffled love
Be broken—thine will never break;
Thy heart can feel—but will not move;
Thy soul, though soft, will never shake.

And these, when all was lost beside,
Were found, and still are fixed, in thee—
And bearing still a breast so tried,
Earth is no desert—even to me.

ODE.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

We do not curse thee, Waterloo!
Though Freedom's blood thy plain bedew;
There 't was shed, but is not sunk—
Rising from each gory trunk,
Like the water-spout from ocean,
With a strong and growing motion—
It soars, and mingles in the air,
With that of lost Labedoyere—
With that of him whose honour'd grave
Contains the "bravest of the brave."
A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
But shall return to whence it rose;
When 't is full 't will burst asunder—
Never yet was heard such thunder
As then shall shake the world with wonder—
Never yet was seen such lightning,
As o'er heaven shall then be bright'ning!
Like the Wormwood star foretold
By the sainted seer of old,
Showering down a fiery flood,
Turning rivers into blood.[1]

The chief has fallen, but not by you,
Vanquishers of Waterloo!
When the soldier citizen
Sway'd not o'er his fellow men—
Save in deeds that led them on
Where glory smiled on freedom's son—
Who, of all the despots banded,
With that youthful chief competed?
Who could boast o'er France defeated,
Till lone tyranny commanded?
Till, goaded by ambition's sting,
The hero sunk into the king?
Then he fell;—so perish all,
Who would men by man enthral!

And thou too of the snow-white plume!
Whose realm refused thee even a tomb;[2]
Better hadst thou still been leading
France o'er hosts of hirelings bleeding,
Than sold thyself to death and shame
For a meanly royal name;
Such as he of Naples wears,
Who thy blood-bought title bears.
Little didst thou deem, when dashing
On thy war-horse through the ranks,
Like a stream which burst it banks,
While helmets cleft, and sabres clashing,
Shone and shiver'd fast around thee—
Of the fate at last which found thee:
Was that haughty plume laid low
By a slave's dishonest blow?
Once—as the moon sways o'er the tide,
It rolled in air, the warrior's guide;
Through the smoke-created night
Of the black and sulphurous fight,
The soldier raised his seeking eye
To catch that crest's ascendancy,—
And as it onward rolling rose,
So moved his heart upon our foes.
There, where death's brief pang was quickest,
And the battle's wreck lay thickest,
Strew'd beneath the advancing banner
Of the eagle's burning crest—
(There, with thunder-clouds to fan her,
Who could then her wing arrest—
Victory beaming from her breast?)
While the broken line enlarging
Fell, or fled along the plain:
There be sure was Murat charging!
There he ne'er shall charge again!

[1] *See Rev.* chap. viii. verse 7, etc. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood," etc.

Verse 8. "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood," etc.

Verse 10. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp; and it fell upon a third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters."

Verse 11. "And the name of the star is called *Wormwood*: and the third part of the waters became *wormwood*; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

[2] Murat's remains are said to have been torn from the grave and burnt.

O'er glories gone the invaders march,
Weeps triumph o'er each levell'd arch—
But let Freedom rejoice,
With her heart in her voice;
Put her hand on her sword,
Doubly shall she be adored;
France hath twice too well been taught
The «moral lesson» dearly bought—
Her safety sits not on a throne,
With CAPET or NAPOLEON!
But in equal rights and laws,
Hearts and hands in one great cause—
Freedom, such as God hath given
Unto all beneath his heaven,
With their breath, and from their birth,
Though Guilt would sweep it from the earth;
With a fierce and lavish hand
Scattering nations' wealth like sand;
Pouring nations' blood like water,
In imperial seas of slaughter!

But the heart and the mind,
And the voice of mankind,
Shall arise in communion—
And who shall resist that proud union?
The time is past when swords subdued—
Man may die—the soul 's renew'd:
Even in this low world of care
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir;
Millions breathe but to inherit
Her for ever bounding spirit—
When once more her hosts assemble,
Tyrants shall believe and tremble—
Smile they at this idle threat?
Crimson tears will follow yet.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

* All wept, but particularly Savary, and a Polish officer who had been exalted from the ranks by Buonaparte. He clung to his master's knees- wrote a letter to Lord Keith, entreating permission to accompany him, even in the most menial capacity, which could not be admitted.*

MUST thou go, my glorious chief,
Sever'd from thy faithful few?
Who can tell thy warriors' grief,
Maddening o'er that long adieu?
Woman's love, and friendship's zeal—
Dear as both have been to me—
What are they to all I feel,
With a soldier's faith, for thee?

Idol of the soldier's soul!
First in fight, but mightiest now:
Many could a world control;
Thee alone no doom can bow.
By thy side for years I dared
Death, and envied those who fell,
When their dying shout was heard
Blessing him they served so well.[1]

[1] «At Waterloo, one man was seen, whose left arm was shattered by a cannon ball, to wrench it off with the other, and throwing it up in the air, exclaimed to his comrades, 'Vive l'Empereur jusqu'à la mort.' There were many other instances of the like; this you may, however, depend on as true.

A private Letter from Brussels.

Would that I were cold with those,
Since this hour I live to see;
When the doubts of coward foes
Scarce dare trust a man with thee,
Dreading each should set thee free.
Oh! although in dungeons pent,
All their chains were light to me,
Gazing on thy soul unbent.

Would the sycophants of him
Now so deaf to duty's prayer,
Were his borrow'd glories dim,
In his native darkness share?
Were that world this hour his own,
All thou calmly dost resign,
Could he purchase with that throne
Hearts like those which still are thine?

My chief, my king, my friend, adieu!
Never did I droop before;
Never to my sovereign sue,
As his foes I now implore.
All I ask is to divide
Every peril he must brave,
Sharing by the hero's side
His fall, his exile, and his grave.

ON THE STAR OF «THE LEGION OF HONOUR.»

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

STAR of the brave!—whose beam hath shed
Such glory o'er the quick and dead—
Thou radiant and adored deceit!
Which millions rush'd in arms to greet,—
Wild meteor of immortal birth!
Why rise in heaven to set on earth?

Souls of slain heroes form'd thy rays;
Eternity flash'd through thy blaze;
The music of thy martial sphere
Was fame on high and honour here;
And thy light broke on human eyes
Like a volcano of the skies.

Like lava roll'd thy stream of blood,
And swept down empires with its flood;
Earth rock'd beneath thee to her base,
As thou didst lighten through all space;
And the shorn sun grew dim in air,
And set while thou wert dwelling there.

Before thee rose, and with thee grew,
A rainbow of the loveliest hue
Of three bright colours,[1] each divine,
And fit for that celestial sign;
For freedom's hand had blended them
Like tints in an immortal gem.

One tint was of the sunbeam's dyes;
One, the blue depth of seraph's eyes;
One, the pure spirit's veil of white
Had robed in radiance of its light;
The three so mingled did beseem
The texture of a heavenly dream.

[1] The tri-colour.

Star of the brave! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail!
But, oh thou rainbow of the free!
Our tears and blood must flow for thee.
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

And freedom hallows with her tread
The silent cities of the dead;
For beautiful in death are they
Who proudly fall in her array;
And soon, oh goddess! may we be
For evermore with them or thee!

NAPOLEON'S FAREWELL.

[FROM THE FRENCH.]

FAREWELL to the land where the gloom of my glory
Arose and o'ershadow'd the earth with her name—
She abandons me now,—but the page of her story,
The brightest or blackest, is fill'd with my fame.
I have warr'd with a world which vanquish'd me only
When the meteor of conquest allured me too far;
I have coped with the nations which dread me thus lonely,
The last single captive to millions in war!

Farewell to thee, France!—when thy diadem crown'd me,
I made thee the gem and the wonder of earth,—
But thy weakness decrees I should leave as I found thee,
Decay'd in thy glory and sunk in thy worth.
Oh! for the veteran hearts that were wasted
In strife with the storm, when their battles were won—
Then the eagle, whose gaze in that moment was blasted,
Had still soar'd with eyes fix'd on Victory's sun!

Farewell to thee, France!—but when liberty rallies
Once more in thy regions, remember me then—
The violet still grows in the depth of thy valleys;
Though wither'd, thy tears will unfold it again:
Yet, yet I may baffle the hosts that surround us,
And yet may thy heart leap awake to my voice—
There are links which must break in the chain that has bound us,
Then turn thee, and call on the chief of thy choice!

SONNET.

ROUSSEAU—Voltaire—our Gibbon—and de Staël—
Leman![1] these names are worthy of thy shore,
Thy shore of names like these; wert thou no more,
Their memory thy remembrance would recal:
To them thy banks were lovely as to all;
But they have made them lovelier, for the lore
Of mighty minds doth hallow in the core
Of human hearts the ruin of a wall
Where dwelt the wise and wond'rous; but by thee
How much more, Lake of Beauty! do we feel,
In sweetly gliding o'er thy crystal sea,
The wild glow of that not ungentle zeal,
Which of the heirs of immortality
Is proud, and makes the breath of glory real!

[1] Geneva, Ferney, Coppet, Lausanne.

WRITTEN ON A BLANK LEAF OF «THE PLEASURES OF MEMORY.»

ABSENT or present, still to thee,
My friend, what magic spells belong!
As all can tell, who share, like me,
In turn, thy converse and thy song.
But when the dreaded hour shall come,
By friendship ever deem'd too nigh,
And «MEMORY» o'er her Druid's tomb
Shall weep that aught of thee can die,
How fondly will she then repay
Thy homage offer'd at her shrine,
And blend, while ages roll away,
Her name immortally with *thine!*

April 19, 1812.

STANZAS TO ***.

THOUGH the day of my destiny 's over,
And the star of my fate hath declined,
Thy soft heart refused to discover
The faults which so many could find;
Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
It shrunk not to share it with me,
And the love which my spirit hath painted
It never hath found but in *thee*.

Then when nature around me is smiling
The last smile which answers to mine,
I do not believe it beguiling,
Because it reminds me of thine;
And when winds are at war with the ocean,
As the breasts I believed in with me,
If their billows excite an emotion,
It is that they bear me from *thee*.

Though the rock of my last hope is shiver'd,
And its fragments are sunk in the wave,
Though I feel that my soul is deliver'd
To pain—it shall not be its slave.
There is many a pang to pursue me:
They may crush, but they shall not contemn—
They may torture, but shall not subdue me—
'T is of *thee* that I think—not of them.

Though human, thou didst not deceive me,
Though woman, thou didst not forsake,
Though loved, thou forborest to grieve me,
Though slander'd, thou never couldst shake,—
Though trusted, thou didst not disclaim me,
Though parted, it was not to fly,
Though watchful, 't was not to defame me,
Nor, mute, that the world might belie.

Yet I blame not the world, nor depsise it,
Nor the war of the many with one—
If my soul was not fitted to prize it,
'T was folly not sooner to shun.
And if dearly that error hath cost me,
And more than I once could foresee,
I have found that, whatever it lost me,
It could not deprive me of *thee*.

From the wreck of the past, which hath perish'd,
Thus much I at least may recal,
It hath taught me that what I most cherish'd
Deserved to be dearest of all:

In the desert a fountain is springing,
In the wide waste there still is a tree,
And a bird in the solitude singing,
Which speaks to my spirit of *thee*.

DARKNESS.

I had a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came, and went—and came, and brought no day.
And men forgot their passions in the dread
Of this their desolation; and all hearts
Were chill'd into a selfish prayer for light:
And they did live by watchfires—and the thrones,
The palaces of crowned kings—the huts,
The habitations of all things which dwell,
Were burnt for beacons; cities were consumed,
And men were gather'd round their blazing homes
To look once more into each other's face;
Happy were those who dwelt within the eye
Of the volcanos and their mountain-torch:
A fearful hope was all the world contain'd;
Forests were set on fire—but hour by hour
They fell and faded—and the crackling trunks
Extinguish'd with a crash—and all was black.
The brows of men by the despairing light
Wore an unearthly aspect, as by fits
The flashes fell upon them; some lay down
And hid their eyes and wept; and some did rest
Their chins upon their clenched hands, and smiled;
And others hurried to and fro, and fed
Their funeral piles with fuel, and look'd up
With mad disquietude on the dull sky,
The pall of a past world; and then again
With curses cast them down upon the dust,
And gnash'd their teeth and howl'd: the wild birds shriek'd,
And, terrified, did flutter on the ground,
And flap their useless wings; the wildest brutes
Came tame and tremulous; and vipers crawl'd
And twined themselves among the multitude,
Hissing, but stingless—they were slain for food:
And war, which for a moment was no more,
Did glut himself again—a meal was bought
With blood, and each sate sullenly apart,
Gorging himself in gloom: no love was left;
All earth was but one thought—and that was death,
Immediate and inglorious; and the pang
Of famine fed upon all entrails—men
Died, and their bones were tombless as their flesh;
The meagre by the meagre were devour'd,
Even dogs assail'd their masters, all save one,
And he was faithful to a corse and kept
The birds and beasts and famish'd men at bay,
Till hunger clung them, or the dropping dead
Lured their lank jaws; himself sought out no food,
But with a piteous and perpetual moan
And a quick desolate cry, licking the hand
Which answered not with a caress—he died.
The crowd was famish'd by degrees; but two
Of an enormous city did survive,
And they were enemies; they met beside
The dying embers of an altar-place
Where had been heap'd a mass of holy things
For an unholy usage; they raked up,
And shivering scraped with their cold skeleton hands
The feeble ashes, and their feeble breath
Blew for a little life, and made a flame
Which was a mockery; then they lifted up
Their eyes as it grew lighter, and beheld
Each other's aspects—saw, and shriek'd and died—
Even of their mutual hideousness they died,
Unknowing who he was upon whose brow
Famine had written fiend. The world was void,
The populous and the powerful was a lump,
Seasonless, herbless, treeless, manless, lifeless—
A lump of death—a chaos of hard clay.
The rivers, lakes, and ocean all stood still,
And nothing stirred within their silent depths;
Ships sailorless lay rotting on the sea,
And their masts fell down piecemeal; as they dropp'd,
They slept on the abyss without a surge—
The waves were dead; the tides were in their grave,
The moon their mistress had expired before;
The winds were wither'd in the stagnant air,
And the clouds perish'd; darkness had no need
Of aid from them—she was the universe.

CHURCHILL'S GRAVE,

A FACT LITERALLY RENDERED.

I stood beside the grave of him who blazed
The comet of a season, and I saw
The humblest of all sepulchres, and gazed
With not the less of sorrow and of awe
On that neglected turf and quiet stone,
With name no clearer than the names unknown,
Which lay unread around it; and I ask'd
The gardener of that ground, why it might be
That for this plant strangers his memory task'd
Through the thick deaths of half a century;
And thus he answer'd—«Well, I do not know
Why frequent travellers turn to pilgrims so;
He died before my day of sextonship,
And I had not the digging of this grave.»
And is this all? I thought,—and do we rip
The veil of immortality? and crave
I know not what of honour and of light
Through unborn ages to endure this blight?
So soon and so successless? As I said,
The architect of all on which we tread,
For earth is but a tombstone, did essay
To extricate remembrance from the clay,
Whose minglings might confuse a Newton's thought
Were it not that all life must end in one,
Of which we are but dreamers;—as he caught
As 't were the twilight of a former sun,
Thus spoke he,—«I believe the man of whom
You wot, who lies in this selected tomb,
Was a most famous writer in his day,
And therefore travellers step from out their way
To pay him honour,—and myself whate'er
Your honour pleases.»—then most pleased I shook
From out my pocket's avaricious nook
Some certain coins of silver, which as 't were
Perforce I gave this man, though I could spare
So much but inconveniently;—Ye smile,
I see ye, ye profane ones! all the while,

Because my homely phrase the truth would tell.
You are the fools, not I—for I did dwell
With a deep thought, and with a soften'd eye,
On that old sexton's natural homily,
In which there was obscurity and fame,
The glory and the nothing of a name.

PROMETHEUS.

Titan! to whose immortal eyes
The sufferings of mortality,
Seen in their sad reality,
Were not as things that gods despise;
What was thy pity's recompense?
A silent suffering, and intense;
The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain,
The agony they do not show,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness,
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a listener, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless.

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of fate,
The ruling principle of hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell:
And in thy silence was his sentence,
And in his soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy godlike crime was to be kind,
To render with thy precepts less
The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
Of thine impenetrable spirit,
Which earth and heaven could not convulse,
A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
To mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee, man is in part divine,
A troubled stream from a pure source;
And man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his spirit may oppose
Itself—an equal to all woes,
And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
Its own concentred recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making death a victory.

ODE.

On shame to thee, land of the Gaul!
Oh shame to thy children and thee!
Unwise in thy glory, and base in thy fall,
How wretched thy portion shall be!
Derision shall strike thee forlorn,
A mockery that never shall die;
The curses of hate, and the hisses of scorn,
Shall burden the winds of thy sky;
And proud o'er thy ruin for ever be hurl'd
The laughter of triumph, the jeers of the world!

Oh, where is thy spirit of yore,
The spirit that breathed in thy dead,
When gallantry's star was the beacon before,
And honour the passion that led?
Thy storms have awaken'd their sleep,
They groan from the place of their rest,
And wrathfully murmur, and sullenly weep,
To see the foul stain on thy breast;
For where is the glory they left thee in trust?
'T is scatter'd in darkness, 't is trampled in dust!

Go look to the kingdoms of earth,
From Indus all round to the pole,
And something of goodness, of honour, and worth,
Shall brighten the sins of the soul.
But thou art *alone* in thy shame,
The world cannot liken thee there;
Abhorrence and vice have disfigured thy name
Beyond the low reach of compare;
Stupendous in guilt, thou shalt lend us through time
A proverb, a by-word, for treachery and crime!

While conquest illumined his sword,
While yet in his prowess he stood,
Thy praises still follow'd the steps of thy lord,
And welcomed the torrent of blood:
Though tyranny sat on his crown,
And wither'd the nations afar,
Yet bright in thy view was that despot's renown,
Till fortune deserted his car;
Then back from the chieftain thou slunkest away,
The foremost t' insult, the first to betray!

Forgot were the feats he had done,
The toils he had borne in thy cause;
Thou turned'st to worship a new rising sun,
And waft other songs of applause.
But the storm was beginning to lower,
Adversity clouded his beam;
And honour and faith were the brag of an hour,
And loyalty's self but a dream:—
To him thou hadst banish'd thy vows were restored,
And the first that had scoff'd were the first that adored.

What tumult thus burthens the air?
What throng thus encircles his throne?

'Tis the shout of delight, 'tis the millions that swear
His sceptre shall rule them alone.
Reverses shall brighten their zeal,
Misfortune shall hallow his name,
And the world that pursues him shall mournfully feel
How quenchless the spirit and flame
That Frenchmen will breathe, when their hearts are on fire,
For the hero they love, and the chief they admire!

Their hero has rush'd to the field;
His laurels are cover'd with shade—
But where is the spirit that never should yield,
The loyalty never to fade?
In a moment desertion and guile
Abandon'd him up to the foe;
The dastards that flourish'd and grew in his smile
Forsook and renounced him in woe;
And the millions that swore they would perish to save
Beheld him a fugitive, captive, and slave!

The savage all wild in his glen
Is nobler and better than thou;
Thou standest a wonder, a marvel to men,
Such perfidy blackens thy brow!
If thou wert the place of my birth,
At once from thy arms would I sever;
I 'd fly to the uttermost parts of the earth,
And quit thee for ever and ever;
And thinking of thee in my long after-years,
Should but kindle my blushes and waken my tears.

Oh, shame to thee, land of the Gaul!
Oh, shame to thy children and thee!
Unwise in thy glory, and base in thy fall,
How wretched thy portion shall be!
Derision shall strike thee forlorn,
A mockery that never shall die;
The curses of hate, and the hisses of scorn,
Shall burthen the winds of thy sky;
And proud o'er thy ruin for ever be hurl'd
The laughter of triumph, the jeers of the world!

WINDSOR POETICS.

Lines composed on the occasion of H. R. H. the P....e R-g-t being seen standing betwixt the coffins of Henry VIII. and Charles I. in the royal vault at Windsor.

Famed for contemptuous breach of sacred ties,
By headless Charles, see heartless Henry lies;
Between them stands another sceptred thing,
It moves, it reigns—in all but name, a king:
Charles to his people, Henry to his wife,
—In him the double tyrant starts to life:
Justice and death have mix'd their dust in vain,
Each royal vampyre wakes to life again:
Ah! what can tombs avail—since these disgorge
The blood and dust of both——to mould a G...ge.

1813.

A SKETCH FROM PRIVATE LIFE.

"Honest—honest Iago!
If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee."
SHAKSPEARE.

Born in the garret, in the kitchen bred,
Promoted thence to deck her mistress' head;
Next—for some gracious service unexprest,
And from its wages only to be guess'd—
Raised from the toilet to the table, where
Her wondering betters wait behind her chair:
With eye unmoved, and forehead unabash'd,
She dines from off the plate she lately wash'd.
Quick with the tale, and ready with the lie,
The genial confidante, and general spy;
Who could, ye gods! her next employment guess,
An only infant's earliest governess!
She taught the child to read, and taught so well,
That she herself, by teaching, learn'd to spell.
An adept next in penmanship she grows,
As many a nameless slander deftly shows:
What she had made the pupil of her art,
None know—but that high soul secured the heart,
And panted for the truth it could not hear,
With longing breast and undeluded ear.

Foil'd was perversion by that youthful mind,
Which flattery fool'd not, baseness could not blind,
Deceit infect not, near contagion soil,
Indulgence weaken, nor example spoil,
Nor master'd science tempt her to look down
On humbler talents with a pitying frown,
Nor genius swell, nor beauty render vain,
Nor envy ruffle to retaliate pain,
Nor fortune change, pride raise, nor passion bow,
Nor virtue teach austerity—till now.
Serenely purest of her sex that live,
But wanting one sweet weakness—to forgive;
Too shock'd at faults her soul can never know,
She deems that all could be like her below:
Foe to all vice, yet hardly virtue's friend—
For virtue pardons those she would amend.

But to the theme—now laid aside too long,
The baleful burthen of this honest song—
Though all her former functions are no more,
She rules the circle which she served before.
If mothers—none know why—before her quake,
If daughters dread her for the mother's sake;
If early habits—those false links which bind,
At times, the loftiest to the meanest mind—
Have given her power too deeply to instil
The angry essence of her deadly will;
If like a snake she steal within your walls,
Till the black slime betray her as she crawls;
If like a viper to the heart she wind,
And leave the venom there she did not find;
What marvel that this hag of hatred works
Eternal evil latent as she lurks,
To make a Pandemonium where she dwells,
And reign the Hecate of domestic hells!

Skill'd by a touch to deepen scandal's tints,
With all the kind mendacity of hints,
While mingling truth with falsehood, sneers with smiles,
A thread of candour with a web of wiles;
A plain blunt show of briefly-spoken seeming,
To hide her bloodless heart's soul-harden'd scheming;
A lip of lies, a face form'd to conceal,
And, without feeling, mock at all who feel;
With a vile mask the Gorgon would disown,
A cheek of parchment, and an eye of stone.
Mark how the channels of her yellow blood
Ooze to her skin, and stagnate there to mud,

Cased like the centipede in saffron mail,
Or darker greenness of the scorpion's scale
(For drawn from reptiles only may we trace
Congenial colours in that soul or face).
Look on her features! and behold her mind
As in a mirror of itself defined:
Look on the picture! deem it not o'ercharged—
There is no trait which might not be enlarged;
Yet true to « Nature's journeymen,» who made
This monster when their mistress left off trade,—
This female dog-star of her little sky,
Where all beneath her influence droop or die.

Oh! wretch without a tear—without a thought,
Save joy above the ruin thou hast wrought—
The time shall come, nor long remote, when thou
Shalt feel far more than thou inflictest now;
Feel for thy vile self-loving self in vain,
And turn thee howling in unpitied pain.
May the strong curse of crush'd affections light
Back on thy bosom with reflected blight!
And make thee, in thy leprosy of mind,
As loathsome to thyself as to mankind!
Till all thy self-thoughts curdle into hate,
Black as thy will for others would create:
Till thy hard heart be calcined into dust,
And thy soul welter in its hideous crust.
Oh, may thy grave be sleepless as the bed,
The widow'd couch of fire, that thou hast spread!
Then, when thou fain wouldst weary Heaven with prayer,
Look on thine earthly victims—and despair!
Down to the dust!—and, as thou rott'st away,
Even worms shall perish on thy poisonous clay.
But for the love I bore, and still must bear,
To her thy malice from all ties would tear,
Thy name—thy human name—to every eye
The climax of all scorn should hang on high,
Exalted o'er thy less abhorr'd compeers,
And festering in the infamy of years.

March 30, 1816.

CARMINA BYRONIS IN C. ELGIN.

Aspice, quos Scoto Pallas concedit honores,
Subter stat nomen, facta superque vide.
Scote miser! quamvis nocuisti Palladis ædi,
Infandum facinus vindicat ipsa Venus.
Pigmalion statuam pro sponsa arsisse refertur;
In statuam rapias, Scote, sed uxor abest.

LINES TO MR MOORE.

(The following lines were addressed *extempore* by Lord Byron to his friend Mr Moore, on the latter's last visit to Italy.)

My boat is on the shore,
And my bark is on the sea;
But, before I go, Tom Moore,
Here's a double health to thee.

Here's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And, whatever sky's above me,
Here's a heart for every fate.

Tho' the ocean roar around me,
Yet it still shall bear me on;
Tho' a desert should surround me,
It hath springs that may be won.

Wer't the last drop in the well,
As I gasp'd upon the brink,
Ere my fainting spirit fell,
'T is to thee that I would drink.

In that water, as this wine,
The libation I would pour
Should be—Peace to thine and mine,
And a health to thee, Tom Moore!

«ON THIS DAY I COMPLETE MY THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR.»

January 22, 1824, *Missolonghi.*

«'T is time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move;
Yet though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

«My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief,
Are mine alone!

«The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile!

«The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

«But 't is not *thus*, and 't is not *here*
Such thoughts should shake my soul; nor *now*
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

«The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

«Awake! (not Greece,—she *is* awake!)
Awake my spirit! think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

«Tread those reviving passions down,
Unworthy manhood! Unto thee,
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

«If thou regret'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honourable death
Is here—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath!

«Seek out, less often sought than found,
A soldier's grave—for thee the best;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.»

Letter

TO **** ****** ON

THE REV. W. L. BOWLES' STRICTURES

ON THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF POPE.

«I 'll play at *Bowls* with the sun and moon.»

Old Song.

«My mither 's auld, sir, and she has rather forgotten hersell in speaking to my Leddy, that canna weel bide to be contradickit (as I ken nae body likes it if they could help themsells).»

Tales of my Landlord, *Old Mortality*, vol. ii. p. 163.

LETTER.

Ravenna, February 7th, 1821.

DEAR SIR,

In the different pamphlets which you have had the goodness to send me, on the Pope and Bowles' controversy, I perceive that my name is occasionally introduced by both parties. Mr Bowles refers more than once to what he is pleased to consider «a remarkable circumstance,» not only in his letter to Mr Campbell, but in his reply to the Quarterly. The Quarterly also and Mr Gilchrist have conferred on me the dangerous honour of a quotation; and Mr Bowles indirectly makes a kind of appeal to me personally, by saying, «Lord Byron, *if he remembers* the circumstance, will *witness*»—(*witness* in italic, an ominous character for a testimony at present.)

I shall not avail myself of a «non mi ricordo» even after so long a residence in Italy;—I *do* «remember the circumstance,»—and have no reluctance to relate it (since called upon so to do) as correctly as the distance of time and the impression of intervening events will permit me. In the year 1812, more than three years after the publication of «English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,» I had the honour of meeting Mr Bowles in the house of our venerable host of «Human Life, etc.» the last Argonaut of classic English poetry, and the Nestor of our inferior race of living poets. Mr Bowles calls this «soon after» the publication; but to me three years appear a considerable segment of the immortality of a modern poem. I recollect nothing of «the rest of the company going into another room»—nor, though I well remember the topography of our host's elegant and classically furnished mansion, could I swear to the very room where the conversation occurred, though the «taking *down* the poem» seems to fix it in the library. Had it been «taken *up*» it would probably have been in the drawing-room. I presume also that the «remarkable circumstance» took place *after* dinner, as I conceive that neither Mr Bowles's politeness nor appetite would have allowed him to detain «the rest of the company» standing round their chairs in the «other room» while we were discussing «the Woods of Madeira» instead of circulating its vintage. Of Mr Bowles's «good humour» I have a full and not ungrateful recollection; as also of his gentlemanly manners and agreeable conversation. I speak of the *whole*, and not of particulars; for whether he did or did not use the precise words printed in the pamphlet, I cannot say, nor could he with accuracy. Of «the tone of seriousness» I certainly recollect nothing: on the contrary, I thought Mr Bowles rather disposed to treat the subject lightly; for he said (I have no objection to be contradicted if incorrect), that some of his good-natured friends had come to him and exclaimed, «Eh! Bowles! how came you to make the Woods of Madeira?» etc. etc. and that he had been at some pains and pulling down of the poem to convince them that he had never made «the Woods» do any thing of the kind. He was right, and *I was wrong*, and have been wrong still up to this acknowledgment; for I ought to have looked twice before I wrote that which involved an inaccuracy capable of giving pain. The fact was, that although I had certainly before read «the Spirit of Discovery,» I took the quotation from the review. But the mistake was mine, and not the *review's*, which quoted the passage correctly enough, I believe. I blundered—God knows how—into attributing the tremors of the lovers to the «Woods of Madeira,» by which they were surrounded. And I hereby do fully and freely declare and asseverate, that the Woods did *not* tremble to a kiss, and that the lovers did. I quote from memory—

A kiss
Stole on the list'ning silence, etc. etc.
They (the lovers) trembled, even as if the power, etc.

And if I had been aware that this declaration would have been in the smallest degree satisfactory to Mr Bowles, I should not have waited nine years to make it, notwithstanding that «English Bards and Scotch Reviewers» had been suppressed some time previously to my meeting him at Mr Rogers's. Our worthy host might indeed have told him as much, as it was at his representation that I suppressed it. A new edition of that lampoon was preparing for the press, when Mr Rogers represented to me, that «I was *now* acquainted with many of the persons mentioned in it, and with some on terms of intimacy;» and that he knew «one family in particular to whom its suppression would give pleasure.» I did not hesitate one moment; it was cancelled instantly; and it is no fault of mine that it has ever been republished. When I left England, in April, 1816, with no very violent intentions of troubling that country again, and amidst scenes of various kinds to distract my attention—almost my last act, I believe, was to sign a power of attorney, to yourself, to prevent or suppress any attempts (of which several had been made in Ireland) at a republication. It is proper that I should state, that the persons with whom I was subsequently acquainted, whose names had occurred in that

publication, were made my acquaintances at their own desire, or through the unsought intervention of others. I never, to the best of my knowledge, sought a personal introduction to any. Some of them to this day I know only by correspondence; and with one of those it was begun by myself, in consequence, however, of a polite verbal communication from a third person.

I have dwelt for an instant on these circumstances, because it has sometimes been made a subject of bitter reproach to me to have endeavoured to *suppress* that satire. I never shrunk, as those who know me know, from any personal consequences which could be attached to its publication. Of its subsequent suppression, as I possessed the copyright, I was the best judge and the sole master. The circumstances which occasioned the suppression I have now stated; of the motives, each must judge according to his candour or malignity. Mr Bowles does me the honour to talk of «noble mind,» and «generous magnanimity;» and all this because «the circumstance would have been explained had not the book been suppressed.» I see no «nobility of mind» in an act of simple justice; and I hate the word «*magnanimity*,» because I have sometimes seen it applied to the grossest of impostors by the greatest of fools; but I would have «explained the circumstance,» notwithstanding «the suppression of the book,» if Mr Bowles had expressed any desire that I should. As the «gallant Galbraith» says to «Baillie Jarvie,» «Well, the devil take the mistake and all that occasioned it.» I have had as great and greater mistakes made about me personally and poetically, once a month for these last ten years, and never cared very much about correcting one or the other, at least after the first eight and forty hours had gone over them.

I must now, however, say a word or two about Pope, of whom you have my opinion more at large in the unpublished letter *on* or *to* (for I forget which) the editor of «Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine;»—and here I doubt that Mr Bowles will not approve of my sentiments.

Although I regret having published «English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,» the part which I regret the least is that which regards Mr Bowles with reference to Pope. Whilst I was writing that publication, in 1807 and 1808, Mr Hobhouse was desirous that I should express our mutual opinion of Pope, and of Mr Bowles's edition of his works. As I had completed my outline, and felt lazy, I requested that *he* would do so. He did it. His fourteen lines on Bowles's Pope are in the first edition of «English Bards and Scotch Reviewers;» and are quite as severe and much more poetical than my own in the second. On reprinting the work, as I put my name to it, I omitted Mr Hobhouse's lines, and replaced them with my own, by which the work gained less than Mr Bowles. I have stated this in the preface to the second edition. It is many years since I have read that poem; but the Quarterly Review, Mr Octavius Gilchrist, and Mr Bowles himself, have been so obliging as to refresh my memory, and that of the public. I am grieved to say, that in reading over those lines, I repent of their having so far fallen short of what I meant to express upon the subject of Bowles's edition of Pope's Works. Mr Bowles says, that «Lord Byron *knows* he does *not* deserve this character.» I know no such thing. I have met Mr Bowles occasionally, in the best society in London; he appeared to me an amiable, well-informed, and extremely able man. I desire nothing better than to dine in company with such a mannered man every day in the week: but of «his character» I know nothing personally; I can only speak to his manners, and these have my warmest approbation. But I never judge from manners, for I once had my pocket picked by the civilest gentleman I ever met with; and one of the mildest persons I ever saw was Ali Pacha. Of Mr Bowles's «*character*» I will not do him the *injustice* to judge from the edition of Pope, if he prepared it heedlessly; nor the *justice*, should it be otherwise, because I would neither become a literary executioner, nor a personal one. Mr Bowles the individual, and Mr Bowles the editor, appear the two most opposite things imaginable.

«And he himself one —— antithesis.»

I won't say «vile,» because it is harsh; nor «mistaken,» because it has two syllables too many; but every one must fill up the blank as he pleases.

What I saw of Mr Bowles increased my surprise and regret that he should ever have lent his talents to such a task. If he had been a fool, there would have been some excuse for him; if he had been a needy or a bad man, his conduct would have been intelligible: but he is the opposite of all these; and thinking and feeling as I do of Pope, to me the whole thing is unaccountable. However, I must call things by their right names. I cannot call his edition of Pope a «candid» work; and I still think that there is an affectation of that quality not only in those volumes, but in the pamphlets lately published.

«Why *yet* he doth *deny* his prisoners.»

Mr Bowles says, that «he has seen passages in his letters to Martha Blount which were never published by me, and I *hope never will* be by others; which are so *gross* as to imply the *grossest* licentiousness.» Is this fair play? It may, or it may not be that such passages exist; and that Pope, who was not a monk, although a catholic, may have occasionally sinned in word and in deed with woman in his youth; but is this a sufficient ground for such a sweeping denunciation? Where is the unmarried Englishman of a certain rank of life, who (provided he has not taken orders) has not to reproach himself between the ages of sixteen and thirty with far more licentiousness than has ever yet been traced to Pope? Pope lived in the public eye from his youth upwards; he had all the dunces of his own time for his enemies, and, I am sorry to say, some, who have not the apology of dulness for detraction, since his death; and yet to what do all their accumulated hints and charges amount?—to an equivocal *liaison* with Martha Blount, which might arise as much from his infirmities as from his passions; to a hopeless flirtation with Lady Mary W. Montagu; to a story of Cibber's; and to two or three coarse passages in his works. *Who* could come forth clearer from an invidious inquest on a life of fifty-six years? Why are we to be officiously reminded of such passages in his letters, provided that they exist. Is Mr Bowles aware to what such rummaging among «letters» and «stories» might lead? I have myself seen a collection of letters of another eminent, nay, pre-eminent, deceased poet, so abominably gross, and elaborately coarse, that I do not believe that they could be paralleled in our language. What is more strange, is, that some of these are couched as *postscripts* to his serious and sentimental letters, to which are tacked either a piece of prose, or some verses, of the most hyperbolical indecency. He himself says, that if «obscenity (using a much coarser word) be the sin against

the Holy Ghost, he most certainly cannot be saved.» These letters are in existence, and have been seen by many besides myself; but would his *editor* have been «*candid*» in even alluding to them? Nothing would have even provoked *me*, an indifferent spectator, to allude to them, but this further attempt at the depreciation of Pope.

What should we say to an editor of Addison, who cited the following passage from Walpole's letters to George Montagu? «Dr Young has published a new book, etc. Mr Addison sent for the young Earl of Warwick, as he was dying, to show him in what peace a Christian could die; unluckily he died of *brandy*: nothing makes a Christian die in peace like being maudlin! but don't say this in Gath where you are.» Suppose the editor introduced it with this preface: «One circumstance is mentioned by Horace Walpole, which, if true, was indeed *flagitious*. Walpole informs Montagu that Addison sent for the young Earl of Warwick, when dying, to show him in what peace a Christian could die; but unluckily he died drunk, etc. etc.» Now, although there might occur on the subsequent, or on the same page, a faint show of disbelief, seasoned with the expression of «the *same candour*» (the *same* exactly as throughout the book), I should say that this editor was either foolish or false to his trust; such a story ought not to have been admitted, except for one brief mark of crushing indignation, unless it were *completely proved*. Why the words «*if true?*» that «*if*» is not a peace-maker. Why talk of «Cibber's testimony» to his licentiousness; to what does this amount? that Pope when very young was *once* decoyed by some nobleman and the player to a house of carnal recreation. Mr Bowles was not always a clergyman; and when he was a very young man, was he never seduced into as much? If I were in the humour for story-telling, and relating little anecdotes, I could tell a much better story of Mr Bowles than Cibber's, upon much better authority, viz. that of Mr Bowles himself. It was not related by *him* in my presence, but in that of a third person, whom Mr Bowles names oftener than once in the course of his replies. This gentleman related it to me as a humorous and witty anecdote; and so it was, whatever its other characteristics might be. But should I, for a youthful frolic, brand Mr Bowles with a «libertine sort of love,» or with «licentiousness?» is he the less now a pious or a good man, for not having always been a priest? No such thing; I am willing to believe him a good man, almost as good a man as Pope, but no better.

The truth is, that in these days the grand «*primum mobile*» of England is *cant;* cant political, cant poetical, cant religious, cant moral; but always cant, multiplied through all the varieties of life. It is the fashion, and while it lasts will be too powerful for those who can only exist by taking the tone of the time. I say *cant*, because it is a thing of words, without the smallest influence upon human actions; the English being no wiser, no better, and much poorer, and more divided amongst themselves, as well as far less moral, than they were before the prevalence of this verbal decorum. This hysterical horror of poor Pope's not very well ascertained, and never fully proved amours (for even Cibber owns that he prevented the somewhat perilous adventure in which Pope was embarking), sounds very virtuous in a controversial pamphlet; but all men of the world who know what life is, or at least what it was to them in their youth, must laugh at such a ludicrous foundation of the charge of «a libertine sort of love;» while the more serious will look upon those who bring forward such charges upon an insulated fact, as fanatics or hypocrites, perhaps both. The two are sometimes compounded in a happy mixture.

Mr Octavius Gilchrist speaks rather irreverently of a «second tumbler of *hot* white-wine negus.» What does he mean? Is there any harm in negus? or is it the worse for being *hot?* or does Mr Bowles drink negus? I had a better opinion of him. I hoped that whatever wine he drank was neat; or at least, that like the ordinary in Jonathan Wild, «he preferred *punch*, the rather as there was nothing against it in scripture.» I should be sorry to believe that Mr Bowles was fond of negus; it is such a «candid» liquor, so like a wishy-washy compromise between the passion for wine and the propriety of water. But different writers have divers tastes. Judge Blackstone composed his «Commentaries» (he was a poet too in his youth) with a bottle of port before him. Addison's conversation was not good for much till he had taken a similar dose. Perhaps the prescription of these two great men was not inferior to the very different one of a soi-disant poet of this day, who, after wandering amongst the hills, returns, goes to bed, and dictates his verses, being fed by a bystander with bread and butter during the operation.

I now come to Mr Bowles's «invariable principles of poetry.» These Mr Bowles and some of his correspondents pronounce «unanswerable;» and they are «unanswered,» at least by Campbell, who seems to have been astounded by the title. The sultan of the time being, offered to ally himself to a king of France, because «he hated the word league;» which proves that the Padishan understood French. Mr Campbell has no need of my alliance, nor shall I presume to offer it; but I do hate that word «*invariable*.» What is there of *human*, be it poetry, philosophy, wit, wisdom, science, power, glory, mind, matter, life, or death, which is «*invariable?*» Of course I put things divine out of the question. Of all arrogant baptisms of a book, this title to a pamphlet appears the most complacently conceited. It is Mr Campbell's part to answer the contents of this performance, and especially to vindicate his own «Ship,» which Mr Bowles most triumphantly proclaims to have struck to his very first fire.

> «Quoth he, there was a *Ship;*
> Now let me go, thou gray-hair'd loon,
> Or my staff shall make thee skip.»

It is no affair of mine, but having once begun (certainly not by my own wish, but called upon by the frequent recurrence to my name in the pamphlets), I am like an Irishman in a «row,» «any body's customer.» I shall therefore say a word or two on the «Ship.»

Mr Bowles asserts that Campbell's «Ship of the Line,» derives all its poetry not from «*art*,» but from «*nature*.» «Take away the waves, the winds, the sun, etc. etc. *one* will become a stripe of blue bunting; and the other a piece of coarse canvas on three tall poles.» Very true; take away the «waves,» «the winds,» and there will be no ship at all, not only for poetical, but for any other purpose; and take away «the sun,» and we must read Mr Bowles's pamphlet by candle-light. But the «poetry» of the «Ship» does *not* depend on «the waves,» etc.; on the contrary, the «Ship of the Line» confers

its own poetry upon the waters, and heightens *theirs*. I do not deny, that the «waves and winds,» and above all «the sun,» are highly poetical; we know it to our cost, by the many descriptions of them in verse: but if the waves bore only the foam upon their bosoms, if the winds wafted only the sea-weed to the shore, if the sun shone neither upon pyramids, nor fleets, nor fortresses, would its beams be equally poetical? I think not: the poetry is at least reciprocal. Take away «the ship of the line» «swinging round» the «calm water,» and the calm water becomes a somewhat monotonous thing to look at, particularly if not transparently *clear;* witness the thousands who pass by without looking on it at all. What was it attracted the thousands to the launch? they might have seen the poetical «calm water,» at Wapping, or in the «London Dock,» or in the Paddington Canal, or in a horse-pond, or in a slop-basin, or in any other vase. They might have heard the poetical winds howling through the chinks of a pig-stye, or the garret window; they might have seen the sun shining on a footman's livery, or on a brass warming-pan; but could the «calm water,» or the «wind,» or the «sun,» make all, or any of these «poetical?» I think not. Mr Bowles admits «the ship» to be poetical, but only from those accessaries: now if they *confer* poetry so as to make one thing poetical, they would make other things poetical; the more so, as Mr Bowles calls a «ship of the line» without them, that is to say, its «masts and sails and streamers,» «blue bunting,» and «coarse canvas,» and «tall poles.» So they are; and porcelain is clay, and man is dust, and flesh is grass, and yet the two latter at least are the subjects of much poesy.

Did Mr Bowles ever gaze upon the sea? I presume that he has, at least upon a sea-piece. Did any painter ever paint the sea *only*, without the addition of a ship, boat, wreck, or some such adjunct? Is the sea itself a more attractive, a more moral, a more poetical object with or without a vessel, breaking its vast but fatiguing monotony? Is a storm more poetical without a ship? or, in the poem of the Shipwreck, is it the storm or the ship which most interests? both *much* undoubtedly; but without the vessel, what should we care for the tempest? It would sink into mere descriptive poetry, which in itself was never esteem'd a high order of that art.

I look upon myself as entitled to talk of naval matters, at least to poets:—with the exception of Walter Scott, Moore, and Southey, perhaps (who have been voyagers), I have *swam* more miles than all the rest of them together now living ever *sailed*, and have lived for months and months on ship-board; and during the whole period of my life abroad, have scarcely ever passed a month out of sight of the ocean: besides being brought up from two years till ten on the brink of it. I recollect, when anchored off Cape Sigeum, in 1810, in an English frigate, a violent squall coming on at sunset, so violent as to make us imagine that the ship would part cable, or drive from her anchorage. Mr Hobhouse and myself, and some officers, had been up the Dardanelles to Abydos, and were just returned in time. The aspect of a storm in the Archipelago is as poetical as need be, the sea being particularly short, dashing, and dangerous, and the navigation intricate and broken by the isles and currents. Cape Sigeum, the tumuli of the Troad, Lemnos, Tenedos, all added to the associations of the time. But what seemed the most «*poetical*» of all at the moment, were the numbers (about two hundred) of Greek and Turkish craft, which were obliged to «cut and run» before the wind, from their unsafe anchorage, some for Tenedos, some for other isles, some for the main, and some it might be for eternity. The sight of these little scudding vessels, darting over the foam in the twilight, now appearing and now disappearing between the waves in the cloud of night, with their peculiarly *white* sails (the Levant sails not being of «*coarse canvas,*» but of white cotton), skimming along as quickly, but less safely than the sea-mews which hovered over them; their evident distress, their reduction to fluttering specks in the distance, their crowded succession, their *littleness*, as contending with the giant element, which made our stout forty-four's *teak* timbers (she was built in India), creak again; their aspect and their motion, all struck me as something far more «poetical» than the mere broad, brawling, shipless sea, and the sullen winds, could possibly have been without them.

The Euxine is a noble sea to look upon, and the port of Constantinople the most beautiful of harbours, and yet I cannot but think that the twenty sail of the line, some of one hundred and forty guns, rendered it more «poetical» by day in the sun, and by night perhaps still more, for the Turks illuminate their vessels of war in a manner the most picturesque, and yet all this is *artificial*. As for the Euxine, I stood upon the Symplegades—I stood by the broken altar still exposed to the winds upon one of them—I felt all the «*poetry*» of the situation, as I repeated the first lines of Medea; but would not that «poetry» have been heightened by the *Argo?* It was so even by the appearance of any merchant vessel arriving from Odessa. But Mr Bowles says, «why bring your ship off the stocks?» for no reason that I know, except that ships are built to be launched. The water, etc. undoubtedly HEIGHTENS the poetical associations, but it does not *make* them; and the ship amply repays the obligation: they aid each other; the water is more poetical with the ship—the ship less so without the water. But even a ship, laid up in dock, is a grand and poetical sight. Even an old boat, keel upwards, wrecked upon the barren sand, is a «poetical» object (and Wordsworth, who made a poem about a washing-tub and a blind boy, may tell you so as well as I); whilst a long extent of sand and unbroken water, without the boat, would be as like dull prose as any pamphlet lately published.

What makes the poetry in the image of the «*marble waste of Tadmor,*» or Grainger's «Ode to Solitude,» so much admired by Johnson? Is it the «*marble,*» or the «*waste,*» the *artificial* or the *natural* object. The «waste» is like all other *wastes*; but the «*marble*» of Palmyra makes the poetry of the passage as of the place.

The beautiful but barren Hymettus, the whole coast of Attica, her hills and mountains, Pentelicus, Anchesmus, Philopappus, etc. etc., are in themselves poetical, and would be so if the name of Athens, of Athenians, and her very ruins, were swept from the earth. But am I to be told that the «nature» of Attica would be *more* poetical without the «art» of the Acropolis? of the Temple of Theseus? and of the still all Greek and glorious monuments of her exquisitely artificial genius? Ask the traveller what strikes him as most poetical, the Parthenon, or the rock on which it stands? The COLUMNS of Cape Colonna, or the Cape itself? The rocks at the foot of it, or the recollection that Falconer's

ship was bulged upon them? There are a thousand rocks and capes, far more picturesque than those of the Acropolis and Cape Sunium in themselves; what are they to a thousand scenes in the wilder parts of Greece, of Asia Minor, Switzerland, or even of Cintra in Portugal, or to many scenes of Italy, and the Sierras of Spain? But it is the «*art*,» the columns, the temples, the wrecked vessel, which give them their antique and their modern poetry, and not the spots themselves. Without them, the *spots* of earth would be unnoticed and unknown; buried, like Babylon and Nineveh, in indistinct confusion, without poetry, as without existence: but to whatever spot of earth these ruins were transported, if they were *capable* of transportation, like the obelisk, and the sphinx, and the Memnon's head, *there* they would still exist in the perfection of their beauty and in the pride of their poetry. I opposed, and will ever oppose, the robbery of ruins from Athens, to instruct the English in sculpture; but why did I so? The *ruins* are as poetical in Piccadilly as they were in the Parthenon; but the Parthenon and its rock are less so without them. Such is the poetry of art.

Mr Bowles contends, again, that the pyramids of Egypt are poetical, because of «the association with boundless deserts,» and that a «pyramid of the same dimensions» would not be sublime in «Lincoln's Inn Fields;» not *so* poetical certainly; but take away the «pyramids,» and what is the «*desert?*» Take away Stone-henge from Salisbury plain, and it is nothing more than Hounslow Heath, or any other uninclosed down. It appears to me that St Peter's, the Coliseum, the Pantheon, the Palatine, the Apollo, the Laocoon, the Venus di Medicis, the Hercules, the dying Gladiator, the Moses of Michel Angelo, and all the higher works of Canova (I have already spoken of those of ancient Greece, still extant in that country, or transported to England), are as *poetical* as Mont Blanc or Mount Ætna, perhaps still more so, as they are direct manifestations of mind, and *presuppose* poetry in their very conception; and have, moreover, as being such, a something of actual life, which cannot belong to any part of inanimate nature, unless we adopt the system of Spinosa, that the world is the deity. There can be nothing more poetical in its aspect than the city of Venice: does this depend upon the sea, or the canals?—

«The dirt and sea-weed whence proud Venice rose!»

Is it the canal which runs between the palace and the prison, or the «Bridge of Sighs» which connects them, that render it poetical? Is it the «Canal' Grande,» or the Rialto which arches it, the churches which tower over it, the palaces which line, and the gondolas which glide over the waters, that render this city more poetical than Rome itself? Mr Bowles will say, perhaps, that the Rialto is but marble, the palaces and churches only stone, and the gondolas a «coarse» black cloth, thrown over some planks of carved wood, with a shining bit of fantastically-formed iron at the prow, «*without*» the water. And I tell him that without these the water would be nothing but a clay-coloured ditch, and whoever says the contrary, deserves to be at the bottom of that where Pope's heroes are embraced by the mud-nymphs. There would be nothing to make the canal of Venice more poetical than that of Paddington, were it not for the artificial adjuncts above mentioned, although it is a perfectly natural canal, formed by the sea, and the innumerable islands which constitute the site of this extraordinary city.

The very Cloacæ of Tarquin at Rome are as poetical as Richmond Hill; many will think more so. Take away Rome, and leave the Tiber and the seven hills, in the nature of Evander's time: let Mr Bowles, or Mr Wordsworth, or Mr Southey, or any of the other «naturals,» make a poem upon them, and then see which is most poetical, their production, or the commonest guide-book which tells you the road from St Peter's to the Coliseum, and informs you what you will see by the way. The ground interests in Virgil, because it *will* be *Rome*, and not because it is Evander's rural domain.

Mr Bowles then proceeds to press Homer into his service, in answer to a remark of Mr Campbell's, that «Homer was a great describer of works of art.» Mr Bowles contends that all his great power, even in this, depends upon their connexion with nature. The «shield of Achilles derives its poetical interest from the subjects described on it.» And from what does the *spear* of Achilles derive its interest? and the helmet and the mail worn by Patroclus, and the celestial armour, and the very brazen greaves of the well-booted Greeks? Is it solely from the legs, and the back, and the breast, and the human body, which they inclose? In that case, it would have been more poetical to have made them fight naked; and Gulley and Gregson, as being nearer to a state of nature, are more poetical, boxing in a pair of drawers, than Hector and Achilles in radiant armour, and with heroic weapons.

Instead of the clash of helmets, and the rushing of chariots, and the whizzing of spears, and the glancing of swords, and the cleaving of shields, and the piercing of breast-plates, why not represent the Greeks and Trojans like two savage tribes, tugging and tearing, and kicking, and biting, and gnashing, foaming, grinning, and gouging, in all the poetry of martial nature, unincumbered with gross, prosaic, artificial arms, an equal superfluity to the natural warrior, and his natural poet? Is there any thing unpoetical in Ulysses striking the horses of Rhesus with *his bow* (having forgotten his thong), or would Mr Bowles have had him kick them with his foot, or smack them with his hand, as being more unsophisticated?

In Gray's Elegy, is there an image more striking than his «shapeless sculpture?» Of sculpture in general, it may be observed, that it is more poetical than nature itself, inasmuch as it represents and bodies forth that ideal beauty and sublimity which is never to be found in actual nature. This at least is the general opinion; but, always excepting the Venus di Medicis, I differ from that opinion, at least as far as regards female beauty; for the head of Lady Charlemont (when I first saw her, nine years ago), seemed to possess all that sculpture could require for its ideal. I recollect seeing something of the same kind in the head of an Albanian girl, who was actually employed in mending a road in the mountains, and in some Greek, and one or two Italian faces. But of *sublimity*, I have never seen any thing in human nature at all to approach the expression of sculpture, either in the Apollo, the Moses, or other of the sterner works of ancient or modern art.

Let us examine a little further this «babble of green fields,» and of bare nature in general, as superior to artificial imagery, for the poetical purposes of the fine

arts. In landscape painting, the great artist does not give you a literal copy of a country, but he invents and composes one. Nature, in her actual aspect, does not furnish him with such existing scenes as he requires. Even where he presents you with some famous city, or celebrated scene from mountain or other nature, it must be taken from some particular point of view, and with such light, and shade, and distance, etc. as serve not only to heighten its beauties, but to shadow its deformities. The poetry of nature alone, *exactly* as she appears, it not sufficient to bear him out. The very sky of his painting is not the *portrait* of the sky of nature; it is a composition of different *skies*, observed at different times, and not the whole copied from any *particular* day. And why? Because Nature is not lavish of her beauties; they are widely scattered, and occasionally displayed, to be selected with care, and gathered with difficulty.

Of sculpture I have just spoken. It is the great scope of the sculptor to heighten nature into heroic beauty, *i. e.* in plain English, to surpass his model. When Canova forms a statue, he takes a limb from one, a hand from another, a feature from a third, and a shape, it may be, from a fourth, probably at the same time improving upon all, as the Greek of old did in embodying his Venus.

Ask a portrait painter to describe his agonies in accommodating the faces with which Nature and his sitters have crowded his painting-room to the principles of his art; with the exception of perhaps ten faces in as many millions, there is not one which he can venture to give without shading much and adding more. Nature, exactly, simply, barely nature, will make no great artist of any kind, and least of all a poet—the most artificial, perhaps, of all artists in his very essence. With regard to natural imagery, the poets are obliged to take some of their best illustrations from *art*. You say that «a fountain is as clear or clearer than *glass*,» to express its beauty—

«O fons Bandusiæ, splendidior vitro!»

In the speech of Mark Antony, the body of Cæsar is displayed. but so also is his *mantle*:

«You all do know this *mantle*,» etc.

* * * * * *

«Look! in this place ran Cassius' *dagger* through.»

If the poet had said that Cassius had run his *fist* through the rent of the mantle, it would have had more of Mr Bowles's «nature» to help it; but the artificial *dagger* is more poetical than any natural *hand* without it. In the sublime of sacred poetry, «Who is this that cometh from Edom? with *dyed garments* from Bozrah?» Would «the comer» be poetical without his «*dyed garments*?» which strike and startle the spectator, and identify the approaching object.

The mother of Sisera is represented listening for the «*wheels of his chariot*.» Solomon, in his Song, compares the nose of his beloved to «a tower,» which to us appears an eastern exaggeration. If he had said, that her stature was like that of a «tower,» it would have been as poetical as if he had compared her to a tree.

«The virtuous Marcia *towers* above her sex.»

is an instance of an artificial image to express a *moral* superiority. But Solomon, it is probable, did not compare his beloved's nose to a «tower» on account of its length, but of its symmetry; and, making allowance for eastern hyperbole and the difficulty of finding a discreet image for a female nose in nature, it is perhaps as good a figure as any other.

Art is *not* inferior to nature for poetical purposes. What makes a regiment of soldiers a more noble object of view than the same mass of mob? Their arms, their dresses, their banners, and the *art* and artificial symmetry of their position and movements. A Highlander's plaid, a Mussulman's turban, and a Roman toga, are more poetical than the tattooed or untattooed buttocks of a New Sandwich savage, although they were described by William Wordsworth himself like the «idiot in his glory.»

I have seen as many mountains as most men, and more fleets than the generality of landsmen: and, to my mind, a large convoy with a few sail of the line to conduct them, is as noble and as poetical a prospect as all that inanimate nature can produce. I prefer the «mast of some great ammiral,» with all its tackle, to the Scotch fir or the Alpine tannen: and think that *more* poetry *has been* made out of it. In what does the infinite superiority of «Falconer's Shipwreck,» over all other shipwrecks, consist? In his admirable application of the terms of his art; in a poet-sailor's description of the sailor's fate. These *very terms*, by his application, make the strength and reality of his poem. Why? because he was a poet, and in the hands of a poet *art* will not be found less ornamental than nature. It is precisely in general nature, and in stepping out of his element, that Falconer fails; where he digresses to speak of ancient Greece, and «such branches of learning.»

In Dyer's Grongar Hill, upon which his fame rests, the very appearance of Nature herself is moralised into an artificial image:

«Thus is Nature's *vesture* wrought,
To instruct our wandering thought;
Thus she *dresses green and gay*,
To disperse our cares away.»

And here also we have the telescope, the mis-use of which, from Milton, has rendered Mr Bowles so triumphant over Mr Campbell.

«So we mistake the future's face,
Eyed through Hope's deluding *glass*.»

And here a word, *en passant*, to Mr Campbell:

«As yon summits, soft and fair,
Clad in colours of the air,
Which, to those who journey near,
Barren, brown, and rough appear,
Still we tread the same coarse way—
The present's still a cloudy day.»

Is not this the original of the far-famed

«'T is distance lends enchantment to the view,
And robes the mountain in its azure hue!»

To return once more to the sea. Let any one look on the long wall of Malamocco, which curbs the Adriatic, and pronounce between the sea and its master. Surely that Roman work (I mean *Roman* in conception and performance), which says to the ocean, «thus far shalt thou come, and no further,» and is obeyed, is not less sublime and poetical than the angry waves which vainly break beneath it.

Mr Bowles makes the chief part of a ship's poesy depend on the «*wind*:» then why is a ship under sail more

poetical than a hog in a high wind? The hog is all nature, the ship is all art, «coarse canvas,» «blue bunting,» and «tall poles;» both are violently acted upon by the wind, tossed here and there, to and fro; and yet nothing but excess of hunger could make me look upon the pig as the more poetical of the two, and then only in the shape of a griskin.

Will Mr Bowles tell us that the poetry of an aqueduct consists in the *water* which it conveys? Let him look on that of Justinian, on those of Rome, Constantinople, Lisbon, and Elvas, or even at the remains of that in Attica.

We are asked «what makes the venerable towers of Westminster Abbey more poetical, as objects, than the tower for the manufactory of patent shot, surrounded by the same scenery?» I will answer—the *architecture*. Turn Westminster Abbey, or Saint Paul's, into a powder magazine, their poetry, as objects, remains the same: the Parthenon was actually converted into one by the Turks, during Morosini's Venetian siege, and part of it destroyed in consequence. Cromwell's dragoons stalled their steeds in Worcester cathedral; was it less poetical, as an object, than before? Ask a foreigner on his approach to London, what strikes him as the most poetical of the towers before him: he will point out St Paul's and Westminster Abbey, without, perhaps, knowing the names or associations of either, and pass over the «tower for patent shot,» not that, for any thing he knows to the contrary, it might not be the mausoleum of a monarch, or a Waterloo column, or a Trafalgar monument, but because its architecture is obviously inferior.

To the question, «whether the description of a game of cards be as poetical, supposing the execution of the artists equal, as a description of a walk in a forest?» it may be answered, that the *materials* are certainly not equal; but that «the *artist*,» who has rendered the «game of cards poetical,» is *by far the greater* of the two. But all this «ordering» of poets is purely arbitrary on the part of Mr Bowles. There may or may not be, in fact, different «orders» of poetry, but the poet is always ranked according to his execution, and not according to his branch of the art.

Tragedy is one of the highest presumed orders. Hughes has written a tragedy, and a very successful one; Fenton another; and Pope none. Did any man, however,—will even Mr Bowles himself rank Hughes and Fenton as poets above *Pope*? Was even Addison (the author of Cato), or Rowe (one of the higher order of dramatists, as far as success goes), or Young, or even Otway and Southerne, ever raised for a moment to the same rank with Pope in the estimation of the reader or the critic, before his death or since? If Mr Bowles will contend for classifications of this kind, let him recollect that descriptive poetry has been ranked as among the lowest branches of the art, and description as a mere ornament, but which should never form «the subject» of a poem. The Italians, with the most poetical language, and the most fastidious taste in Europe, possess now five *great* poets, they say, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, and lastly Alfieri; and whom do they esteem one of the highest of these, and some of them the very highest? Petrarch the *sonneteer*: it is true that some of his Canzoni are *not less* esteemed, but *not* more; who ever dreams of his Latin Africa?

Were Petrarch to be ranked according to the «order» of his compositions, where would the best of sonnets place him? with Dante and the others? No; but, as I have before said, the poet who *executes* best is the highest, whatever his department, and will ever be so rated in the world's esteem.

Had Gray written nothing but his Elegy, high as he stands, I am not sure that he would not stand higher; it is the corner stone of his glory: without it, his odes would be insufficient for his fame. The depreciation of Pope is partly founded upon a false idea of the dignity of his order of poetry, to which he has partly contributed by the ingenuous boast,

> «That not in fancy's maze he wander'd long,
> But *stoop'd* to truth, and moralised his song.»

He should have written «rose to truth.» In my mind the highest of all poetry is ethical poetry, as the highest of all earthly objects must be moral truth. Religion does not make a part of my subject; it is something beyond human powers, and has failed in all human hands except Milton's and Dante's, and even Dante's powers are involved in his delineation of human passions, though in supernatural circumstances. What made Socrates the greatest of men? His moral truth—his ethics. What proved Jesus Christ the Son of God hardly less than his miracles? His moral precepts. And if ethics have made a philosopher the first of men, and have not been disdained as an adjunct to his gospel by the Deity himself, are we to be told that ethical poetry, or didactic poetry, or by whatever name you term it, whose object is to make men better and wiser, is not the *very first order* of poetry; and are we to be told this too by one of the priesthood? It requires more mind, more wisdom, more power, than all the «forests» that ever were «walked» for their «description,» and all the epics that ever were founded upon fields of battle. The Georgics are indisputably, and, I believe, *undisputedly*, even a finer poem than the Æneid. Virgil knew this; he did not order *them* to be burnt.

> «The proper study of mankind is man.»

It is the fashion of the day to lay great stress upon what they call «imagination» and «invention,» the two commonest of qualities: an Irish peasant, with a little whiskey in his head, will imagine and invent more than would furnish forth a modern poem. If Lucretius had not been spoiled by the Epicurean system, we should have had a far superior poem to any now in existence. As mere poetry, it is the first of Latin poems. What then has ruined it? His ethics. Pope has not this defect; his moral is as pure as his poetry is glorious. In speaking of artificial objects, I have omitted to touch upon one which I will now mention. Cannon may be presumed to be as highly poetical as art can make her objects. Mr Bowles will, perhaps, tell me that this is because they resemble that grand natural article of sound in heaven, and simile upon earth—thunder. I shall be told triumphantly, that Milton made sad work with his artillery, when he armed his devils therewithal. He did so; and this artificial object must have had much of the sublime to attract his attention for such a conflict. He *has* made an absurd use of it; but the absurdity consists not in using *cannon* against the angels of God, but any *material* weapon. The thunder of the clouds would have been as ridiculous and vain in the hands of the

devils, as the « villainous saltpetre: » the angels were as impervious to the one as to the other. The thunderbolts became sublime in the hands of the Almighty, not as such, but because *he* deigns to use them as a means of repelling the rebel spirits; but no one can attribute their defeat to this grand piece of natural electricity: the Almighty willed, and they fell; his word would have been enough; and Milton is as absurd (and in fact, *blasphemous*) in putting material lightnings into the hands of the Godhead as in giving him hands at all.

The artillery of the demons was but the first step of his mistake, the thunder the next, and it is a step lower. It would have been fit for Jove, but not for Jehovah. The subject altogether was essentially unpoetical; he has made more of it than another could, but it is beyond him and all men.

In a portion of his reply, Mr Bowles asserts that Pope « envied Phillips » because he quizzed his pastorals in the Guardian, in that most admirable model of irony, his paper on the subject. If there was any thing enviable about Phillips, it could hardly be his pastorals. They were despicable, and Pope expressed his contempt. If Mr Fitzgerald published a volume of sonnets, or a « Spirit of Discovery,» or a « Missionary,» and Mr Bowles wrote in any periodical journal an ironical paper upon them, would this be « envy? » The authors of the « Rejected Addresses » have ridiculed the sixteen or twenty « first living poets » of the day; but do they « envy » them? « Envy » writhes, it don't laugh. The authors of the Rejected Addresses may despise some, but they can hardly « envy » any of the persons whom they have parodied; and Pope could have no more envied Phillips than he did Welsted, or Theobalds, or Smedley, or any other given hero of the Dunciad. He could not have envied him, even had he himself *not* been the greatest poet of his age. Did Mr Ings « *envy* » Mr Phillips, when he asked him, « how came your Pyrrhus to drive oxen, and say, I am *goaded* on by love! » This question silenced poor Phillips; but it no more proceeded from « envy » than did Pope's ridicule. Did he envy Swift? Did he envy Bolingbroke? Did he envy Gay the unparalleled success of his « Beggar's Opera? » We may be answered that these were his friends—true; but does *friendship* prevent *envy*? Study the first woman you meet with, or the first scribbler, let Mr Bowles himself (whom I acquit fully of such an odious quality), study some of his own poetical intimates: the most envious man I ever heard of is a poet, and a high one; besides it is an *universal* passion. Goldsmith envied not only the puppets for their dancing, and broke his shins in the attempt at rivalry, but was seriously angry because two pretty women received more attention than he did. *This is envy*; but where does Pope show a sign of the passion? In that case, Dryden envied the hero of his Mac Flecknoe. Mr Bowles compares, when and where he can, Pope with Cowper (the same Cowper whom, in his edition of Pope, he laughs at for his attachment to an old woman, Mrs Unwin: search and you will find it; I remember the passage, though not the page); in particular he requotes Cowper's Dutch delineation of a wood, drawn up like a seedsman's catalogue,[1] with an affected imitation of Milton's style, as burlesque as the « Splendid Shilling.» These two writers (for Cowper is no poet), come into comparison in one great work—the translation of Homer. Now, with all the great, and manifest, and manifold, and reproved, and acknowledged, and uncontroverted faults of Pope's translation, and all the scholarship, and pains, and time, and trouble, and blank verse of the other, who can ever read Cowper? and who will ever lay down Pope, unless for the original? Pope's was « not Homer, it was Spondanus; » but Cowper's is not Homer, either, it is not even Cowper. As a child I first read Pope's Homer with a rapture which no subsequent work could ever afford; and children are not the worst judges of their own language. As a boy I read Homer in the original, as we have all done, some of us by force, and a few by favour; under which description I come is nothing to the purpose, it is enough that I read him. As a man I have tried to read Cowper's version, and I found it impossible. Has any human reader ever succeeded?

And now that we have heard the Catholic reproached with envy, duplicity, licentiousness, avarice—what was the Calvinist? He attempted the most atrocious of crimes in the Christian code, viz. suicide—and why? Because he was to be examined whether he was fit for an office which he seems to wish to have made a sinecure. His connexion with Mrs Unwin was pure enough, for the old lady was devout, and he was deranged; but why then is the infirm and then elderly Pope to be reproved for his connexion with Martha Blount? Cowper was the almoner of Mrs Throgmorton; but Pope's charities were his own, and they were noble and extensive, far beyond his fortune's warrant. Pope was

> « Thy *needles*, once a shining store,
> For my sake restless heretofore,
> Now rust disused, and shine no more,
> My Mary, »

contain a simple, household, « *indoor*, » artificial, and ordinary image. I refer Mr Bowles to the stanza, and ask if these three lines about « *needles* » are not worth all the boasted twaddling about trees, so triumphantly re-quoted? and yet in *fact* what do they convey? A homely collection of images and ideas associated with the darning of stockings, and the hemming of shirts, and the mending of breeches; but will any one deny that they are eminently poetical and pathetic as addressed by Cowper to his nurse? The trash of trees reminds me of a saying of Sheridan's. Soon after the « Rejected Address » scene, in 1812, I met Sheridan. In the course of dinner, he said, « Lord Byron, did you know that amongst the writers of addresses was Whitbread himself? » I answered by an enquiry of what sort of an address he had made. « Of that, » replied Sheridan, « I remember little, except that there was a *phœnix* in it. » « A phœnix!! Well, how did he describe it? » « *Like a poulterer*, » answered Sheridan; « it was green, and yellow, and red, and blue: he did not let us off for a single feather. » And just such as this poulterer's account of a phœnix, is Cowper's stick-picker's detail of a wood, with all its petty minutiæ of this, that, and the other.

One more poetical instance of the power of art, and even its *superiority* over nature, in poetry, and I have done:—the bust of *Antinous!* Is there any thing in nature like this marble, excepting the Venus? Can there be more *poetry* gathered into existence than in that wonderful creation of perfect beauty? But the poetry of this bust is in no respect derived from nature, nor from any association of moral exaltedness; for what is there in common with moral nature and the male minion of Adrian? The very execution is *not natural*, but *supernatural*, or rather *super-artificial*, for nature has never done so much.

Away, then, with this cant about nature and « invariable principles of poetry »! A great artist will make a block of stone as sublime as a mountain, and a good poet can imbue a pack of cards with more poetry than inhabits the forests of America. It is the business and the proof of a poet to give the lie to the proverb, and sometimes to « *make a silken purse out of a sow's ear*; » and to conclude with another homely proverb, « a good workman will not find fault with his tools. »

[1] I will submit to Mr Bowles's own judgment a passage from another poem of Cowper's, to be compared with the same writer's Sylvan Sampler. In the lines to Mary,

the tolerant yet steady adherent of the most bigoted of sects; and Cowper the most bigoted and despondent sectary that ever anticipated damnation to himself or others. Is this harsh? I know it is, and I do not assert it as my opinion of Cowper *personally*, but to *show what might* be said, with just as great an appearance of truth and candour, as all the odium which has been accumulated upon Pope in similar speculations. Cowper was a good man, and lived at a fortunate time for his works.

Mr Bowles, apparently not relying entirely upon his own arguments, has, in person or by proxy, brought forward the names of Southey and Moore. "Mr Southey "agrees entirely with Mr Bowles in his *invariable* principles of poetry." The least that Mr Bowles can do in return is to approve the "invariable principles of Mr Southey." I should have thought that the word "*invariable*" might have stuck in Southey's throat, like Macbeth's "Amen!" I am sure it did in mine, and I am not the least consistent of the two, at least as a voter. Moore (*et tu Brute!*) also approves, and a Mr J. Scott. There is a letter also of two lines from a gentleman in asterisks, who, it seems, is a poet of "the highest rank"—who *can* this be? not my friend, Sir Walter, surely. Campbell it can't be; Rogers it won't be.

"You have *hit the nail in* the head, and **** [Pope, I presume] *on* the head also."

I *remain* yours, affectionately,
(Four *Asterisks*)."

And in asterisks let him remain. Whoever this person may be, he deserves, for such a judgment of Midas, that "the nail" which Mr Bowles has "hit *in* the head" should be driven through his own ears; I am sure that they are long enough.

The attention of the poetical populace of the present day to obtain an ostracism against Pope is as easily accounted for as the Athenian's shell against Aristides; they are tired of hearing him always called "the Just." They are also fighting for life; for if he maintains his station, they will reach their own falling. They have raised a mosque by the side of a Grecian temple of the purest architecture; and, more barbarous than the barbarians from whose practice I have borrowed the figure, they are not contented with their own grotesque edifice, unless they destroy the prior and purely beautiful fabric which preceded, and which shames them and theirs for ever and ever. I shall be told that amongst those I *have* been (or it may be still *am*) conspicuous—true, and I am ashamed of it. I *have* been amongst the builders of this Babel, attended by a confusion of tongues, but *never* amongst the envious destroyers of the classic temple of our predecessor. I have loved and honoured the fame and name of that illustrious and unrivalled man, far more than my own paltry renown, and the trashy jingle of the crowd of "schools" and upstarts, who pretend to rival, or even surpass him. Sooner than a single leaf should be torn from his laurel, it were better that all which these men, and that I, as one of their set, have ever written, should

"Line trunks, clothe spice, or, fluttering in a row,
Befringe the rails of Bedlam or Soho!"

There are those who will believe this, and those who will not. You, sir, know how far I am sincere, and whether my opinion, not only in the short work intended for publication, and in private letters which can never be published, has or has not been the same. I look upon this as the declining age of English poetry; no regard for others, no selfish feeling, can prevent me from seeing this, and expressing the truth. There can be no worse sign for the taste of the times than the depreciation of Pope. It would be better to receive for proof Mr Cobbett's rough but strong attack upon Shakspeare and Milton, than to allow this smooth and "candid" undermining of the reputation of the most *perfect* of our poets and the purest of our moralists. Of his power in the *passions*, in description, in the mock-heroic, I leave others to descant. I take him on his strong ground, as an *ethical* poet: in the former none excel, in the mock-heroic and the ethical none equal him; and, in my mind, the latter is the highest of all poetry, because it does that in *verse*, which the greatest of men have wished to accomplish in prose. If the essence of poetry must be a *lie*, throw it to the dogs, or banish it from your republic, as Plato would have done. He who can reconcile poetry with truth and wisdom, is the only true "*poet*" in its real sense: "the *maker*," "the *creator*"—why must this mean the "liar," the "feigner," "the tale-teller?" A man may make and create better things than these.

I shall not presume to say that Pope is as high a poet as Shakspeare and Milton, though his enemy, Warton, places him immediately under them. I would no more say this than I would assert in the mosque (once Saint Sophia's), that Socrates was a greater man than Mahomet. But if I say that he is very near them, it is no more than has been asserted of Burns, who is supposed

"To rival all but Shakespeare's name below."

I say nothing against this opinion. But of what "*order*," according to the poetical aristocracy, are Burns's poems? There are his *opus magnum*, "Tam O'Shanter," a *tale*; the "Cotter's Saturday Night," a descriptive sketch; some others in the same style; the rest are songs. So much for the *rank* of his *productions*; the *rank* of *Burns* is the very first of his art. Of Pope I have expressed my opinion elsewhere, as also of the effect which the present attempts at poetry have had upon our literature. If any great national or natural convulsion could or should overwhelm your country, in such sort as to sweep Great Britain from the kingdoms of the earth, and leave only that, after all the most living of human things, a *dead language*, to be studied, and read, and imitated by the wise of future and far generations upon foreign shores; if your literature should become the learning of mankind, divested of party cabals, temporary fashions, and national pride and prejudice; an Englishman, anxious that the posterity of strangers should know that there had been such a thing as a British Epic and Tragedy, might wish for the preservation of Shakspeare and Milton; but the surviving world would snatch Pope from the wreck, and let the rest sink with the people. He is the moral poet of all civilization; and, as such, let us hope that he will one day be the national poet of mankind. He is the only poet that never shocks; the only poet whose *faultlessness* has been made his reproach. Cast your eye over his productions; consider their extent, and

contemplate their variety:—pastoral, passion, mock-heroic, translation, satire, ethics,—all excellent, and often perfect. If his great charm be his *melody*, how comes it that foreigners adore him even in their diluted translation? But I have made this letter too long. Give my compliments to Mr Bowles.

Yours ever, very truly,
BYRON.

To J. Murray, Esq.

Post scriptum.—Long as this letter has grown, I find it necessary to append a postscript,—if possible, a short one. Mr Bowles denies that he has accused Pope of «a sordid money-getting passion;» but he adds, «if I had ever done so, I should be glad to find any testimony that might show me he was *not* so.» This testimony he may find to his heart's content in Spence and elsewhere. First, there is Martha Blount, who, Mr Bowles charitably says, «probably thought he did not save enough for her as legatee.» Whatever she *thought* upon this point, her words are in Pope's favour. Then there is Alderman Barber; see Spence's Anecdotes. There is Pope's cold answer to Halifax, when he proposed a pension; his behaviour to Craggs and to Addison upon like occasions; and his own two lines—

«And, thanks to Homer, since I live and thrive,
Indebted to no prince or peer alive»—

written when princes would have been proud to pension, and peers to promote him, and when the whole army of dunces were in array against him, and would have been but too happy to deprive him of this boast of independence. But there is something a little more serious in Mr Bowles's declaration, that he «*would* have spoken» of his «noble generosity to the outcast, Richard Savage,» and other instances of a compassionate and generous heart, «*had they occurred to his recollection when he wrote.*» What! is it come to this? Does Mr Bowles sit down to write a minute and laboured life and edition of a great poet? Does he anatomise his character, moral and poetical? Does he present us with his faults and with his foibles? Does he sneer at his feelings and doubt of his sincerity? Does he unfold his vanity and duplicity? and then omit the good qualities which might, in part, have «covered this multitude of sins?» and then plead that «*they did not occur to his recollection?*» Is this the frame of mind and of memory with which the illustrious dead are to be approached? If Mr Bowles, who must have had access to all the means of refreshing his memory, did not recollect these facts, he is unfit for his task; but if he *did* recollect, and omit them, I know not what he is fit for, but I know what would be fit for him. Is the plea of «not recollecting» such prominent facts to be admitted? Mr Bowles has been at a public school, and, as I have been publicly educated also, I can sympathise with his predilection. When we were in the third form even, had we pleaded on the Monday morning, that we had not brought up the Saturday's exercise because «we had forgotten it,» what would have been the reply? And is an excuse, which would not be pardoned to a schoolboy, to pass current in a matter which so nearly concerns the fame of the first poet of his age, if not of his country? If Mr Bowles so readily forgets the virtues of others, why complain so grievously that others have a better memory for his own faults? They are but the faults of an author; while the virtues he omitted from his catalogue are essential to the justice due to a man.

Mr Bowles appears, indeed, to be susceptible beyond the privilege of authorship. There is a plaintive dedication to Mr Gifford, in which *he* is made responsible for all the articles of the Quarterly. Mr Southey, it seems, «the most able and eloquent writer in that Review,» approves of Mr Bowles's publication. Now, it seems to me the more impartial, that, notwithstanding that the great writer of the Quarterly entertains opinions opposite to the able article on Spence, nevertheless that essay was permitted to appear. Is a review to be devoted to the opinions of any *one* man? Must it not vary according to circumstances, and according to the subjects to be criticised? I fear that writers must take the sweets and bitters of the public journals as they occur, and an author of so long a standing as Mr Bowles might have become accustomed to such incidents; he might be angry, but not astonished. I have been reviewed in the Quarterly almost as often as Mr Bowles, and have had as pleasant things said, and some as *unpleasant*, as could well be pronounced. In the review of «The Fall of Jerusalem,» it is stated that I have devoted «my powers,» etc. to the worst parts of manicheism,» which, being interpreted, means that I worship the devil. Now, I have neither written a reply, nor complained to Gifford. I believe that I observed in a letter to you, that I thought «that the critic might have praised Milman without finding it necessary to abuse me;» but did I not add at the same time, or soon after (apropos, of the note in the book of Travels), that I would not, if it were even in my powor, have a single line cancelled on my account in that nor in any other publication?—Of course, I reserve to myself the privilege of response when necessary. Mr Bowles seems in a whimsical state about the article on Spence. You know very well that I am not in your confidence, nor in that of the conductor of the journal. The moment I saw that article, I was morally certain that I knew the author «by his style.» You will tell me that I do *not know* him: that is all as it should be, keep the secret, so shall I, though no one has ever intrusted it to me. He is not the person whom Mr Bowles denounces. Mr Bowles's extreme sensibility reminds me of a circumstance which occurred on board of a frigate, in which I was a passenger and guest of the captain's for a considerable time. The surgeon on board, a very gentlemanly young man, and remarkably able in his profession, wore a *wig*. Upon this ornament he was extremely tenacious. As naval jests are sometimes a little rough, his brother-officers made occasional allusions to this delicate appendage to the doctor's person. One day a young lieutenant, in the course of a facetious discussion, said, «Suppose, now, doctor, I should take off your *hat*.» «Sir,» replied the doctor, «I shall talk no longer with you; you grow *scurrilous*.» He would not even admit so near an approach as to the hat which protected it. In like manner, if any body approaches Mr Bowles's laurels, even in his outside capacity of an *editor*, «they grow *scurrilous*.» You say that you are about to prepare an edition of Pope; you cannot do better for your own credit as a publisher, nor for the redemption of Pope from Mr Bowles, and of the public taste from rapid degeneracy.

A Fragment.

June 17, 1816.

In the year 17—, having for some time determined on a journey through countries not hitherto much frequented by travellers, I set out, accompanied by a friend, whom I shall designate by the name of Augustus Darvell. He was a few years my elder, and a man of considerable fortune and ancient family—advantages which an extensive capacity prevented him alike from undervaluing or overrating. Some peculiar circumstances in his private history had rendered him to me an object of attention, of interest, and even of regard, which neither the reserve of his manners, nor occasional indications of an inquietude at times nearly approaching to alienation of mind, could extinguish.

I was yet young in life, which I had begun early; but my intimacy with him was of a recent date: we had been educated at the same schools and university; but his progress through these had preceded mine, and he had been deeply initiated into what is called the world, while I was yet in my noviciate. While thus engaged, I had heard much both of his past and present life; and, although in these accounts there were many and irreconcilable contradictions, I could still gather from the whole that he was a being of no common order, and one who, whatever pains he might take to avoid remark, would still be remarkable. I had cultivated his acquaintance subsequently, and endeavoured to obtain his friendship, but this last appeared to be unattainable; whatever affections he might have possessed seemed now, some to have been extinguished, and others to be concentred: that his feelings were acute, I had sufficient opportunities of observing; for, although he could control, he could not altogether disguise them; still he had a power of giving to one passion the appearance of another in such a manner that it was difficult to define the nature of what was working within him; and the expressions of his features would vary so rapidly, though slightly, that it was useless to trace them to their sources. It was evident that he was a prey to some cureless disquiet; but whether it arose from ambition, love, remorse, grief, from one or all of these, or merely from a morbid temperament akin to disease, I could not discover: there were circumstances alleged which might have justified the application to each of these causes; but, as I have before said, these were so contradictory and contradicted, that none could be fixed upon with accuracy. Where there is mystery, it is generally supposed that there most also be evil: I know not how this may be, but in him there certainly was the one, though I could not ascertain the extent of the other—and felt loth, as far as regarded himself, to believe in its existence. My advances were received with sufficient coldness; but I was young, and not easily discouraged, and at length succeeded in obtaining, to a certain degree, that common-place intercourse and moderate confidence of common and every-day concerns, created and cemented by similarity of pursuit and frequency of meeting, which is called intimacy, or friendship, according to the ideas of him who uses those words to express them.

Darvell had already travelled extensively, and to him I had applied for information with regard to the conduct of my intended journey. It was my secret wish that he might be prevailed on to accompany me: it was also a probable hope, founded upon the shadowy restlessness which I had observed in him, and to which the animation which he appeared to feel on such subjects, and his apparent indifference to all by which he was more immediately surrounded, gave fresh strength. This wish I first hinted, and then expressed: his answer, though I had partly expected it, gave me all the pleasure of surprise—he consented; and, after the requisite arrangements, we commenced our voyages. After journeying through various countries of the south of Europe, our attention was turned towards the east, according to our original destination; and it was in my progress through those regions that the incident occurred upon which will turn what I may have to relate.

The constitution of Darvell, which must, from his appearance, have been in early life more than usually robust, had been for some time gradually giving way, without the intervention of any apparent disease: he had neither cough nor hectic, yet he became daily more enfeebled: his habits were temperate, and he neither declined nor complained of fatigue, yet he was evidently wasting away: he became more and more silent and sleepless, and at length so seriously altered, that my alarm grew proportionate to what I conceived to be his danger.

We had determined, on our arrival at Smyrna, on an excursion to the ruins of Ephesus and Sardis, from which I endeavoured to dissuade him, in his present state of indisposition—but in vain: there appeared to be an oppression on his mind, and a solemnity in his manner, which ill corresponded with his eagerness to proceed on what I regarded as a mere party of pleasure, little suited to a valetudinarian; but I opposed him no longer—and in a few days we set off together, accompanied only by a serrugee and a single janizary.

We had passed half-way towards the remains of Ephesus, leaving behind us the more fertile environs of Smyrna, and were entering upon that wild and tenantless track through the marshes and defiles which lead to the few huts yet lingering over the broken columns of Diana—the roofless walls of expelled Christianity, and the still more recent but complete desolation of abandoned mosques—when the sudden and rapid illness of my companion obliged us to halt at a Turkish cemetery, the turbaned tombstones of which were the sole indication that human life had ever been a sojourner in this wilderness. The only caravansera we had seen was left some hours behind us; not a vestige of a town, or even cottage, was within sight or hope, and this «city of the dead» appeared to be the sole refuge for my unfortunate friend, who seemed on the verge of becoming the last of its inhabitants.

In this situation, I looked round for a place where he might most conveniently repose:—contrary to the usual aspect of Mahometan burial-grounds, the cypresses were in this few in number, and these thinly scattered over its extent: the tombstones were mostly fallen, and worn with age: upon one of the most considerable of these, and beneath one of the most spreading trees

Darvell supported himself, in a half-reclining posture, with great difficulty. He asked for water. I had some doubts of our being able to find any, and prepared to go in search of it with hesitating despondency—but he desired me to remain; and, turning to Suleiman, our janizary, who stood by us smoking with great tranquillity, he said, «Suleiman, verbana su,» (*i. e.* bring some water,) and went on describing the spot where it was to be found with great minuteness, at a small well for camels, a few hundred yards to the right: the janizary obeyed. I said to Darvell, «How did you know this?» —He replied, «From our situation; you must perceive that this place was once inhabited, and could not have been so without springs: I have also been here before.»

«You have been here before!—How came you never to mention this to me? and what could you be doing in a place where no one would remain a moment longer than they could help it?»

To this question I received no answer. In the mean time, Suleiman returned with the water, leaving the serrugee and the horses at the fountain. The quenching of his thirst had the appearance of reviving him for a moment; and I conceived hopes of his being able to proceed, or at least to return, and I urged the attempt. He was silent—and appeared to be collecting his spirits for an effort to speak. He began.

«This is the end of my journey, and of my life—I came here to die: but I have a request to make, a command—for such my last words must be.—You will observe it?»

«Most certainly; but have better hopes.»

«I have no hopes, nor wishes, but this—conceal my death from every human being.»

«I hope there will be no occasion; that you will recover, and——»

«Peace! it must be so: promise this.»

«I do.»

«Swear it by all that»——He here dictated an oath of great solemnity.

«There is no occasion for this—I will observe your request;—and to doubt me is——»

«It cannot be helped,—you must swear.»

I took the oath: it appeared to relieve him. He removed a seal-ring from his finger, on which were some Arabic characters, and presented it to me. He proceeded—

«On the ninth day of the month, at noon precisely (what month you please, but this must be the day), you must fling this ring into the salt springs which run into the Bay of Eleusis: the day after, at the same hour, you must repair to the ruins of the temple of Ceres, and wait one hour.»

«Why?»

«You will see.»

«The ninth day of the month, you say?»

«The ninth.»

As I observed that the present was the ninth day of the month, his countenance changed, and he paused. As he sate, evidently becoming more feeble, a stork, with a snake in her beak, perched upon a tombstone near us; and, without devouring her prey, appeared to be stedfastly regarding us. I know not what impelled me to drive it away, but the attempt was useless; she made a few circles in the air, and returned exactly to the same spot. Darvell pointed to it, and smiled: he spoke—I know not whether to himself or to me—but the words were only, «'T is well!»

«What is well? what do you mean?»

«No matter: you must bury me here this evening, and exactly where that bird is now perched. You know the rest of my injunctions.»

He then proceeded to give me several directions as to the manner in which his death might be best concealed. After these were finished, he exclaimed, «You perceive that bird?»

«Certainly.»

«And the serpent writhing in her beak?»

«Doubtless: there is nothing uncommon in it; it is her natural prey. But it is odd that she does not devour it.»

He smiled in a ghastly manner, and said, faintly, «It is not yet time!» As he spoke, the stork flew away. My eyes followed it for a moment; it could hardly be longer than ten might be counted. I felt Darvell's weight, as it were, increase upon my shoulder, and, turning to look upon his face, perceived that he was dead!

I was shocked with the sudden certainty which could not be mistaken—his countenance in a few minutes became nearly black. I should have attributed so rapid a change to poison, had I not been aware that he had no opportunity of receiving it unperceived. The day was declining, the body was rapidly altering, and nothing remained but to fulfil his request. With the aid of Suleiman's ataghan and my own sabre, we scooped a shallow grave upon the spot which Darvell had indicated: the earth easily gave way, having already received some Mahometan tenant. We dug as deeply as the time permitted us, and throwing the dry earth upon all that remained of the singular being so lately departed, we cut a few sods of greener turf from the less withered soil around us, and laid them upon his sepulchre.

Between astonishment and grief, I was tearless.

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Parliamentary Speeches.

DEBATE ON THE FRAME WORK BILL, IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, FEBRUARY 27, 1812.

The order of the day for the second reading of this bill being read,

LORD BYRON rose, and (for the first time) addressed their lordships, as follows:

My Lords—the subject now submitted to your lordships for the first time, though new to the House, is by no means new to the country. I believe it had occupied the serious thoughts of all descriptions of persons, long before its introduction to the notice of that legislature, whose interference alone could be of real service. As a person in some degree connected with the

suffering country, though a stranger not only to this House in general, but to almost every individual whose attention I presume to solicit, I must claim some portion of your lordships' indulgence whilst I offer a few observations on a question in which I confess myself deeply interested.

To enter into any detail of the riots would be superfluous: the House is already aware that every outrage short of actual bloodshed has been perpetrated, and that the proprietors of the frames obnoxious to the rioters, and all persons supposed to be connected with them, have been liable to insult and violence. During the short time I recently passed in Nottinghamshire, not twelve hours elapsed without some fresh act of violence; and on the day I left the county I was informed that forty frames had been broken the preceding evening, as usual, without resistance and without detection.

Such was then the state of that county, and such I have reason to believe it to be at this moment. But whilst these outrages must be admitted to exist to an alarming extent, it cannot be denied that they have arisen from circumstances of the most unparalleled distress. The perseverance of these miserable men in their proceedings, tends to prove that nothing but absolute want could have driven a large, and once honest and industrious, body of the people, into the commission of excesses so hazardous to themselves, their families and the community. At the time to which I allude, the town and county were burthened with large detachments of the military; the police was in motion, the magistrates assembled; yet all the movements, civil and military, had led to—nothing. Not a single instance had occurred of the apprehension of any real delinquent actually taken in the fact, against whom there existed legal evidence sufficient for conviction. But the police, however useless, were by no means idle: several notorious delinquents had been detected; men, liable to conviction, on the clearest evidence, of the capital crime of poverty; men, who had been nefariously guilty of lawfully begetting several children, whom, thanks to the times! they were unable to maintain. Considerable injury has been done to the proprietors of the improved frames. These machines were to them an advantage, inasmuch as they superseded the necessity of employing a number of workmen, who were left in consequence to starve. By the adoption of one species of frame in particular, one man performed the work of many, and the superfluous labourers were thrown out of employment. Yet it is to be observed, that the work thus executed was inferior in quality; not marketable at home, and merely hurried over with a view to exportation. It was called, in the cant of the trade, by the name of «Spider work» The rejected workmen, in the blindness of their ignorance, instead of rejoicing at these improvements in arts so beneficial to mankind, conceived themselves to be sacrificed to improvements in mechanism. In the foolishness of their hearts they imagined, that the maintenance and well doing of the industrious poor were objects of greater consequence than the enrichment of a few individuals by any improvement, in the implements of trade, which threw the workmen out of employment, and rendered the labourer unworthy of his hire. And it must be confessed that although the adoption of the enlarged machinery in that state of our commerce which the country once boasted, might have been beneficial to the master without being detrimental to the servant; yet, in the present situation of our manufactures, rotting in warehouses, without a prospect of exportation, with the demand for work and workmen equally diminished; frames of this description tend materially to aggravate the distress and discontent of the disappointed sufferers. But the real cause of these distresses and consequent disturbances lies deeper. When we are told that these men are leagued together not only for the destruction of their own comfort, but of their very means of subsistence, can we forget that it is the bitter policy, the destructive warfare of the last eighteen years, which has destroyed their comfort, your comfort, all men's comfort? That policy which, originating with «great statesmen now no more,» has survived the dead to become a curse on the living, unto the third and fourth generation! These men never destroyed their looms till they were become useless, worse than useless; till they were become actual impediments to their exertions in obtaining their daily bread. Can you, then, wonder that in times like these, when bankruptcy, convicted fraud, and imputed felony are found in a station not far beneath that of your lordships, the lowest, though once most useful portion of the people, should forget their duty in their distresses, and become only less guilty than one of their representatives? But while the exalted offender can find means to baffle the law, new capital punishments must be devised, new snares of death must be spread for the wretched mechanic, who is famished into guilt. These men were willing to dig, but the spade was in other hands: they were not ashamed to beg, but there was none to relieve them: their own means of subsistence were cut off, all other employments pre-occupied, and their excesses, however to be deplored and condemned, can hardly be subject of surprise.

It has been stated that the persons in the temporary possession of frames connive at their destruction; if this be proved upon inquiry, it were necessary that such material accessories to the crime should be principals in the punishment. But I did hope, that any measure proposed by his majesty's government, for your lordships' decision, would have had conciliation for its basis; or, if that were hopeless, that some previous inquiry, some deliberation would have been deemed requisite; not that we should have been been called at once without examination, and without cause, to pass sentences by wholesale, and sign death-warrants blindfold. But admitting that these men had no cause of complaint; that the grievances of them and their employers were alike groundless; that they deserved the worst; what inefficiency, what imbecility has been evinced in the method chosen to reduce them! Why were the military called out to be made a mockery of, if they were to be called out at all? As far as the difference of seasons would permit, they have merely parodied the summer campaign of Major Sturgeon; and, indeed, the whole proceedings, civil and military, seemed on the model of those of the Mayor and Corporation of Garratt.—Such marchings and counter-marchings! from Nottingham to Bullwell, from Bullwell to Banford, from Banford to Mansfield! and when at length the detachments arrived at their destinations, in all «the pride, pomp, and cir-

cumstance of glorious war,» they came just in time to witness the mischief which had been done, and ascertain the escape of the perpetrators, to collect the «*spolia opima*» in the fragments of broken frames, and return to their quarters amidst the derision of old women, and the hootings of children. Now, though in a free country, it were to be wished, that our military should never be too formidable, at least to ourselves, I cannot see the policy of placing them in situations where they can only be made ridiculous. As the sword is the worst argument that can be used, so should it be the last. In this instance it has been the first; but providentially as yet only in the scabbard. The present measure will, indeed, pluck it from the sheath; yet had proper meetings been held in the earlier stages of these riots, had the grievances of these men and their masters (for they also had their grievances) been fairly weighed and justly examined, I do think that means might have been devised to restore these workmen to their avocations, and tranquillity to the county. At present the county suffers from the double infliction of an idle military and a starving population. In what state of apathy have we been plunged so long, that now for the first time the House has been officially apprized of these disturbances? All this has been transacting within 130 miles of London, and yet we, «good easy men, have deemed full sure our greatness was a ripening,» and have sat down to enjoy our foreign triumphs in the midst of domestic calamity. But all the cities you have taken, all the armies which have retreated before your leaders, are but paltry subjects of self congratulation, if your land divides against itself, and your dragoons and your executioners must be let loose against your fellow-citizens.—You call these men a mob, desperate, dangerous, and ignorant; and seem to think that the only way to quiet the «*Bellua multorum capitum*» is to lop off a a few of its superfluous heads. But even a mob may be better reduced to reason by a mixture of conciliation and firmness, than by additional irritation and redoubled penalties. Are we aware of our obligations to a mob? It is the mob that labour in your fields, and serve in your houses,—that man your navy, and recruit your army,—that have enabled you to defy all the world, and can also defy you when neglect and calamity have driven them to despair. You may call the people a mob; but do not forget, that a mob too often speaks the sentiments of the people. And here I must remark, with what alacrity you are accustomed to fly to the succour of your distressed allies, leaving the distressed of your own country to the care of Providence or—the parish. When the Portuguese suffered under the retreat of the French, every arm was stretched out, every hand was opened, from the rich man's largess to the widow's mite, all was bestowed to enable them to rebuild their villages and replenish their granaries. And at this moment, when thousands of misguided but most unfortunate fellow-countrymen are struggling with the extremes of hardships and hunger, as your charity began abroad it should end at home. A much less sum, a tithe of the bounty bestowed on Portugal, even if those men (which I cannot admit without inquiry) could not have been restored to their employments, would have rendered unnecessary the tender mercies of the bayonet and the gibbet. But doubtless our friends have too many foreign claims to admit a prospect of domestic relief; though never did such objects demand it. I have traversed the seat of war in the Peninsula, I have been in some of the most oppressed provinces of Turkey, but never under the most despotic of infidel governments did I behold such squalid wretchedness as I have seen since my return in the very heart of a Christian country. And what are your remedies? After months of inaction, and months of action worse than inactivity, at length comes forth the grand specific, the never-failing nostrum of all state physicians, from the days of Draco to the present time. After feeling the pulse and shaking the head over the patient, prescribing the usual course of warm water and bleeding, the warm water of your maukish police, and the lancets of your military, these convulsions must terminate in death, the sure consummation of the prescriptions of all political Sangrados. Setting aside the palpable injustice, and the certain inefficiency of the bill, are there not capital punishments sufficient in your statutes? Is there not blood enough upon your penal code, that more must be poured forth to ascend to Heaven and testify against you? How will you carry the bill into effect? Can you commit a whole county to their own prison? Will you erect a gibbet in every field, and hang up men like scarecrows? or will you proceed (as you must to bring this measure into effect) by decimation? place the country under martial law? depopulate and lay waste all around you? and restore Sherwood Forest as an acceptable gift to the crown, in its former condition of a royal chase and an asylum for outlaws? Are these the remedies for a starving and desperate populace? Will the famished wretch who has braved your bayonets, be appalled by your gibbets? When death is a relief, and the only relief it appears that you will afford him, will he be dragooned into tranquillity? Will that which could not be effected by your grenadiers be accomplished by your executioners? If you proceed by the forms of law, where is your evidence? Those who have refused to impeach their accomplices, when transportation only was the punishment, will hardly be tempted to witness against them when death is the penalty. With all due deference to the noble lords opposite, I think a little investigation, some previous inquiry, would induce even them to change their purpose. That most favourite state measure, so marvellously efficacious in many and recent instances, temporizing, would not be without its advantages in this. When a proposal is made to emancipate or relieve, you hesitate, you deliberate for years, you temporize and tamper with the minds of men; but a death-bill must be passed off hand, without a thought of the consequences. Sure I am from what I have heard, and from what I have seen, that to pass the Bill under all the existing circumstances without inquiry, without deliberation, would only be to add injustice to irritation, and barbarity to neglect. The framers of such a Bill must be content to inherit the honours of that Athenian lawgiver whose edicts were said to be written not in ink but in blood. But suppose it past; suppose one of these men, as I have seen them,—meagre with famine, sullen with despair, careless of a life which your lordships are perhaps about to value at something less than the price of a stocking-frame—suppose this man surrounded by the children for whom he is unable to procure bread at the hazard of his existence, about to be torn for ever

from a family which he lately supported in peaceful industry, and which it is not his fault that he can no longer so support—suppose this man, and there are ten thousand such from whom you may select your victims, dragged into court, to be tried for this new offence by this new law; still, there are two things wanting to convict and condemn him; and these are, in my opinion,—twelve Butchers for a Jury, and a Jefferies for a Judge!

DEBATE ON THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE'S MOTION FOR A COMMITTEE ON THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIMS, APRIL 21, 1812.

My Lords—the question before the House has been so frequently, fully, and ably discussed, and never perhaps more ably than on this night, that it would be difficult to adduce new arguments for or against it. But with each discussion, difficulties have been removed, objections have been canvassed and refuted, and some of the former opponents of Catholic Emancipation have at length conceded to the expediency of relieving the petitioners. In conceding thus much, however, a new objection is started; it is not the time, say they, or it is an improper time, or there is time enough yet. In some degree I concur with those who say it is not the time exactly; that time is passed; better had it been for the country, that the Catholics possessed at this moment their proportion of our privileges, that their nobles held their due weight in our councils, than that we should be assembled to discuss their claims. It had indeed been better

« Non tempore tali
Cogere concilium cum muros obsidet hostis. »

The enemy is without, and distress within. It is too late to cavil on doctrinal points, when we must unite in defence of things more important than the mere ceremonies of religion. It is indeed singular, that we are called together to deliberate, not on the God we adore, for in that we are agreed; not about the king we obey, for to him we are loyal; but how far a difference in the ceremonials of worship, how far believing not too little, but too much (the worst that can be imputed to the Catholics, how far too much devotion to their God, may incapacitate our fellow-subjects from effectually serving their king.

Much has been said, within and without doors, of Church and State, and although those venerable words have been too often prostituted to the most despicable of party purposes, we cannot hear them too often; all, I presume, are the advocates of Church and State, the Church of Christ, and the State of Great Britain; but not a state of exclusion and despotism, not an intolerant church, not a church militant, which renders itself liable to the very objection urged against the Romish communion, and in a greater degree, for the Catholic merely withholds its spiritual benediction (and even that is doubtful), but our church, or rather our churchmen, not only refuse to the Catholic their spiritual grace, but all temporal blessings whatsoever. It was an observation of the great Lord Peterborough, made within these walls, or within the walls where the Lords then assembled, that he was for a « parliamentary king and a parliamentary constitution, but not a parliamentary God and a parliamentary religion. » The interval of a century has not weakened the force of the remark. It is indeed time that we should leave off these petty cavils on frivolous points, these Lilliputian sophistries, whether our « eggs are best broken at the broad or narrow end. »

The opponents of the Catholics may be divided into two classes; those who assert that the Catholics have too much already, and those who allege that the lower orders, at least, have nothing more to require. We are told by the former, that the Catholics never will be contented: by the latter, that they are already too happy. The last paradox is sufficiently refuted by the present, as by all past petitions; it might as well be said, that the negroes did not desire to be emancipated, but this is an unfortunate comparison, for you have already delivered them out of the house of bondage without any petition on their part, but many from their task-masters to a contrary effect; and for myself, when I consider this, I pity the Catholic peasantry for not having the good fortune to be born black. But the Catholics are contented, or at least ought to be, as we are told; I shall therefore proceed to touch on a few of those circumstances which so marvellously contribute to their exceeding contentment. They are not allowed the free exercise of their religion in the regular army; the Catholic soldier cannot absent himself from the service of the Protestant clergyman, and, unless he is quartered in Ireland, or in Spain, where can he find eligible opportunities of attending his own? The permission of Catholic chaplains to the Irish militia regiments was conceded as a special favour, and not till after years of remonstrance, although an act, passed in 1793, established it as a right. But are the Catholics properly protected in Ireland? Can the Church purchase a rood of land whereon to erect a chapel? No! all the places of worship are built on leases of trust or sufferance from the laity, easily broken and often betrayed. The moment any irregular wish, any casual caprice of the benevolent landlord meets with opposition, the doors are barred against the congregation. This has happened continually, but in no instance more glaringly, than at the town of Newton-Barry, in the county of Wexford. The Catholics, enjoying no regular chapel, as a temporary expedient, hired two barns, which, being thrown into one, served for public worship. At this time, there was quartered opposite to the spot, an officer whose mind appears to have been deeply imbued with those prejudices which the Protestant petitions now on the table, proved to have been fortunately eradicated from the more rational portion of the people; and when the Catholics were assembled on the Sabbath as usual, in peace and goodwill towards men, for the worship of their God and yours, they found the chapel door closed, and were told that if they did not immediately retire (and they were told this by a yeoman officer and a magistrate), the riot act should be read, and the assembly dispersed at the point of the bayonet! This was complained of to the middle man of government, the secretary at the Castle in 1806, and the answer was (in lieu of redress), that he would cause a letter to be written to the colonel, to prevent, if possible, the recurrence of similar disturbances. Upon this fact, no very great stress need be laid; but it tends to prove that while the Catholic church has not power to purchase land for its chapels to stand upon, the laws for its protection are of no avail. In the mean time, the Catholics are at the mercy of every

«pelting petty officer,» who may choose to play his «fantastic tricks before high heaven,» to insult his God, and injure his fellow-creatures.

Every schoolboy, any foot-boy (such have held commissions in our service), any foot-boy who can exchange his shoulder-knot for an epaulet, may perform all this and more against the Catholic, by virtue of that very authority, delegated to him by his sovereign, for the express purpose of defending his fellow-subjects to the last drop of his blood, without discrimination or distinction between Catholic and Protestant.

Have the Irish Catholics the full benefit of trial by jury? They have not; they never can have until they are permitted to share the privilege of serving as sheriffs and under-sheriffs. Of this, a striking example occurred at the last Enniskillen assizes. A yeoman was arraigned for the murder of a Catholic named Macvournagh: three respectable uncontradicted witnesses deposed that they saw the prisoner load, take aim, fire at, and kill the said Macvournagh. This was properly commented on by the judge; but, to the astonishment of the bar, and indignation of the court, the Protestant jury acquitted the accused. So glaring was the partiality, that Mr Justice Osborne felt it his duty to bind over the acquitted, but not absolved assassin, in large recognizances; thus for a time taking away his licence to kill Catholics.

Are the very laws passed in their favour observed? They are rendered nugatory in trivial as in serious cases. By a late act, Catholic chaplains are permitted in jails, but in Fermanagh county the grand jury lately persisted in presenting a suspended clergyman for the office, thereby evading the statute, notwithstanding the most pressing remonstrances of a most respectable magistrate, named Fletcher, to the contrary. Such is law, such is justice, for the happy, free, contented Catholic!

It has been asked in another place, why do not the rich Catholics endow foundations for the education of the priesthood? Why do you not permit them to do so? Why are all such bequests subject to the interference, the vexatious, arbitrary, peculating interference of the Orange commissioners for charitable donations?

As to Maynooth college, in no instance, except at the time of its foundation, when a noble Lord (Camden), at the head of the Irish administration, did appear to interest himself in its advancement; and during the government of a noble Duke (Bedford), who, like his ancestors, has ever been the friend of freedom and mankind, and who has not so far adopted the selfish policy of the day as to exclude the Catholics from the number of his fellow-creatures; with these exceptions, in no instance has that institution been properly encouraged. There was indeed a time when the Catholic clergy were conciliated, while the Union was pending, that Union which could not be carried without them, while their assistance was requisite in procuring addresses from the Catholic counties; then they were cajoled and caressed, feared and flattered, and given to understand that «the Union would do every thing;» but the moment it was passed, they were driven back with contempt into their former obscurity.

In the conduct pursued towards Maynooth college, every thing is done to irritate and perplex—every thing is done to efface the slightest impression of gratitude from the Catholic mind; the very hay made upon the lawn, the fat and tallow of the beef and mutton allowed, must be paid for and accounted upon oath. It is true, this economy in miniature cannot sufficiently be commended, particularly at a time when only the insect defaulters of the Treasury, your Hunts and your Chinnerys, when only those «gilded bugs» can escape the microscopic eye of ministers. But when you come forward session after session, as your paltry pittance is wrung from you with wrangling and reluctance, to boast of your liberality, well might the Catholic exclaim, in the words of Prior,—

«To John I owe some obligation,
But John unluckily thinks fit
To publish it to all the nation,
So John and I are more than quit.»

Some persons have compared the Catholics to the beggar in Gil Blas. Who made them beggars? Who are enriched with the spoils of their ancestors? And cannot you relieve the beggar when your fathers have made him such? If you are disposed to relieve him at all, cannot you do it without flinging your farthings in his face? As a contrast, however, to this beggarly benevolence, let us look at the Protestant Charter Schools; to them you have lately granted 41,000l.: thus are they supported, and how are they recruited? Montesquieu observes on the English constitution, that the model may be found in Tacitus, where the historian describes the policy of the Germans, and adds, «this beautiful system was taken from the woods;» so, in speaking of the charter schools, it may be observed, that this beautiful system was taken from the gypsies. These schools are recruited in the same manner as the Janissaries at the time of their enrolment under Amurath, and the gypsies of the present day with stolen children, with children decoyed and kidnapped from their Catholic connexions by their rich and powerful Protestant neighbours: this is notorious, and one instance may suffice to show in what manner.—The sister of a Mr Carthy (a Catholic gentleman of very considerable property) died, leaving two girls, who were immediately marked out as proselytes, and conveyed to the charter school of Coolgreny. Their uncle, on being apprised of the fact, which took place during his absence, applied for the restitution of his nieces, offering to settle an independence on these his relations; his request was refused, and not till after five years' struggle, and the interference of very high authority, could this Catholic gentleman obtain back his nearest of kindred from a charity charter school. In this manner are proselytes obtained, and mingled with the offspring of such Protestants as may avail themselves of the institution. And how are they taught? A catechism is put into their hands, consisting of, I believe, forty-five pages, in which are three questions relative to the Protestant religion; one of these queries is, «Where was the Protestant religion before Luther?» Answer, «In the Gospel.» The remaining forty-four pages and a half regard the damnable idolatry of Papists!

Allow me to ask our spiritual pastors and masters, is this training up a child in the way which he should go? Is this the religion of the gospel before the time of Luther? that religion which preaches «Peace on earth, and glory to God?» Is it bringing up infants to be men or devils? Better would it be to send them any where than teach them such doctrines; better send them to those islands in the South Seas, where they might more

humanely learn to become cannibals; it would be less disgusting that they were brought up to devour the dead, than persecute the living. Schools do you call them? call them rather dunghills, where the viper of intolerance deposits her young, that when their teeth are cut and their poison is mature, they may issue forth, filthy and venomous, to sting the Catholic. But are these the doctrines of the Church of England, or of churchmen? No; the most enlightened churchmen are of a different opinion. What says Paley? « I perceive no reason why men of different religious persuasions should not sit upon the same bench, deliberate in the same council, or fight in the same ranks, as well as men of various religious opinions, upon any controverted topic of natural history, philosophy, or ethics.» It may be answered, that Paley was not strictly orthodox; I know nothing of his orthodoxy, but who will deny that he was an ornament to the church, to human nature, to christianity?

I shall not dwell upon the grievance of tithes, so severely felt by the peasantry, but it may be proper to observe, that there is an addition to the burthen, a per centage to the gatherer, whose interest it thus becomes to rate them as highly as possible, and we know that in many large livings in Ireland, the only resident Protestants are the tithe proctor and his family.

Among many causes of irritation, too numerous for recapitulation, there is one in the militia not to be passed over, I mean the existence of Orange lodges amongst the privates; can the officers deny this? And if such lodges do exist, do they, can they tend to promote harmony amongst the men, who are thus individually separated in society, although mingled in the ranks? And is this general system of persecution to be permitted, or is it to be believed that with such a system the Catholics can or ought to be contented? If they are, they belie human nature; they are then, indeed, unworthy to be any thing but the slaves you have made them. The facts stated are from most respectable authority, or I should not have dared in this place, or any place, to hazard this avowal. If exaggerated, there are plenty, as willing as I believe them to be unable, to disprove them. Should it be objected that I never was in Ireland, I beg leave to observe, that it is as easy to know something of Ireland without having been there, as it appears with some to have been born, bred, and cherished there, and yet remain ignorant of its best interests.

But there are, who assert that the Catholics have already been too much indulged: see (cry they) what has been done; we have given them one entire college, we allow them food and raiment, the full enjoyment of the elements, and leave to fight for us as long as they have limbs and lives to offer; and yet they are never to be satisfied! Generous and just declaimers! To this, and to this only, amount the whole of your arguments, when stript of their sophistry. Those personages remind me of a story of a certain drummer, who being called upon in the course of duty to administer punishment to a friend tied to the halberts, was requested to flog high; he did—to flog low, he did—to flog in the middle, he did—high, low, down the middle, and up again, but all in vain, the patient continued his complaints with the most provoking pertinacity, until the drummer, exhausted and angry, flung down his scourge, exclaiming, « the devil burn you, there's no pleasing you, flog where one will!» Thus it is, you have flogged the Catholic high, low, here, there, and every where, and then you wonder he is not pleased. It is true, that time, experience, and that weariness which attends even the exercise of barbarity, have taught you to flog a little more gently, but still you continue to lay on the lash, and will so continue, till perhaps the rod may be wrested from your hands, and applied to the backs of yourselves and your posterity.

It was said by somebody in a former debate (I forget by whom, and am not very anxious to remember), if the Catholics are emancipated, why not the Jews? If this sentiment was dictated by compassion for the Jews, it might deserve attention, but as a sneer against the Catholic, what is it but the language of Shylock transferred from his daughter's marriage to Catholic emancipation—

« Would any of the tribe of Barrabbas
Should have it rather than a Christian.»

I presume a Catholic is a Christian, even in the opinion of him whose taste only can be called in question for his preference of the Jews.

It is a remark often quoted of Dr Johnson (whom I take to be almost as good authority as the gentle apostle of intolerance, Dr Duigenan), that he who could entertain serious apprehensions of danger to the Church in these times, would have « cried fire in the deluge.» This is more than a metaphor, for a remnant of these antediluvians appear actually to have come down to us, with fire in their mouths and water in their brains, to disturb and perplex mankind with their whimsical outcries. And as it is an infallible symptom of that distressing malady with which I conceive them to be afflicted (so any doctor will inform your Lordships), for the unhappy invalids to perceive a flame perpetually flashing before their eyes, particularly when their eyes are shut (as those of the persons to whom I allude have long been), it is impossible to convince these poor creatures, that the fire against which they are perpetually warning us and themselves, is nothing but an *ignis fatuus* of their own drivelling imaginations. What rhubarb, senna, or « what purgative drug can scour that fancy thence?»—It is impossible, they are given over, theirs is the true

« Caput insanabile tribus Anticyris.»

These are your true Protestants. Like Bayle, who protested against all sects whatsoever, so do they protest against Catholic petitions, Protestant petitions, all redress, all that reason, humanity, policy, justice, and common sense, can urge against the delusions of their absurd delirium. These are the persons who reverse the fable of the mountain that brought forth a mouse; they are the mice who conceive themselves in labour with mountains.

To return to the Catholics, suppose the Irish were actually contented under their disabilities, suppose them capable of such a bull as not to desire deliverance, ought we not to wish it for ourselves? Have we nothing to gain by their emancipation? What resources have been wasted? What talents have been lost by the selfish system of exclusion? You already know the value of Irish aid; at this moment the defence of England is intrusted to the Irish militia; at this moment, while the starving people are rising in the fierceness of de-

spair, the Irish are faithful to their trust. But till equal energy is imparted throughout by the extension of freedom, you cannot enjoy the full benefit of the strength which you are glad to interpose between you and destruction. Ireland has done much, but will do more. At this moment the only triumph obtained through long years of continental disaster has been achieved by an Irish general; it is true he is not a Catholic; had he been so, we should have been deprived of his exertions; but I presume no one will assert that his religion would have impaired his talents or diminished his patriotism, though in that case he must have conquered in the ranks, for he never could have commanded an army.

But while he is fighting the battles of the Catholics abroad, his noble brother has this night advocated their cause, with an eloquence which I shall not depreciate by the humble tribute of my panegyric, whilst a third of his kindred, as unlike as unequal, has been combating against his catholic brethren in Dublin, with circular letters, edicts, proclamations, arrests, and dispersions—all the vexatious implements of petty warfare that could be wielded by the mercenary guerillas of government, clad in the rusty armour of their obsolete statutes. Your lordships will, doubtless, divide new honours between the saviour of Portugal, and the dispenser of delegates. It is singular, indeed, to observe the difference between our foreign and domestic policy; if Catholic Spain, faithful Portugal, or the no less Catholic and faithful king of the one Sicily (of which, by the by, you have lately deprived him), stand in need of succour, away goes a fleet and an army, an ambassador and a subsidy, sometimes to fight pretty hardly, generally to negotiate very badly, and always to pay very dearly for our Popish allies. But let four millions of fellow-subjects pray for relief, who fight and pay and labour in your behalf, they must be treated as aliens, and although their «father's house has many mansions,» there is no resting place for them. Allow me to ask, are you not fighting for the emancipation of Ferdinand the seventh, who certainly is a fool, and consequently, in all probability, a bigot; and have you more regard for a foreign sovereign than your own fellow-subjects, who are not fools, for they know your interest better than you know your own; who are not bigots, for they return you good for evil; but who are in worse durance than the prison of an usurper, inasmuch as the fetters of the mind are more galling than those of the body.

Upon the consequences of your not acceding to the claims of the petitioners, I shall not expatiate; you know them, you will feel them, and your children's children when you are passed away. Adieu to that Union so called, as «*Lucus a non lucendo*» a Union from never uniting, which, in its first operation, gave a death-blow to the independence of Ireland, and in its last may be the cause of her eternal separation from this country. If it must be called a Union, it is the union of the shark with his prey; the spoiler swallows up his victim, and thus they become one and indivisible. Thus has Great Britain swallowed up the parliament, the constitution, the independence of Ireland, and refuses to disgorge even a single privilege, although for the relief of her swollen and distempered body politic.

And now, my lords, before I sit down, will his majesty's ministers permit me to say a few words, not on their merits, for that would be superfluous, but on the degree of estimation in which they are held by the people of these realms. The esteem in which they are held has been boasted of in a triumphant tone on a late occasion within these walls, and a comparison instituted between their conduct, and that of noble lords on this side of the house.

What portion of popularity may have fallen to the share of my noble friends (if such I may presume to call them), I shall not pretend to ascertain; but that of his majesty's ministers it were vain to deny. It is, to be sure, a little like the wind, «no one knows whence it cometh or whither it goeth,» but they feel it, they enjoy it, they boast of it. Indeed, modest and unostentatious as they are, to what part of the kingdom even the most remote, can they flee to avoid the triumph which pursues them? If they plunge into the midland counties, there they will be greeted by the manufacturers, with spurned petitions in their hands, and those halters round their necks recently voted in their behalf, imploring blessings on the heads of those who so simply, yet ingeniously contrived to remove them from their miseries in this to a better world. If they journey on to Scotland, from Glasgow to Johnny Groat's, every where will they receive similar marks of approbation. If they take a trip from Portpatrick to Donaghadee, there will they rush at once into the embraces of four Catholic millions, to whom their vote of this night is about to endear them for ever. When they return to the metropolis, if they can pass under Temple Bar without unpleasant sensations at the sight of the greedy niches over that ominous gateway, they cannot escape the acclamations of the livery, and the more tremulous, but not less sincere, applause, the blessings «not loud but deep» of bankrupt merchants and doubting stock-holders. If they look to the army, what wreaths, not of laurel, but of night-shade, are preparing for the heroes of Walcheren. It is true there are few living deponents left to testify to their merits on that occasion; but a «cloud of witnesses» are gone above from that gallant army which they so generously and piously dispatched, to recruit the «noble army of martyrs.»

What if, in the course of this triumphal career (in which they will gather as many pebbles as Caligula's army did on a similar triumph, the prototype of their own), they do not perceive any of those memorials which a grateful people erect in honour of their benefactors; what although not even a sign-post will condescend to depose the Saracen's head in favour of the likeness of the conquerors of Walcheren, they will not want a picture who can always have a caricature; or regret the omission of a statue who will so often see themselves exalted in effigy. But their popularity is not limited to the narrow bounds of an island; there are other countries where their measures, and above all, their conduct to the Catholics, must render them pre-eminently popular. If they are beloved here, in France they must be adored. There is no measure more repugnant to the designs and feelings of Bonaparte than Catholic emancipation; no line of conduct more propitious to his projects, than that which has been pursued, is pursuing, and, I fear, will be pursued, towards Ireland. What is England without Ireland, and what is Ireland without the Catholics? It is on the basis of your tyranny Napoleon

hopes to build his own. So grateful must oppression of the Catholics be to his mind, that doubtless (as he has lately permitted some renewal of intercourse) the next cartel will convey to this country cargoes of Sèvres-china and blue ribands (things in great request, and of equal value at this moment), blue ribands of the legion of honour for Dr Duigenan and his ministerial disciples. Such is that well-earned popularity, the result of those extraordinary expeditions, so expensive to ourselves, and so useless to our allies; of those singular inquiries, so exculpatory to the accused, and so dissatisfactory to the people; of those paradoxical victories, so honourable, as we are told, to the British name, and so destructive to the best interests of the British nation: above all, such is the reward of a conduct pursued by ministers towards the Catholics.

I have to apologise to the House, who will, I trust, pardon one, not often in the habit of intruding upon their indulgence, for so long attempting to engage their attention. My most decided opinion is, as my vote will be, in favour of the motion.

DEBATE ON MAJOR CARTWRIGHT'S PETITION. JUNE 1, 1813.

LORD BYRON rose and said:

My Lords, the Petition which I now hold for the purpose of presenting to the House, is one which I humbly conceive requires the particular attention of your lordships, inasmuch as, though signed but by a single individual, it contains statements which (if not disproved) demand most serious investigation. The grievance of which the petitioner complains, is neither selfish nor imaginary. It is not his own only, for it has been, and is still felt by numbers. No one without these walls, nor indeed within, but may to-morrow be made liable to the same insult and obstruction, in the discharge of an imperious duty for the restoration of the true constitution of these realms by petitioning for reform in parliament. The petitioner, my Lords, is a man whose long life has been spent in one unceasing struggle for the liberty of the subject, against that undue influence which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished; and whatever difference of opinion may exist as to his political tenets, few will be found to question the integrity of his intentions. Even now oppressed with years, and not exempt from the infirmities attendant on his age, but still unimpaired in talent, and unshaken in spirit—«*frangas non flectes*»—he has received many a wound in the combat against corruption; and the new grievance, the fresh insult of which he complains, may inflict another scar, but no dishonour. The petition is signed by John Cartwright, and it was in behalf of the people and parliament, in the lawful pursuit of that reform in the representation which is the best service to be rendered both to parliament and people, that he encountered the wanton outrage which forms the subject matter of his petition to your lordships. It is couched in firm, yet respectful language—in the language of a man, not regardless of what is due to himself, but at the same time, I trust, equally mindful of the deference to be paid to this House. The petitioner states, amongst other matter of equal, if not greater importance, to all who are British in their feelings, as well as blood and birth, that on the 21st January, 1813, at Huddersfield, himself and six other persons, who, on hearing of his arrival, had waited on him merely as a testimony of respect, were seized by a military and civil force, and kept in close custody for several hours, subjected to gross and abusive insinuation from the commanding officer, relative to the character of the petitioner; that he (the petitioner) was finally carried before a magistrate: and not released till an examination of his papers proved that there was not only no just, but not even statutable charge against him; and that, notwithstanding the promise and order from the presiding magistrates of a copy of the warrant against your petitioner, it was afterwards withheld on divers pretexts, and has never until this hour been granted. The names and condition of the parties will be found in the petition. To the other topics touched upon in the petition, I shall not now advert, from a wish not to encroach upon the time of the House; but I do most sincerely call the attention of your Lordships to its general contents—it is in the cause of the parliament and people that the rights of this venerable freeman have been violated, and it is, in my opinion, the highest mark of respect that could be paid to the House, that to your justice, rather than by appeal to any inferior court, he now commits himself. Whatever may be the fate of his remonstrance, it is some satisfaction to me, though mixed with regret for the occasion, that I have this opportunity of publicly stating the obstruction to which the subject is liable, in the prosecution of the most lawful and imperious of his duties, the obtaining by petition reform in parliament. I have shortly stated his complaint; the petitioner has more fully expressed it. Your lordships will, I hope, adopt some measure fully to protect and redress him, and not him alone, but the whole body of the people insulted and aggrieved in his person, by the interposition of an abused civil, and unlawful military force between them and their right of petition to their own representatives.

His lordship then presented the petition from Major Cartwright, which was read, complaining of the circumstances at Huddersfield, and of interruptions given to the right of petitioning, in several places in the northern parts of the kingdom, and which his lordship moved should be laid on the table.

Several Lords having spoken on the question,

LORD BYRON replied, that he had, from motives of duty, presented this petition to their lordships' consideration. The noble Earl had contended that it was not a petition but a speech; and that, as it contained no prayer, it should not be received. What was the necessity of a prayer? If that word were to be used in its proper sense, their lordships could not expect that any man should pray to others. He had only to say that the petition, though in some parts expressed strongly perhaps, did not contain any improper mode of address, but was couched in respectful language towards their lordships; he should therefore trust their lordships would allow the petition to be received.

Don Juan.

"Difficile est proprie communia dicere."
HOR. *Epist. ad Pison.*

"Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more Cakes and Ale?—Yes, by St Anne; and Ginger shall be hot i' the mouth, too!"—*Twelfth Night; or What you Will.*—SHAKSPEARE.

CANTO I.

I.

I WANT a hero: an uncommon want,
When every year and month sends forth a new one,
Till, after cloying the gazettes with cant,
The age discovers he is not the true one;
Of such as these I should not care to vaunt,
I 'll therefore take our ancient friend Don Juan;
We all have seen him in the pantomime
Sent to the devil, somewhat ere his time.

II.

Vernon, the butcher Cumberland, Wolfe, Hawke,
Prince Ferdinand, Granby, Burgoyne, Keppel, Howe,
Evil and good, have had their tithe of talk,
And fill'd their sign-posts then, like Wellesley now;
Each in their turn like Banquo's monarchs stalk,
Followers of fame, "nine farrow" of that sow:
France, too, had Buonaparté and Dumourier,
Recorded in the Moniteur and Courier.

III.

Barnave, Brissot, Condorcet, Mirabeau,
Petion, Clootz, Danton, Marat, La Fayette,
Were French, and famous people, as we know;
And there were others, scarce forgotten yet,
Joubert, Hoche, Marceau, Lannes, Dessaix, Moreau,
With many of the military set,
Exceedingly remarkable at times,
But not at all adapted to my rhymes.

IV.

Nelson was once Britannia's god of war,
And still should be so, but the tide is turn'd;
There's no more to be said of Trafalgar,
'T is with our hero quietly inurn'd;
Because the army 's grown more popular,
At which the naval people are concern'd:
Besides, the prince is all for the land-service,
Forgetting Duncan, Nelson, Howe, and Jervis.

V.

Brave men were living before Agamemnon,[1]
And since exceeding valorous and sage,
A good deal like him too, though quite the same none;
But then they shone not on the poet's page,
And so have been forgotten:—I condemn none,
But can't find any in the present age
Fit for my poem (that is, for my new one);
So, as I said, I 'll take my friend Don Juan.

VI.

Most epic poets plunge in "medias res"
(Horace makes this the heroic turnpike road),
And then your hero tells, whene'er you please,
What went before—by way of episode,
While seated after dinner at his ease,
Beside his mistress in some soft abode,
Palace or garden, paradise, or cavern,
Which serves the happy couple for a tavern.

VII.

That is the usual method, but not mine—
My way is to begin with the beginning;
The regularity of my design
Forbids all wandering as the worst of sinning,
And therefore I shall open with a line
(Although it cost me half an hour in spinning)
Narrating somewhat of Don Juan's father,
And also of his mother, if you'd rather.

VIII.

In Seville was he born, a pleasant city,
Famous for oranges and women—he
Who has not seen it will be much to pity,
So says the proverb—and I quite agree;
Of all the Spanish towns is none more pretty,
Cadiz perhaps—but that you soon may see:—
Don Juan's parents lived beside the river,
A noble stream, and call'd the Guadalquivir.

IX.

His father's name was Jóse—*Don*, of course,
A true Hidalgo, free from every stain
Of Moor or Hebrew blood, he traced his source
Through the most Gothic gentlemen of Spain;
A better cavalier ne'er mounted horse,
Or being mounted, e'er got down again,
Than Jose, who begot our hero, who
Begot—but that 's to come—Well, to renew:

X.

His mother was a learned lady, famed
For every branch of every science known—
In every christian language ever named,
With virtues equall'd by her wit alone,
She made the cleverest people quite ashamed,
And even the good with inward envy groan,
Finding themselves so very much exceeded
In their own way by all the things that she did.

XI.

Her memory was a mine: she knew by heart
All Calderon and greater part of Lopé,
So that if any actor miss'd his part
She could have served him for the prompter's copy;
For her Feinagle's were an useless art,
And he himself obliged to shut up shop—he
Could never make a memory so fine as
That which adorn'd the brain of Donna Inez.

XII.

Her favourite science was the mathematical,
Her noblest virtue was her magnanimity,
Her wit (she sometimes tried at wit) was Attic all,
Her serious sayings darken'd to sublimity;
In short, in all things she was fairly what I call
A prodigy—her morning dress was dimity,
Her evening silk, or, in the summer, muslin,
And other stuffs, with which I won't stay puzzling.

XIII.

She knew the Latin—that is, «the Lord's prayer,»
And Greek—the alphabet I' m nearly sure;
She read some French romances here and there,
Although her mode of speaking was not pure;
For native Spanish she had no great care,
At least her conversation was obscure;
Her thoughts were theorems, her words a problem,
As if she deem'd that mystery would ennoble 'em.

XIV.

She liked the English and the Hebrew tongue,
And said there was analogy between 'em;
She proved it somehow out of sacred song,
But I must leave the proofs to those who've seen 'em;
But this I heard her say, and can't be wrong,
And all may think which way their judgments lean 'em,
«'T is strange—the Hebrew noun which means 'I am,'
The English always use to govern d—n.»

XV.

* * * * *
* * * * *

XVI.

In short, she was a walking calculation,
Miss Edgeworth's novels stepping from their covers,
Or Mrs Trimmer's books on education,
Or «Cœlebs' Wife» set out in quest of lovers,
Morality's prim personification,
In which not Envy's self a flaw discovers;
To others' share let «female errors fall,»
For she had not even one—the worst of all.

XVII.

Oh! she was perfect past all parallel—
Of any modern female saint's comparison;
So far above the cunning powers of hell,
Her guardian angel had given up his garrison;
Even her minutest motions went as well
As those of the best time-piece made by Harrison:
In virtues nothing earthly could surpass her,
Save thine «incomparable oil,» Macassar![2]

XVIII.

Perfect she was, but as perfection is
Insipid in this naughty world of ours,
Where our first parents never learn'd to kiss
Till they were exiled from their earlier bowers,
Where all was peace, and innocence, and bliss
(I wonder how they got through the twelve hours),
Don Jose, like a lineal son of Eve,
Went plucking various fruit without her leave.

XIX.

He was a mortal of the careless kind,
With no great love for learning, or the learn'd,
Who chose to go where'er he had a mind,
And never dream'd his lady was concern'd;
The world, as usual, wickedly inclined
To see a kingdom or a house o'erturn'd,
Whisper'd he had a mistress, some said *two*,
But for domestic quarrels *one* will do.

XX.

Now Donna Inez had with all her merit,
A great opinion of her own good qualities;
Neglect, indeed, requires a saint to bear it,
And such, indeed, she was in her moralities;
But then she had a devil of a spirit,
And sometimes mix'd up fancies with realities,
And let few opportunities escape
Of getting her liege lord into a scrape.

XXI.

This was an easy matter with a man
Oft in the wrong, and never on his guard;
And even the wisest, do the best they can,
Have moments, hours, and days, so unprepared,
That you might «brain them with their lady's fan;»
And sometimes ladies hit exceeding hard,
And fans turn into falchions in fair hands,
And why and wherefore no one understands.

XXII.

'T is pity learned virgins ever wed
With persons of no sort of education,
Or gentlemen, who, though well-born and bred,
Grow tired of scientific conversation:
I don't choose to say much upon this head,
I'm a plain man and in a single station,
But—Oh! ye lords of ladies intellectual,
Inform us truly, have they not hen-peck'd you all?

XXIII.

Don Jose and his lady quarrell'd—*why*,
Not any of the many could divine,
Though several thousand people chose to try,
'T was surely no concern of theirs nor mine:
I loathe that low vice curiosity;
But if there 's any thing in which I shine,
'T is in arranging all my friends' affairs,
Not having, of my own, domestic cares.

XXIV.

And so I interfered, and with the best
Intentions, but their treatment was not kind;
I think the foolish people were possess'd,
For neither of them could I ever find,
Although their porter afterwards confess'd—
But that 's no matter, and the worst's behind,
For little Juan o'er me threw, down stairs,
A pail of housemaid's water unawares.

XXV.

A little curly-headed, good-for-nothing,
And mischief-making monkey from his birth;
His parents ne'er agreed except in doting
Upon the most unquiet imp on earth;
Instead of quarrelling, had they been but both in
Their senses, they'd have sent young master forth
To school, or had him soundly whipp'd at home,
To teach him manners for the time to come.

XXVI.

Don Jóse and the Donna Inez led
For sometime an unhappy sort of life,
Wishing each other, not divorced, but dead;
They lived respectably as man and wife,
Their conduct was exceedingly well-bred,
And gave no outward signs of inward strife,
Until at length the smother'd fire broke out,
And put the business past all kind of doubt.

XXVII.

For Inez call'd some druggists and physicians,
And tried to prove her loving lord was *mad*,
But as he had some lucid intermissions,
She next decided he was only *bad;*
Yet when they ask'd her for her depositions,
No sort of explanation could be had,
Save that her duty both to man and God
Required this conduct—which seem'd very odd.

XXVIII.

She kept a journal, where his faults were noted,
And open'd certain trunks of books and letters,
All which might, if occasion served, be quoted;
And then she had all Seville for abettors,
Besides her good old grandmother (who doted);
The hearers of her case became repeaters,
Then advocates, inquisitors, and judges,
Some for amusement, others for old grudges.

XXIX.

And then this best and meekest woman bore
With such serenity her husband's woes,
Just as the Spartan ladies did of yore,
Who saw their spouses kill'd, and nobly chose
Never to say a word about them more—
Calmly she heard each calumny that rose,
And saw *his* agonies with such sublimity,
That all the world exclaim'd, "What magnanimity!".

XXX.

No doubt, this patience, when the world is damning us,
Is philosophic in our former friends;
'T is also pleasant to be deem'd magnanimous,
The more so in obtaining our own ends;
And what the lawyers call a "*malus animus*,"
Conduct like this by no means comprehends:
Revenge in person 's certainly no virtue,
But then 't is not *my* fault if *others* hurt you.

XXXI.

And if our quarrels should rip up old stories,
And help them with a lie or two additional,
I 'm not to blame, as you well know, no more is
Any one else—they were become traditional;
Besides, their resurrection aids our glories
By contrast, which is what we just were wishing all:
And science profits by this resurrection—
Dead scandals form good subjects for dissection.

XXXII.

Their friends had tried at reconciliation,
Then their relations, who made matters worse
('T were hard to tell upon a like occasion
To whom it may be best to have recourse—
I can't say much for friend or yet relation):
The lawyers did their utmost for divorce,
But scarce a fee was paid on either side
Before, unluckily, Don Jose died.

XXXIII.

He died: and most unluckily, because,
According to all hints I could collect
From counsel learned in those kinds of laws
(Although their talk 's obscure and circumspect),
His death contrived to spoil a charming cause;
A thousand pities also with respect
To public feeling, which on this occasion
Was manifested in a great sensation.

XXXIV.

But ah! he died! and buried with him lay
The public feeling and the lawyer's fees:
His house was sold, his servants sent away,
A Jew took one of his two mistresses,
A priest the other—at least so they say:
I ask'd the doctors after his disease,
He died of the slow fever called the tertian,
And left his widow to her own aversion.

XXXV.

Yet Jose was an honourable man,
That I must say, who knew him very well;
Therefore his frailties I 'll no further scan,
Indeed there were not many more to tell;
And if his passions now and then outran
Discretion, and were not so peaceable
As Numa's (who was also named Pompilius),
He had been ill brought up, and was born bilious.

XXXVI.

Whate'er might be his worthlessness or worth,
Poor fellow! he had many things to wound him,
Let's own, since it can do no good on earth;
It was a trying moment that which found him
Standing alone beside his desolate hearth,
Where all his household gods lay shiver'd round him;
No choice was left his feelings or his pride
Save death or Doctors' Commons—so he died.

XXXVII.

Dying intestate, Juan was sole heir
To a chancery suit, and messuages, and lands,
Which, with a long minority and care,
Promised to turn out well in proper hands:
Inez became sole guardian, which was fair,
And answer'd but to nature's just demands;
An only son left with an only mother
Is brought up much more wisely than another.

XXXVIII.

Sagest of women, even of widows, she
Resolved that Juan should be quite a paragon,
And worthy of the noblest pedigree
(His sire was of Castile, his dam from Arragon):
Then for accomplishments of chivalry,
In case our lord the king should go to war again,
He learn'd the arts of riding, fencing, gunnery,
And how to scale a fortress—or a nunnery.

XXXIX.

But that which Donna Inez most desired,
And saw into herself each day before all
The learned tutors whom for him she hired,
Was that his breeding should be strictly moral;
Much into all his studies she inquired,
And so they were submitted first to her, all,
Arts, sciences, no branch was made a mystery
To Juan's eyes, excepting natural history.

XL.

The languages, especially the dead,
The sciences, and most of all the abstruse,
The arts, at least all such as could be said
To be the most remote from common use,
In all these he was much and deeply read;
But not a page of any thing that 's loose,
Or hints continuation of the species,
Was ever suffer'd, lest he should grow vicious.

XLI.

His classic studies made a little puzzle,
Because of filthy loves of gods and goddesses,
Who in the earlier ages raised a bustle,
But never put on pantaloons or bodices;
His reverend tutors had at times a tussle,
And for their Æneids, Iliads and Odysseys,
Were forced to make an odd sort of apology,
For Donna Inez dreaded the mythology.

XLII.

Ovid 's a rake, as half his verses show him;
Anacreon's morals are a still worse sample;
Catullus scarcely has a decent poem;
I don't think Sappho's Ode a good example,
Although[3] Longinus tells us there is no hymn
Where the sublime soars forth on wings more ample;
But Virgil's songs are pure, except that horrid one
Beginning with « *Formosum pastor Corydon.*»

XLIII.

Lucretius' irreligion is too strong
For early stomachs, to prove wholesome food;
I can't help thinking Juvenal was wrong,
Although no doubt his real intent was good,
For speaking out so plainly in his song,
So much indeed as to be downright rude;
And then what proper person can be partial
To all those nauseous epigrams of Martial?

XLIV.

Juan was taught from out the best edition,
Expurgated by learned men, who place,
Judiciously, from out the schoolboy's vision,
The grosser parts; but, fearful to deface
Too much their modest bard by this omission,
And pitying sore his mutilated case,
They only add them all in an appendix,[4]
Which saves, in fact, the trouble of an index;

XLV.

For there we have them all « at one fell swoop,»
Instead of being scatter'd through the pages;
They stand forth marshall'd in a handsome troop,
To meet the ingenuous youth of future ages,
Till some less rigid editor shall stoop
To call them back into their separate cages,
Instead of standing staring altogether,
Like garden gods—and not so decent, either.

XLVI.

The Missal too (it was the family Missal)
Was ornamented in a sort of way
Which ancient mass books often are, and this all
Kinds of grotesques illumined; and how they
Who saw those figures on the margin kiss all,
Could turn their optics to the text and pray
Is more than I know—but Don Juan's mother
Kept this herself, and gave her son another.

XLVII.

Sermons he read, and lectures he endured,
And homilies, and lives of all the saints;
To Jerome and to Chrysostom inured,
He did not take such studies for restraints:
But how faith is acquired, and then insured,
So well not one of the aforesaid paints
As Saint Augustine, in his fine Confessions,
Which make the reader envy his transgressions.

XLVIII.

This, too, was a seal'd book to little Juan—
I can't but say that his mamma was right,
If such an education was the true one.
She scarcely trusted him from out her sight;
Her maids were old, and if she took a new one
You might be sure she was a perfect fright;
She did this during even her husband's life—
I recommend as much to every wife.

XLIX.

Young Juan wax'd in goodliness and grace:
At six a charming child, and at eleven
With all the promise of as fine a face
As e'er to man's maturer growth was given:
He studied steadily and grew apace,
And seem'd, at least, in the right road to heaven;
For half his days were pass'd at church, the other
Between his tutors, confessor, and mother.

L.

At six, I said he was a charming child,
At twelve he was a fine, but quiet boy;
Although in infancy a little wild,
They tamed him down amongst them: to destroy
His natural spirit not in vain they toil'd,
At least it seem'd so; and his mother's joy
Was to declare how sage and still, and steady,
Her young philosopher was grown already.

LI.

I had my doubts, perhaps I have them still,
But what I say is neither here nor there;
I knew his father well, and have some skill
In character—but it would not be fair
From sire to son to augur good or ill:
He and his wife were an ill-sorted pair—
But scandal 's my aversion—I protest
Against all evil speaking, even in jest.

LII.

For my part I say nothing—nothing—but
This I will say—my reasons are my own—
That if I had an only son to put
To school (as God be praised that I have none)
'T is not with Donna Inez I would shut
Him up to learn his catechism alone;
No—no—I 'd send him out betimes to college,
For there it was I pick'd up my own knowledge.

LIII.

For there one learns—'tis not for me to boast,
Though I acquired—but I pass over *that*,
As well as all the Greek I since have lost:
I say that there 's the place—but « *Verbum sat.*»
I think I pick'd up, too, as well as most,
Knowledge of matters—but, no matter *what*—
I never married—but I think, I know,
That sons should not be educated so.

LIV.

Young Juan now was sixteen years of age,
Tall, handsome, slender, but well knit; he seem'd
Active, though not so sprightly, as a page;
And every body but his mother deem'd
Him almost man; but she flew in a rage,
And bit her lips (for else she might have scream'd)
If any said so, for to be precocious
Was in her eyes a thing the most atrocious.

LV.

Amongst her numerous acquaintance, all
Selected for discretion and devotion,
There was the Donna Julia, whom to call
Pretty were but to give a feeble notion
Of many charms, in her as natural
As sweetness to the flower, or salt to ocean,
Her zone to Venus, or his bow to Cupid
(But this last simile is trite and stupid).

LVI.

The darkness of her oriental eye
Accorded with her Moorish origin
(Her blood was not all Spanish, by the by;
In Spain, you know, this is a sort of sin).
When proud Grenada fell, and, forced to fly,
Boabdil wept, of Donna Julia's kin
Some went to Africa, some stay'd in Spain,
Her great great grandmamma chose to remain.

LVII.

She married (I forget the pedigree)
With an Hidalgo, who transmitted down
His blood less noble than such blood should be:
At such alliances his sires would frown,
In that point so precise in each degree
That they bred *in and in*, as might be shown,
Marrying their cousins—nay, their aunts and nieces,
Which always spoils the breed, if it increases.

LVIII.

This heathenish cross restored the breed again,
Ruin'd its blood, but much improved its flesh.
For, from a root, the ugliest in Old Spain,
Sprung up a branch as beautiful as fresh;
The sons no more were short, the daughters plain;
But there's a rumour which I fain would hush—
'T is said that Donna Julia's grandmamma
Produced her Don more heirs at love than law.

LIX.

However this might be, the race went on
Improving still through every generation,
Until it centred in an only son
Who left an only daughter, my narration
May have suggested that this single one
Could be but Julia (whom on this occasion
I shall have much to speak about), and she
Was married, charming, chaste, and twenty-three.

LX.

Her eye (I 'm very fond of handsome eyes)
Was large and dark, suppressing half its fire
Until she spoke, then through its soft disguise
Flash'd an expression more of pride than ire,
And love than either; and there would arise
A something in them which was not desire,
But would have been, perhaps, but for the soul
Which struggled through and chasten'd down the whole.

LXI.

Her glossy hair was cluster'd o'er a brow
Bright with intelligence, and fair and smooth;
Her eyebrow's shape was like the aerial bow,
Her cheek all purple with the beam of youth,
Mounting, at times, to a transparent glow,
As if her veins ran lightning; she, in sooth,
Possess'd an air and grace by no means common:
Her stature tall—I hate a dumpy woman.

LXII.

Wedded she was some years, and to a man
Of fifty, and such husbands are in plenty;
And yet, I think, instead of such a ONE
'Twere better to have TWO of five-and-twenty,
Especially in countries near the sun:
And now I think on 't, « mi vien in mente,»
Ladies, even of the most uneasy virtue,
Prefer a spouse whose age is short of thirty.

LXIII.

'T is a sad thing, I cannot choose but say,
And all the fault of that indecent sun
Who cannot leave alone our helpless clay,
But will keep baking, broiling, burning on,
That, howsoever people fast and pray,
The flesh is frail, and so the soul undone:
What men call gallantry, and gods adultery,
Is much more common where the climate 's sultry.

LXIV.

Happy the nations of the moral north!
Where all is virtue, and the winter season
Sends sin without a rag on, shivering forth
('T was snow that brought Saint Anthony to reason);
Where juries cast up what a wife is worth
By laying whate'er sum, in mulct, they please on
The lover, who must pay a handsome price,
Because it is a marketable vice.

LXV.

Alfonso was the name of Julia's lord,
A man well looking for his years, and who
Was neither much beloved, nor yet abhorr'd:
They lived together as most people do,
Suffering each other's foibles by accord,
And not exactly either *one* or *two*;
Yet he was jealous, though he did not show it,
For jealousy dislikes the world to know it.

LXVI.

Julia was—yet I never could see why—
With Donna Inez quite a favourite friend;
Between their tastes there was small sympathy,
For not a line had Julia ever penn'd:
Some people whisper (but, no doubt they lie,
For malice still imputes some private end)
That Inez had, ere Don Alfonso's marriage,
Forgot with him her very prudent carriage;

LXVII.

And that, still keeping up the old connexion,
Which time had lately render'd much more chaste,
She took his lady also in affection,
And certainly this course was much the best:
She flatter'd Julia with her sage protection,
And complimented Don Alfonso's taste;
And if she could not (who can?) silence scandal,
At least she left it a more slender handle.

LXVIII.

I can't tell whether Julia saw the affair
With other people's eyes, or if her own
Discoveries made, but none could be aware
Of this, at least no symptom e'er was shown;
Perhaps she did not know, or did not care,
Indifferent from the first, or callous grown:
I 'm really puzzled what to think or say,
She kept her counsel in so close a way.

LXIX.

Juan she saw, and, as a pretty child,
Caress'd him often, such a thing might be
Quite innocently done, and harmless styled,
When she had twenty years, and thirteen he;
But I am not so sure I should have smiled
When he was sixteen, Julia twenty-three:
These few short years make wondrous alterations,
Particularly amongst sun-burnt nations.

LXX.

Whate'er the cause might be, they had become
Changed; for the dame grew distant, the youth shy,
Their looks cast down, their greetings almost dumb,
And much embarrassment in either eye;
There surely will be little doubt with some
That Donna Julia knew the reason why,
But as for Juan, he had no more notion
Than he who never saw the sea of ocean.

LXXI.

Yet Julia's very coldness still was kind,
And tremulously gentle her small hand
Withdrew itself from his, but left behind
A little pressure, thrilling, and so bland
And slight, so very slight, that to the mind
'T was but a doubt; but ne'er magician's wand
Wrought change with all Armida's fairy art
Like what this light touch left on Juan's heart.

LXXII.

And if she met him, though she smiled no more,
She look'd a sadness sweeter than her smile,
As if her heart had deeper thoughts in store
She must not own, but cherish'd more the while,
For that compression in its burning core;
Even innocence itself has many a wile,
And will not dare to trust itself with truth,
And love is taught hypocrisy from youth.

LXXIII.

But passion most dissembles, yet betrays,
Even by its darkness; as the blackest sky
Foretels the heaviest tempest, it displays
Its workings through the vainly-guarded eye,
And in whatever aspect it arrays
Itself, 't is still the same hypocrisy;
Coldness or anger, even disdain or hate,
Are masks it often wears, and still too late.

LXXIV.

Then there were sighs, the deeper for suppression,
And stolen glances, sweeter for the theft,
And burning blushes, though for no transgression,
Tremblings when met, and restlessness when left;
All these are little preludes to possession,
Of which young passion cannot be bereft,
And merely tend to show how greatly love is
Embarrass'd at first starting with a novice.

LXXV.

Poor Julia's heart was in an awkward state;
She felt it going, and resolved to make
The noblest efforts for herself and mate,
For honour's, pride's, religion's, virtue's sake:
Her resolutions were most truly great,
And almost might have made a Tarquin quake;
She pray'd the Virgin Mary for her grace,
As being the best judge of a lady's case.

LXXVI.

She vow'd she never would see Juan more,
And next day paid a visit to his mother,
And look'd extremely at the opening door,
Which, by the Virgin's grace, let in another;
Grateful she was, and yet a little sore—
Again it opens, it can be no other,
'T is surely Juan now—No! I 'm afraid
That night the Virgin was no further pray'd.

LXXVII.

She now determined that a virtuous woman
Should rather face and overcome temptation;
That flight was base and dastardly, and no man
Should ever give her heart the least sensation;
That is to say a thought beyond the common
Preference that we must feel upon occasion
For people who are pleasanter than others,
But then they only seem so many brothers.

LXXVIII.

And even if by chance—and who can tell?
The devil 's so very sly—she should discover
That all within was not so very well,
And if, still free, that such or such a lover
Might please perhaps, a virtuous wife can quell
Such thoughts, and be the better when they 're over.
And, if the man should ask, 't is but denial:
I recommend young ladies to make trial.

LXXIX.

And then there are such things as love divine,
Bright and immaculate, unmix'd and pure,
Such as the angels think so very fine,
And matrons, who would be no less secure,
Platonic, perfect, «just such love as mine;»
Thus Julia said—and thought so, to be sure,
And so I 'd have her think, where I the man
On whom her reveries celestial ran.

LXXX.

Such love is innocent, and may exist
Between young persons without any danger;
A hand may first, and then a lip be kiss'd;
For my part, to such doings I 'm a stranger,
But *hear* these freedoms form the utmost list
Of all o'er which such love may be a ranger:
If people go beyond, 't is quite a crime,
But not my fault—I tell them all in time.

LXXXI.

Love, then, but love within its proper limits,
Was Julia's innocent determination
In young Don Juan's favour, and to him its
Exertion might be useful on occasion;
And, lighted at too pure a shrine to dim its
Etherial lustre, with what sweet persuasion
He might be taught, by love and her together—
I really don't know what, nor Julia either.

LXXXII.

Fraught with this fine intention, and well fenced
In mail of proof—her purity of soul,
She, for the future of her strength convinced,
And that her honour was a rock, or mole,
Exceeding sagely from that hour dispensed
With any kind of troublesome control,
But whether Julia to the task was equal
Is that which must be mention'd in the sequel.

LXXXIII.

Her plan she deem'd both innocent and feasible,
And, surely, with a stripling of sixteen
Not scandal's fangs could fix on much that 's seizable;
Or, if they did so, satisfied to mean
Nothing but what was good, her breast was peaceable—
A quiet conscience makes one so serene!
Christians have burn'd each other, quite persuaded
That all the apostles would have done as they did.

LXXXIV.

And if, in the mean time, her husband died,
But Heaven forbid that such a thought should cross
Her brain, though in a dream (and then she sigh'd)!
Never could she survive that common loss;
But just suppose that moment should betide,
I only say suppose it—*inter nos*
(This should be *entre nous*, for Julia thought
In French, but then the rhyme would go for nought).

LXXXV.

I only say suppose this supposition:
Juan, being then grown up to man's estate,
Would fully suit a widow of condition;
Even seven years hence it would not be too late;
And in the interim (to pursue this vision)
The mischief after all, could not be great,
For he would learn the rudiments of love,
I mean the seraph way of those above.

LXXXVI.

So much for Julia. Now we 'll turn to Juan.
Poor little fellow! he had no idea
Of his own case, and never hit the true one;
In feelings quick as Ovid's Miss Medea,
He puzzled over what he found a new one,
But not as yet imagined it could be a
Thing quite in course, and not at all alarming,
Which, with a little patience, might grow charming.

LXXXVII.

Silent and pensive, idle, restless, slow,
His home deserted for the lonely wood,
Tormented with a wound he could not know,
His, like all deep grief, plunged in solitude.
I 'm fond myself of solitude or so,
But then I beg it may be understood
By solitude I mean a sultan's, not
A hermit's, with a harem for a grot.

LXXXVIII.

"Oh love! in such a wilderness as this,
Where transport and security entwine,
Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss,
And here thou art a god indeed divine."
The bard I quote from does not sing amiss,
With the exception of the second line,
For that same twining "transport and security"
Are twisted to a phrase of some obscurity.

LXXXIX.

The poet meant, no doubt, and thus appeals
To the good sense and senses of mankind,
The very thing which every body feels,
As all have found on trial, or may find,
That no one likes to be disturb'd at meals
Or love:—I won't say more about "entwine"
Or "transport," as we know all that before,
But beg "security" will bolt the door.

XC.

Young Juan wander'd by the glassy brooks,
Thinking unutterable things; he threw
Himself at length within the leafy nooks
Where the wild branch of the cork forest grew;
There poets find materials for their books,
And every now and then we read them through,
So that their plan and prosody are eligible,
Unless, like Wordsworth, they prove unintelligible.

XCI.

He, Juan (and not Wordsworth), so pursued
His self-communion with his own high soul,
Until his mighty heart, in its great mood,
Had mitigated part, though not the whole
Of its disease; he did the best he could
With things not very subject to control,
And turn'd, without perceiving his condition,
Like Coleridge, into a metaphysician.

XCII.

He thought about himself, and the whole earth,
Of man the wonderful, and of the stars,
And how the deuce they ever could have birth;
And then he thought of earthquakes and of wars,
How many miles the moon might have in girth,
Of air-balloons, and of the many bars
To perfect knowledge of the boundless skies;
And then he thought of Donna Julia's eyes.

XCIII.

In thoughts like these true wisdom may discern
Longings sublime, and aspirations high,
Which some are born with, but the most part learn
To plague themselves withal, they know not why:
'T was strange that one so young should thus concern
His brain about the action of the sky;
If *you* think 't was philosophy that this did,
I can't help thinking puberty assisted.

XCIV.

He pored upon the leaves, and on the flowers,
And heard a voice in all the winds; and then
He thought of wood-nymphs and immortal bowers,
And how the goddesses came down to men:
He miss'd the pathway, he forgot the hours,
And, when he look'd upon his watch again,
He found how much old Time had been a winner,
He also found that he had lost his dinner.

XCV.

Sometimes he turn'd to gaze upon his book,
Boscan, or Garcilasso;—by the wind
Even as the page is rustled while we look,
So by the poesy of his own mind
Over the mystic leaf his soul was shook,
As if 't were one whereon magicians bind
Their spells, and give them to the passing gale,
According to some good old woman's tale.

XCVI.

Thus would he while his lonely hours away
Dissatisfied, nor knowing what he wanted;
Nor glowing reverie, nor poet's lay,
Could yield his spirit that for which it panted,—
A bosom whereon he his head might lay,
And hear the heart beat with the love it granted,
With——several other things, which I forget,
Or which, at least, I need not mention yet.

XCVII.

Those lonely walks and lengthening reveries
Could not escape the gentle Julia's eyes;
She saw that Juan was not at his ease;
But that which chiefly may and must surprise,
Is, that the Donna Inez did not tease
Her only son with question or surmise;
Whether it was she did not see, or would not,
Or, like all very clever people, could not.

XCVIII.

This may seem strange, but yet 't is very common;
For instance—gentlemen, whose ladies take
Leave to o'erstep the written rights of woman,
And break the—Which commandment is't they break?
(I have forgot the number, and think no man
Should rashly quote, for fear of a mistake.)
I say, when these same gentlemen are jealous,
They make some blunder, which their ladies tell us.

XCIX.

A real husband always is suspicious,
But still no less suspects in the wrong place,
Jealous of some one who had no such wishes,
Or pandering blindly to his own disgrace,
By harbouring some dear friend extremely vicious;
The last indeed 's infallibly the case:
And when the spouse and friend are gone off wholly,
He wonders at their vice, and not his folly.

C.

Thus parents also are at times short-sighted;
Though watchful as the lynx, they ne'er discover,
The while the wicked world beholds, delighted,
Young Hopeful's mistress, or Miss Fanny's lover,
Till some confounded escapade has blighted
The plan of twenty years, and all is over;
And then the mother cries, the father swears,
And wonders why the devil he got heirs.

CI.

But Inez was so anxious and so clear
Of sight, that I must think, on this occasion,
She had some other motive much more near
For leaving Juan to this new temptation;
But what that motive was, I sha'n't say here;
Perhaps to finish Juan's education,
Perhaps to open Don Alfonso's eyes,
In case he thought his wife too great a prize.

CII.

It was upon a day, a summer's day;—
Summer 's indeed a very dangerous season,
And so is spring about the end of May;
The sun, no doubt, is the prevailing reason;
But whatsoe'er the cause is, one may say,
And stand convicted of more truth than treason,
That there are months which nature grows more merry in—
March has its hares, and May must have its heroine.

CIII.

'T was on a summer's day—the sixth of June:—
I like to be particular in dates,
Not only of the age, and year, but moon;
They are a sort of post-house, where the Fates
Change horses, making history change its tune,
Then spur away o'er empires and o'er states,
Leaving at last not much besides chronology,
Excepting the post-obits of theology.

CIV.

'T was on the sixth of June, about the hour
Of half-past six—perhaps still nearer seven,
When Julia sate within as pretty a bower
As e'er held houri in that heathenish heaven
Described by Mahomet, and Anacreon Moore,
To whom the lyre and laurels have been given,
With all the trophies of triumphant song—
He won them well, and may he wear them long.

CV.

She sate, but not alone; I know not well
How this same interview had taken place,
And even if I knew, I should not tell—
People should hold their tongues in any case;
No matter how or why the thing befel,
But there were she and Juan face to face—
When two such faces are so, 't would be wise,
But very difficult, to shut their eyes.

CVI.

How beautiful she look'd! her conscious heart
Glow'd in her cheek, and yet she felt no wrong,
Oh love! how perfect is thy mystic art,
Strengthening the weak and trampling on the strong,
How self-deceitful is the sagest part
Of mortals whom thy lure hath led along:
The precipice she stood on was immense—
So was her creed in her own innocence.

CVII.

She thought of her own strength, and Juan's youth,
And of the folly of all prudish fears,
Victorious virtue, and domestic truth,
And then of Don Alfonso's fifty years:
I wish these last had not occurr'd, in sooth,
Because that number rarely much endears,
And through all climes, the snowy and the sunny,
Sounds ill in love, whate'er it may in money.

CVIII.

When people say, «I 've told you *fifty* times,»
They mean to scold, and very often do;
When poets say, «I 've written *fifty* rhymes,»
They make you dread that they 'll recite them too;
In gangs of *fifty*, thieves commit their crimes;
At *fifty* love for love is rare, 't is true;
But then, no doubt, it equally as true is,
A good deal may be bought for fifty Louis.

CIX.

Julia had honour, virtue, truth, and love,
For Don Alfonso; and she inly swore,
By all the vows below to powers above,
She never would disgrace the ring she wore,
Nor leave a wish which wisdom might reprove;
And while she ponder'd this, besides much more,
One hand on Juan's carelessly was thrown,
Quite by mistake—she thought it was her own;

CX.

Unconsciously she lean'd upon the other,
Which play'd within the tangles of her hair;
And to contend with thoughts she could not smother
She seem'd, by the distraction of her air.
'T was surely very wrong in Juan's mother
To leave together this imprudent pair,
She who for many years had watch'd her son so—
I'm very certain *mine* would not have done so.

CXI.

The hand which still held Juan's, by degrees
Gently, but palpably, confirm'd its grasp,
As if it said «detain me, if you please;»
Yet there 's no doubt she only meant to clasp
His fingers with a pure Platonic squeeze:
She would have shrunk as from a toad or asp,
Had she imagined such a thing could rouse
A feeling dangerous to a prudent spouse.

CXII.

I cannot know what Juan thought of this,
But what he did, is much what you would do;
His young lip thank'd it with a grateful kiss,
And then, abash'd at its own joy, withdrew
In deep despair, lest he had done amiss,
Love is so very timid when 't is new:
She blush'd and frown'd not, but she strove to speak,
And held her tongue, her voice was grown so weak.

CXIII.

The sun set, and up rose the yellow moon:
The devil 's in the moon for mischief; they
Who call'd her CHASTE, methinks, began too soon
Their nomenclature; there is not a day,
The longest, not the twenty-first of June,
Sees half the business in a wicked way
On which three single hours of moonshine smile—
And then she looks so modest all the while.

CXIV.

There is a dangerous silence in that hour,
A stillness which leaves room for the full soul
To open all itself, without the power
Of calling wholly back its self-control;
The silver light which, hallowing tree and tower,
Sheds beauty and deep softness o'er the whole,
Breathes also to the heart, and o'er it throws
A loving languor, which is not repose.

CXV.

And Julia sate with Juan, half embraced
And half retiring from the glowing arm,
Which trembled like the bosom where 't was placed:
Yet still she must have thought there was no harm,
Or else 't were easy to withdraw her waist;
But then the situation had its charm,
And then——God knows what next—I can't go on;
I'm almost sorry that I e'er begun.

CXVI.

Oh Plato! Plato! you have paved the way,
With your confounded fantasies, to more
Immoral conduct by the fancied sway
Your system feigns o'er the controlless core
Of human hearts, than all the long array
Of poets and romancers:—You 're a bore,
A charlatan, a coxcomb—and have been,
At best, no better than a go-between.

CXVII.

And Julia's voice was lost, except in sighs,
Until too late for useful conversation;
The tears were gushing from her gentle eyes,
I wish, indeed, they had not had occasion;
But who, alas! can love, and then be wise?
Not that remorse did not oppose temptation,
A little still she strove, and much repented,
And whispering «I will ne'er consent»—consented.

CXVIII.

'T is said that Xerxes offer'd a reward
To those who could invent him a new pleasure;
Methinks the requisition 's rather hard,
And must have cost his majesty a treasure:
For my part, I 'm a moderate-minded bard,
Fond of a little love (which I call leisure);
I care not for new pleasures, as the old
Are quite enough for me, so they but hold.

CXIX.

Oh Pleasure! you 're indeed a pleasant thing,
Although one must be damn'd for you no doubt;
I make a resolution every spring
Of reformation ere the year run out,
But, somehow, this my vestal vow takes wing,
Yet still, I trust, it may be kept throughout:
I 'm very sorry, very much ashamed,
And mean, next winter, to be quite reclaim'd.

CXX.

Here my chaste muse a liberty must take—
Start not! still chaster reader—she'll be nice hence-
Forward, and there is no great cause to quake:
This liberty is a poetic license,
Which some irregularity may make
In the design, and as I have a high sense
Of Aristotle and the Rules, 't is fit
To beg his pardon when I err a bit.

CXXI.

This license is to hope the reader will
Suppose from June the sixth (the fatal day,
Without whose epoch my poetic skill,
For want of facts, would all be thrown away),
But keeping Julia and Don Juan still
In sight, that several months have pass'd; we 'll say
'T was in November, but I 'm not so sure
About the day—the era 's more obscure.

CXXII.

We 'll talk of that anon.—'T is sweet to hear
At midnight on the blue and moonlit deep
The song and oar of Adria's gondolier,
By distance mellow'd, o'er the waters sweep;
'T is sweet to see the evening star appear;
'T is sweet to listen as the night-winds creep
From leaf to leaf; 't is sweet to view on high
The rainbow, based on ocean, span the sky;

CXXIII.

'T is sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
Bay deep-mouth'd welcome as we draw near home;
'T is sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come;
'T is sweet to be awaken'd by the lark,
Or lull'd by falling waters; sweet the hum
Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
The lisp of children, and their earliest words.

CXXIV.

Sweet is the vintage, when the showering grapes
In Bacchanal profusion reel to earth
Purple and gushing; sweet are our escapes
From civic revelry to rural mirth;
Sweet to the miser are his glittering heaps;
Sweet to the father is his first-born's birth;
Sweet is revenge—especially to women,
Pillage to soldiers, prize-money to seamen.

CXXV.

Sweet is a legacy; and passing sweet
The unexpected death of some old lady
Or gentleman of seventy years complete,
Who've made «us youth» wait too—too long already
For an estate, or cash, or country-seat,
Still breaking, but with stamina so steady,
That all the Israelites are fit to mob its
Next owner, for their double-damn'd post-obits.

CXXVI.

'T is sweet to win, no matter how, one's laurels
By blood or ink; 't is sweet to put an end
To strife; 't is sometimes sweet to have our quarrels,
Particularly with a tiresome friend;
Sweet is old wine in bottles, ale in barrels;
Dear is the helpless creature we defend
Against the world; and dear the schoolboy spot
We ne'er forget, though there we are forgot.

CXXVII.

But sweeter still than this, than these, than all,
Is first and passionate love—it stands alone,
Like Adam's recollection of his fall;
The tree of knowledge has been pluck'd—all 's known—
And life yields nothing further to recal
Worthy of this ambrosial sin so shown,
No doubt in fable, as the unforgiven
Fire which Prometheus filch'd for us from heaven.

CXXVIII.

Man 's a strange animal, and makes strange use
Of his own nature and the various arts,
And likes particularly to produce
Some new experiment to show his parts:
This is the age of oddities let loose,
Where different talents find their different marts;
You 'd best begin with truth, and when you 've lost your
Labour, there 's a sure market for imposture.

CXXIX.

What opposite discoveries we have seen!
(Signs of true genius, and of empty pockets:)
One makes new noses, one a guillotine,
One breaks your bones, one sets them in their sockets;
But vaccination certainly has been
A kind antithesis to Congreve's rockets,

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CXXX.

Bread has been made (indifferent) from potatoes,
And galvanism has set some corpses grinning,
But has not answer'd like the apparatus
Of the Humane Society's beginning,
By which men are unsuffocated gratis;—
What wondrous new machines have late been spinning!

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CXXXI.

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CXXXII.

This is the patent age of new inventions
For killing bodies, and for saving souls,
All propagated with the best intentions:
Sir Humphry Davy's lantern, by which coals
Are safely mined for in the mode he mentions,
Tombuctoo travels, voyages to the Poles,
Are ways to benefit mankind, as true,
Perhaps, as shooting them at Waterloo.

CXXXIII.

Man 's a phenomenon, one knows not what,
And wonderful beyond all wondrous measure;
'T is pity though, in this sublime world, that
Pleasure 's a sin, and sometimes sin 's a pleasure;
Few mortals know what end they would be at,
But whether glory, power, or love, or treasure,
The path is through perplexing ways, and when
The goal is gain'd, we die, you know—and then—

CXXXIV.

What then?—I do not know, no more do you—
And so good night.—Return we to our story:
'T was in November, when fine days are few,
And the far mountains wax a little hoary,
And clap a white cape on their mantles blue;
And the sea dashes round the promontory,
And the loud breaker boils against the rock,
And sober suns must set at five o'clock.

CXXXV.

'T was, as the watchmen say, a cloudy night;
No moon, no stars, the wind was low or loud
By gusts, and many a sparkling hearth was bright
With the piled wood, round which the family crowd;
There 's something cheerful in that sort of light,
Even as a summer sky 's without a cloud:
I 'm fond of fire, and crickets, and all that,
A lobster salad, and champagne, and chat.

CXXXVI.

'T was midnight—Donna Julia was in bed,
Sleeping, most probably,—when at her door
Arose a clatter might awake the dead,
If they had never been awoke before—
And that they have been so we all have read,
And are to be so, at the least, once more—
The door was fasten'd, but, with voice and fist,
First knocks were heard, then «Madam—Madam—hist!

CXXXVII.

«For God's sake, Madam—Madam—here 's my master,
With more than half the city at his back—
Was ever heard of such a cursed disaster?
'T is not my fault—I kept good watch—Alack!
Do, pray, undo the bolt a little faster—
They 're on the stair just now, and in a crack
Will all be here; perhaps he yet may fly,—
Surely the window 's not so *very* high!»

CXXXVIII.

By this time Don Alfonso was arrived,
With torches, friends, and servants in great number;
The major part of them had long been wived,
And therefore paused not to disturb the slumber
Of any wicked woman, who contrived
By stealth her husband's temples to encumber:
Examples of this kind are so contagious,
Were *one* not punish'd, *all* would be outrageous.

CXXXIX.

I can't tell how, or why, or what suspicion
Could enter into Don Alfonso's head,
But for a cavalier of his condition
It surely was exceedingly ill-bred,
Without a word of previous admonition,
To hold a levee round his lady's bed,
And summon lackeys, arm'd with fire and sword,
To prove himself the thing he most abhorr'd.

CXL.

Poor Donna Julia! starting as from sleep
(Mind—that I do not say—she had not slept),
Began at once to scream, and yawn, and weep;
Her maid Antonia, who was an adept,
Contrived to fling the bed-clothes in a heap,
As if she had just now from out them crept:
I can't tell why she should take all this trouble
To prove her mistress had been sleeping double.

CXLI.

But Julia mistress, and Antonia maid,
Appear'd like two poor harmless women, who
Of goblins, but still more of men, afraid,
Had thought one man might be deterr'd by two,
And therefore side by side were gently laid,
Until the hours of absence should run through,
And truant husband should return, and say,
« My dear, I was the first who came away.»

CXLII.

Now Julia found at length a voice, and cried,
« In Heaven's name, Don Alfonso, what d' ye mean?
Has madness seized you? would that I had died
Ere such a monster's victim I had been!
What may this midnight violence betide,
A sudden fit of drunkenness or spleen!
Dare you suspect me, whom the thought would kill?
Search, then, the room!»—Alfonso said, « I will.»

CXLIII.

He search'd, *they* search'd, and rummaged every where,
Closet and clothes'-press, chest and window-seat,
And found much linen, lace, and several pair
Of stockings, slippers, brushes, combs, complete,
With other articles of ladies fair,
To keep them beautiful, or leave them neat:
Arras they prick'd and curtains with their swords,
And wounded several shutters, and some boards.

CXLIV.

Under the bed they search'd, and there they found—
No matter what—it was not that they sought.
They open'd windows, gazing if the ground
Had signs or foot-marks, but the earth said nought:
And then they stared each other's faces round:
'T is odd, not one of all these seekers thought,
And seems to me almost a sort of blunder,
Of looking *in* the bed as well as under.

CXLV.

During this inquisition Julia's tongue
Was not asleep—« Yes, search and search,» she cried,
Insult on insult heap, and wrong on wrong!
It was for this that I became a bride!
For this in silence I have suffer'd long
A husband like Alfonso at my side;
But now I'll bear no more, nor here remain,
If there be law, or lawyers, in all Spain.

CXLVI.

« Yes, Don Alfonso! husband now no more,
If ever you indeed deserved the name,
Is 't worthy of your years?—you have threescore,
Fifty, or sixty—it is all the same—
Is 't wise or fitting causeless to explore
For facts against a virtuous woman's fame?
Ungrateful, perjured, barbarous Don Alfonso!
How dare you think your lady would go on so?

CXLVII.

« Is it for this I have disdain'd to hold
The common privileges of my sex?
That I have chosen a confessor so old
And deaf, that any other it would vex,
And never once he has had cause to scold,
But found my very innocence perplex
So much, he always doubted I was married—
How sorry you will be when I've miscarried!

CXLVIII.

« Was it for this that no Cortejo ere
I yet have chosen from out the youth of Seville?
Is it for this I scarce went any where,
Except to bull-fights, mass, play, rout, and revel?
Is it for this, whate'er my suitors were,
I favour'd none—nay, was almost uncivil?
Is it for this that General Count O'Reilly,
Who took Algiers, declares I used him vilely?[6]

CXLIX.

« Did not the Italian Musico Cazzani
Sing at my heart six months at least in vain?
Did not his countryman, Count Corniani,
Call me the only virtuous wife in Spain?
Were there not also Russians, English, many?—
The Count Strongstroganoff I put in pain,
And Lord Mount Coffeehouse, the Irish peer,
Who kill'd himself for love (with wine) last year.

CL.

« Have I not had two bishops at my feet,
The Duke of Ichar, and Don Fernan Nunez?
And is it thus a faithful wife you treat?
I wonder in what quarter now the moon is:
I praise your vast forbearance not to beat
Me also, since the time so opportune is—
Oh, valiant man! with sword drawn and cock'd trigger,
Now, tell me, don't you cut a pretty figure?

CLI.

« Was it for this you took your sudden journey,
Under pretence of business indispensable,
With that sublime of rascals your attorney,
Whom I see standing there, and looking sensible
Of having play'd the fool? though both I spurn, he
Deserves the worst, his conduct 's less defensible,
Because, no doubt, 't was for his dirty fee,
And not from any love to you or me.

CLII.

«If he comes here to take a deposition,
By all means let the gentleman proceed;
You 've made the apartment in a fit condition:
There 's pen and ink for you, sir, when you need—
Let every thing be noted with precision,
I would not you for nothing should be fee'd—
But, as my maid 's undress'd, pray turn your spies out.»
«Oh!» sobb'd Antonia, «I could tear their eyes out.»

CLIII.

«There is the closet, there the toilet, there
The anti-chamber—search them under, over:
There is the sofa, there the great arm-chair,
The chimney—which would really hold a lover.
I wish to sleep, and beg you will take care
And make no further noise till you discover
The secret cavern of this lurking treasure—,
And, when 't is found, let me, too, have that pleasure.

CLIV.

«And now, Hidalgo? now that you have thrown
Doubt upon me, confusion over all,
Pray have the courtesy to make it known
Who is the man you search for? how d' ye call
Him? what 's his lineage? let him but be shown—
I hope he 's young and handsome—is he tall?
Tell me—and be assured, that since you stain
My honour thus, it shall not be in vain.

CLV.

«At least, perhaps, he has not sixty years—
At that age he would be too old for slaughter,
Or for so young a husband's jealous fears—
(Antonia! let me have a glass of water).
I am ashamed of having shed these tears,
They are unworthy of my father's daughter;
My mother dream'd not in my natal hour
That I should fall into a monster's power.

CLVI.

«Perhaps 't is of Antonia you are jealous,
You saw that she was sleeping by my side
When you broke in upon us with your fellows:
Look where you please—we 've nothing, sir, to hide;
Only another time, I trust, you 'll tell us,
Or for the sake of decency abide
A moment at the door, that we may be
Dress'd to receive so much good company.

CLVII.

«And now, sir, I have done, and say no more;
The little I have said may serve to show
The guileless heart in silence may grieve o'er
The wrongs to whose exposure it is slow:—
I leave you to your conscience as before,
'T will one day ask you *why* you used me so?
God grant you feel not then the bitterest grief!—
Antonia! where 's my pocket-handkerchief?»

CLVIII.

She ceased, and turn'd upon her pillow; pale
She lay, her dark eyes flashing through their tears,
Like skies that rain and lighten; as a veil
Waved and o'ershading her wan cheek, appears
Her streaming hair; the black curls strive, but fail,
To hide the glossy shoulder which uprears
Its snow through all;—her soft lips lie apart,
And louder than her breathing beats her heart.

CLIX.

The Senhor Don Alfonso stood confused;
Antonia bustled round the ransack'd room,
And, turning up her nose, with looks abused
Her master, and his myrmidons, of whom
Not one, except the attorney, was amused;
He, like Achates, faithful to the tomb,
So there were quarrels, cared not for the cause,
Knowing they must be settled by the laws.

CLX.

With prying snub-nose, and small eyes, he stood,
Following Antonia's motions here and there,
With much suspicion in his attitude;
For reputations he had little care:
So that a suit or action were made good,
Small pity had he for the young and fair,
And ne'er believed in negatives, till these
Were proved by competent false witnesses.

CLXI.

But Don Alfonso stood with downcast looks,
And, truth to say, he made a foolish figure;
When, after searching in five hundred nooks,
And treating a young wife with so much rigour,
He gain'd no point, except some self rebukes,
Added to those his lady with such vigour
Had pour'd upon him for the last half hour,
Quick, thick, and heavy—as a thunder shower.

CLXII.

At first he tried to hammer an excuse,
To which the sole reply were tears and sobs,
And indications of hysterics, whose
Prologue is always certain throes and throbs,
Gasps, and whatever else the owners choose:—
Alfonso saw his wife, and thought of Job's;
He saw, too, in perspective, her relations,
And then he tried to muster all his patience.

CLXIII.

He stood in act to speak, or rather stammer,
But sage Antonia cut him short before
The anvil of his speech received the hammer,
With «Pray, sir, leave the room, and say no more,
Or madam dies.»—Alfonso mutter'd «D——n her,»
But nothing else, the time of words was o'er;
He cast a rueful look or two, and did,
He knew not wherefore, that which he was bid.

CLXIV.

With him retired his «*posse comitatus*,»
The attorney last, who linger'd near the door,
Reluctantly, still tarrying there as late as
Antonia let him—not a little sore
At this most strange and unexplain'd «*hiatus*»
In Don Alfonso's facts, which just now wore
An awkward look; as he revolved the case,
The door was fasten'd in his legal face.

CLXV.

No sooner was it bolted, than—Oh shame!
Oh sin! oh sorrow! and oh womankind!
How can you do such things and keep your fame,
Unless this world, and t' other too, be blind?
Nothing so dear as an unfilch'd good name!
But to proceed—for there is more behind:
With much heart-felt reluctance be it said,
Young Juan slipp'd, half-smother'd, from the bed.

CLXVI.

He had been hid—I don't pretend to say
How, nor can I indeed describe the where—
Young, slender, and pack'd easily, he lay,
No doubt, in little compass, round or square;
But pity him I neither must nor may
His suffocation by that pretty pair;
'T were better, sure, to die so, than be shut
With maudlin Clarence in his Malmsey butt.

CLXVII.

And, secondly, I pity not, because
He had no business to commit a sin,
Forbid by heavenly, fined by human laws,—
At least 't was rather early to begin;
But at sixteen the conscience rarely gnaws
So much as when we call our old debts in
At sixty years, and draw the accounts of evil,
And find a deuced balance with the devil.

CLXVIII.

Of his position I can give no notion:
'T is written in the Hebrew Chronicle,
How the physicians, leaving pill and potion,
Prescribed, by way of blister, a young belle,
When old King David's blood grew dull in motion,
And that the medicine answer'd very well;
Perhaps 't was in a different way applied,
For David lived, but Juan nearly died.

CLXIX.

What 's to be done? Alfonso will be back
The moment he has sent his fools away.
Antonia's skill was put upon the rack,
But no device could be brought into play—
And how to parry the renew'd attack?
Besides, it wanted but few hours of day:
Antonia puzzled; Julia did not speak,
But press'd her bloodless lip to Juan's cheek.

CLXX.

He turn'd his lip to hers, and with his hand
Call'd back the tangles of her wandering hair;
Even then their love they could not all command,
And half forgot their danger and despair:
Antonia's patience now was at a stand—
"Come, come, 't is no time now for fooling there,"
She whisper'd in great wrath—"I must deposit
This pretty gentleman within the closet:

CLXXI.

"Pray keep your nonsense for some luckier night—
Who can have put my master in this mood?
What will become on 't?—I 'm in such a fright!
The devil 's in the urchin, and no good—
Is this a time for giggling? this a plight?
Why, don't you know that it may end in blood?
You 'll lose your life, and I shall lose my place,
My mistress all, for that half-girlish face.

CLXXII.

"Had it but been for a stout cavalier
Of twenty-five or thirty—(Come, make haste)
But for a child, what piece of work is here!
I really, madam, wonder at your taste—
(Come, sir, get in)—my master must be near.
There, for the present at the least he 's fast,
And, if we can but till the morning keep
Our counsel—(Juan, mind you must not sleep.)"

CLXXIII.

Now, Don Alfonso entering, but alone,
Closed the oration of the trusty maid:
She loiter'd, and he told her to be gone,
An order somewhat sullenly obey'd;
However, present remedy was none,
And no great good seem'd answer'd if she stay'd:
Regarding both with slow and sidelong view,
She snuff'd the candle, curtsied, and withdrew.

CLXXIV.

Alfonso paused a minute—then begun
Some strange excuses for his late proceeding;
He would not justify what he had done,
To say the best, it was extreme ill breeding;
But there were ample reasons for it, none
Of which he specified in this his pleading:
His speech was a fine sample, on the whole,
Of rhetoric, which the learn'd call "*rigmarole*."

CLXXV.

Julia said nought; though all the while there rose
A ready answer, which at once enables
A matron, who her husband's foible knows,
By a few timely words to turn the tables,
Which, if it does not silence, still must pose,
Even if it should comprise a pack of fables;
'T is to retort with firmness, and when he
Suspects with *one*, do you reproach with *three*.

CLXXVI.

Julia, in fact, had tolerable grounds,
Alfonso's loves with Inez were well known;
But whether 't was that one's own guilt confounds—
But that can't be, as has been often shown;
A lady with apologies abounds:
It might be that her silence sprang alone
From delicacy to Don Juan's ear,
To whom she knew his mother's fame was dear.

CLXXVII.

There might be one more motive, which makes two:
Alfonso ne'er to Juan had alluded,
Mention'd his jealousy, but never who
Had been the happy lover, he concluded,
Conceal'd amongst his premises; 't is true,
His mind the more o'er this its mystery brooded;
To speak of Inez now were, one may say,
Like throwing Juan in Alfonso's way.

CLXXVIII.

A hint, in tender cases, is enough;
Silence is best, besides there is a *tact*
(That modern phrase appears to me sad stuff,
But it will serve to keep my verse compact)
Which keeps, when push'd by questions rather rough,
A lady always distant from the fact—
The charming creatures lie with such a grace,
There 's nothing so becoming to the face.

CLXXIX.

They blush, and we believe them; at least I
Have always done so; 't is of no great use,
In any case, attempting a reply,
For then their eloquence grows quite profuse;
And when at length they are out of breath, they sigh,
And cast their languid eyes down, and let loose
A tear or two, and then we make it up;
And then—and then—and then—sit down and sup.

CLXXX.

Alfonso closed his speech, and begg'd her pardon,
Which Julia half withheld, and then half granted,
And laid conditions, he thought, very hard on,
Denying several little things he wanted:
He stood, like Adam, lingering near his garden,
With useless penitence perplex'd and haunted,
Beseeching she no further would refuse,
When lo! he stumbled o'er a pair of shoes.

CLXXXI.

A pair of shoes!—what then? not much, if they
Are such as fit with lady's feet, but these
(No one can tell how much I grieve to say)
Were masculine; to see them and to seize
Was but a moment's act.—Ah! well-a-day!
My teeth begin to chatter, my veins freeze—
Alfonso first examined well their fashion,
And then flew out into another passion.

CLXXXII.

He left the room for his relinquish'd sword,
And Julia instant to the closet flew;
«Fly, Juan, fly! for Heaven's sake—not a word—
The door is open—you may yet slip through
The passage you so often have explored—
Here is the garden-key—fly—fly—adieu!
Haste—haste!—I hear Alfonso's hurrying feet—
Day has not broke—there 's no one in the street.»

CLXXXIII.

None can say that this was not good advice;
The only mischief was, it came too late;
Of all experience 't is the usual price,
A sort of income-tax laid on by fate:
Juan had reach'd the room-door in a trice,
And might have done so by the garden-gate,
But met Alfonso in his dressing-gown,
Who threaten'd death—so Juan knock'd him down.

CLXXXIV.

Dire was the scuffle, and out went the light,
Antonia cried out «Rape!» and Julia «Fire!»
But not a servant stirr'd to aid the fight.
Alfonso, pommell'd to his heart's desire,
Swore lustily he 'd be revenged this night;
And Juan, too, blasphemed, an octave higher;
His blood was up; though young, he was a Tartar,
And not at all disposed to prove a martyr.

CLXXXV.

Alfonso's sword had dropp'd ere he could draw it,
And they continued battling hand to hand,
For Juan very luckily ne'er saw it;
His temper not being under great command,
If at that moment he had chanced to claw it,
Alfonso's days had not been in the land
Much longer.—Think of husbands', lovers' lives!
And how you may be doubly widows—wives!

CLXXXVI.

Alfonso grappled to detain the foe,
And Juan throttled him to get away,
And blood ('t was from the nose) began to flow;
At last, as they more faintly wrestling lay,
Juan contrived to give an awkward blow,
And then his only garment quite gave way;
He fled, like Joseph, leaving it—but there,
I doubt, all likeness ends between the pair.

CLXXXVII.

Lights came at length, and men and maids, who found
An awkward spectacle their eyes before;
Antonia in hysterics, Julia swoon'd,
Alfonso leaning, breathless, by the door;
Some half-torn drapery scatter'd on the ground,
Some blood, and several footsteps, but no more:
Juan the gate gain'd, turn'd the key about,
And liking not the inside, lock'd the out.

CLXXXVIII.

Here ends this Canto.—Need I sing or say,
How Juan, naked, favour'd by the Night
(Who favours what she should not), found his way,
And reach'd his home in an unseemly plight?
The pleasant scandal which arose next day,
The nine days' wonder which was brought to light,
And how Alfonso sued for a divorce,
Were in the English newspapers, of course.

CLXXXIX.

If you would like to see the whole proceedings,
The depositions, and the cause at full,
The names of all the witnesses, the pleadings
Of counsel to non-suit or to annul,
There 's more than one edition, and the readings
Are various, but they none of them are dull,
The best is that in short-hand, ta'en by Gurney,
Who to Madrid on purpose made a journey.

CXC.

But Donna Inez to divert the train
Of one of the most circulating scandals
That had for centuries been known in Spain,
At least since the retirement of the Vandals,
First vow'd (and never had she vow'd in vain)
To Virgin Mary several pounds of candles;
And then, by the advice of some old ladies,
She sent her son to be shipp'd off from Cadiz.

CXCI.

She had resolved that he should travel through
All European climes by land or sea,
To mend his former morals, and get new,
Especially in France and Italy
(At least this is the thing most people do).
Julia was sent into a convent; she
Grieved, but perhaps, her feelings may be better
Shown in the following copy of her letter:

CXCII.

«They tell me 't is decided; you depart:
'T is wise—'t is well, but not the less a pain;
I have no further claim on your young heart,
Mine is the victim, and would be again;
To love too much has been the only art
I used;—I write in haste, and if a stain
Be on this sheet, 't is not what it appears—
My eyeballs burn and throb, but have no tears.

CXCIII.

«I loved, I love you, for this love have lost
State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own esteem,
And yet cannot regret what it hath cost,
So dear is still the memory of that dream;
Yet, if I name my guilt, 't is not to boast,—
None can deem harshlier of me than I deem:
I trace this scrawl because I cannot rest—
I 've nothing to reproach or to request.

CXCIV.

«Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
'T is woman's whole existence; man may range
The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart,
Sword, gown, gain, glory, offer in exchange
Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
And few there are whom these can not estrange:
Men have all these resources; we but one—
To love again, and be again undone.

CXCV.

«You will proceed in pleasure and in pride,
Beloved and loving many; all is o'er
For me on earth, except some years to hide
My shame and sorrow deep in my heart's core;
These I could bear, but cannot cast aside
The passion, which still rages as before,
And so farewell—forgive me, love me—No,
That word is idle now—but let it go.

CXCVI.

«My breast has been all weakness, is so yet;
But still, I think, I can collect my mind;
My blood still rushes where my spirit 's set,
As roll the waves before the settled wind;
My heart is feminine, nor can forget—
To all, except one image, madly blind:
So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,
As vibrates my fond heart to my fix'd soul.

CXCVII.

«I have no more to say, but linger still,
And dare not set my seal upon this sheet,
And yet I may as well the task fulfil,
My misery can scarce be more complete:
I had not lived till now, could sorrow kill;
Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow would meet,
And I must even survive this last adieu,
And bear with life, to love and pray for you!»

CXCVIII.

This note was written upon gilt-edged paper,
With a neat little crow-quill, slight and new:
Her small white hand could hardly reach the taper,
It trembled as magnetic needles do,
And yet she did not let one tear escape her;
The seal a sun-flower; «*Elle vous suit partout,*»
The motto, cut upon a white cornelian,
The wax was superfine, its hue vermilion.

CXCIX.

This was Don Juan's earliest scrape; but whether
I shall proceed with his adventures is
Dependant on the public altogether;
We 'll see, however what they say to this
(Their favour in an author's cap 's a feather,
And no great mischief 's done by their caprice);
And, if their approbation we experience,
Perhaps they 'll have some more about a year hence.

CC.

My poem 's epic, and is meant to be
Divided in twelve books; each book containing,
With love, and war, a heavy gale at sea,
A list of ships, and captains, and kings reigning,
New characters; the episodes are three:
A panorama view of hell 's in training,
After the style of Virgil and of Homer,
So that my name of Epic 's no misnomer.

CCI.

All these things will be specified in time,
With strict regard to Aristotle's Rules,
The *vade mecum* of the true sublime,
Which makes so many poets and some fools;
Prose poets like blank-verse—I 'm fond of rhyme—
Good workmen never quarrel with their tools;
I 've got new mythological machinery,
And very handsome supernatural scenery.

CCII.

There 's only one slight difference between
Me and my epic brethren gone before,
And here the advantage is my own, I ween
(Not that I have not several merits more,
But this will more peculiarly be seen);
They so embellish, that 't is quite a bore
Their labyrinth of fables to thread through,
Whereas this story 's actually true.

CCIII.

If any person doubt it, I appeal
To history, tradition, and to facts,
To newspapers, whose truth all know and feel,
To plays in five, and operas in three acts;
All these confirm my statement a good deal,
But that which more completely faith exacts
Is that myself, and several now in Seville,
Saw Juan's last elopement with the devil.

CCIV.

If ever I should condescend to prose,
I 'll write poetical commandments, which
Shall supersede beyond all doubt all those
That went before; in these I shall enrich
My text with many things that no one knows,
And carry precept to the highest pitch:
I 'll call the work «Longinus o'er a Bottle,
Or, Every poet his *own* Aristotle.»

CCV.

Thou shalt believe in Milton, Dryden, Pope:
Thou shalt not set up Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey:
Because the first is crazed beyond all hope,
The second drunk, the third so quaint and mouthey:
With Crabbe it may be difficult to cope,
And Campbell's Hippocrene is somewhat drouthy:
Thou shalt not steal from Samuel Rogers, nor
Commit—flirtation with the muse of Moore:

CCVI.

Thou shalt not covet Mr Sotheby's Muse,
His Pegasus, nor any thing that 's his:
Thou shalt not bear false witness, like «the Blues,»
(There 's one, at least, is very fond of this):
Thou shalt not write, in short, but what I choose:
This is true criticism, and you may kiss—
Exactly as you please, or not—the rod,
But if you don't, I 'll lay it on, by G—d!

CCVII.

If any person should presume to assert
This story is not moral, first, I pray
That they will not cry out before they 're hurt;
Then that they 'll read it o'er again, and say
(But, doubtless, nobody will be so pert)
That this it not a moral tale though gay;
Besides, in canto twelfth, I mean to show
The very place where wicked people go.

CCVIII.

If, after all, there should be some so blind
To their own good this warning to despise,
Led by some tortuosity of mind,
Not to believe my verse and their own eyes,
And cry that they « the moral cannot find,»
I tell him, if a clergyman, he lies—
Should captains the remark or critics make,
They also lie too—under a mistake.

CCIX.

The public approbation I expect,
And beg they 'll take my word about the moral,
Which I with their amusement will connect
(So children cutting teeth receive a coral);
Meantime, they 'll doubtless please to recollect
My epical pretensions to the laurel:
For fear some prudish readers should grow skittish,
I've bribed my grandmother's review—the British.

CCX.

I sent it in a letter to the editor,
Who thank'd me duly by return of post—
I'm for a handsome article his creditor;
Yet if my gentle Muse he please to roast,
And break a promise after having made it her,
Denying the receipt of what it cost,
And smear his page with gall instead of honey,
All I can say is—that he had the money.

CCXI.

I think that with this holy new alliance
I may insure the public, and defy
All other magazines of art or science,
Daily, or monthly, or three-monthly; I
Have not essay'd to multiply their clients,
Because they tell me 't were in vain to try,
And that the Edinburgh Review and Quarterly
Treat a dissenting author very martyrly.

CCXII.

« *Non ego hoc ferrem calida juventa*
Consule Planco,» Horace said, and so
Say I, by which quotation there is meant a
Hint that some six or seven good years ago
(Long ere I dreamt of dating from the Brenta)
I was most ready to return a blow,
And would not brook at all this sort of thing
In my hot youth—when George the Third was King.

CCXIII.

But now, at thirty years, my hair is gray
(I wonder what it will be like at forty?
I thought of a peruke the other day),
My heart is not much greener; and, in short, I
Have squander'd my whole summer while 't was May,
And feel no more the spirit to retort; I
Have spent my life, both interest and principal,
And deem not, what I deem'd, my soul invincible.

CCXIV.

No more—no more—Oh! never more on me
The freshness of the heart can fall like dew,
Which out of all the lovely things we see
Extracts emotions beautiful and new,
Hived in our bosoms like the bag o' the bee:
Think'st thou the honey with those objects grew?
Alas! 'twas not in them, but in thy power
To double even the sweetness of a flower.

CCXV.

No more—no more—Oh! never more, my heart,
Canst thou be my sole world, my universe!
Once all in all, but now a thing apart,
Thou canst not be my blessing or my curse:
The illusion's gone for ever, and thou art
Insensible, I trust, but none the worse;
And in thy stead I've got a deal of judgment,
Though Heaven knows how it ever found a lodgement.

CCXVI.

My days of love are over me, no more?
The charms of maid, wife, and still less of widow,
Can make the fool of, which they made before—
In short, I must not lead the life I did do:
The credulous hope of mutual minds is o'er;
The copious use of claret is forbid, too;
So, for a good old gentlemanly vice,
I think I must take up with avarice.

CCXVII.

Ambition was my idol, which was broken
Before the shrines of Sorrow and of Pleasure;
And the two last have left me many a token
O'er which reflection may be made at leisure:
Now, like Friar Bacon's brazen head, I 've spoken,
« Time is, time was, time 's past,» a chymic treasure
Is glittering youth, which I have spent betimes—
My heart in passion, and my head on rhymes.

CCXVIII.

What is the end of fame! 't is but to fill
A certain portion of uncertain paper;
Some liken it to climbing up a hill,
Whose summit, like all hills, is lost in vapour;
For this men write, speak, preach, and heroes kill;
And bards burn what they call their « midnight taper,»
To have, when the original is dust,
A name, a wretched picture, and worse bust.

CCXIX.

What are the hopes of man? old Egypt's king,
Cheops, erected the first pyramid
And largest, thinking it was just the thing
To keep his memory whole, and mummy hid;
But somebody or other, rummaging,
Burglariously broke his coffin's lid:
Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops.

CCXX.

But I, being fond of true philosophy,
Say very often to myself, « Alas!
All things that have been born were born to die,
And flesh (which Death mows down to hay) is grass;
You 've pass'd your youth not so unpleasantly,
And if you had it o'er again—'t would pass—
So thank your stars that matters are no worse,
And read your Bible, sir, and mind your purse.»

CCXXI.

But for the present, gentle reader! and
Still gentler purchaser! the bard—that 's I—
Must, with permission, shake you by the hand,
And so your humble servant, and good bye!
We meet again, if we should understand
Each other; and, if not, I shall not try
Your patience further than by this short sample—
'Twere well if others follow'd my example.

CCXXII.

« Go, little book, from this my solitude !
I cast thee on the waters, go thy ways !
And if, as I believe, thy vein be good,
The world will find thee after many days.»
When Southey's read, and Wordsworth understood,
I can't help putting in my claim to praise—
The four first rhymes are Southey's, every line :
For God's sake, reader ! take them not for mine.

CANTO II.

I.

Oh ye ! who teach the ingenuous youth of nations,
Holland, France, England, Germany, or Spain,
I pray ye flog them upon all occasions,
It mends their morals ; never mind the pain :
The best of mothers and of educations,
In Juan's case, were but employed in vain,
Since in a way, that's rather of the oddest, he
Became divested of his native modesty.

II.

Had he but been placed at a public school,
In the third form, or even in the fourth,
His daily task had kept his fancy cool,
At least had he been nurtured in the north ;
Spain may prove an exception to the rule,
But then exceptions always prove its worth—
A lad of sixteen causing a divorce
Puzzled his tutors very much, of course.

III.

I can't say that it puzzles me at all,
If all things be consider'd : first there was
His lady mother, mathematical,
A —— never mind ; his tutor, an old ass ;
A pretty woman—(that's quite natural,
Or else the thing had hardly come to pass) ;
A husband rather old, not much in unity
With his young wife—a time, and opportunity.

IV.

Well—well, the world must turn upon its axis,
And all mankind turn with it, heads or tails,
And live and die, make love, and pay our taxes,
And as the veering wind shifts, shift our sails;
The king commands us, and the doctor quacks us,
The priest instructs, and so our life exhales,
A little breath, love, wine, ambition, fame,
Fighting, devotion, dust—perhaps a name.

V.

I said, that Juan had been sent to Cadiz—
A pretty town, I recollect it well—
'Tis there the mart of the colonial trade is
(Or was, before Peru learn'd to rebel) :
And such sweet girls—I mean such graceful ladies,
Their very walk would make your bosom swell ;
I can't describe it, though so much it strike,
Nor liken it—I never saw the like :

VI.

An Arab horse, a stately stag, a barb
New broke, a camelopard, a gazelle,
No—none of these will do ;—and then their garb !
Their veil and petticoat—Alas ! to dwell
Upon such things would very near absorb
A canto—then their feet and ancles !—well,
Thank Heaven I've got no metaphor quite ready
(And so my sober Muse—come let's be steady—

VII.

Chaste Muse !—well, if you must, you must)—the veil
Thrown back a moment with the glancing hand,
While the o'erpowering eye, that turns you pale,
Flashes into the heart :—All sunny land
Of love ! when I forget you, may I fail
To——say my prayers—but never was there plann'd
A dress through which the eyes give such a volley,
Excepting the Venetian Fazzioli.

VIII.

But to our tale : the Donna Inez sent
Her son to Cadiz only to embark ;
To stay there had not answer'd her intent,
But why ?—we leave the reader in the dark—
'T was for a voyage that the young man was meant,
As if a Spanish ship were Noah's ark,
To wean him from the wickedness of earth,
And send him like a dove of promise forth.

IX.

Don Juan bid his valet pack his things
According to direction, then received
A lecture and some money : for four springs
He was to travel ; and, though Inez grieved
(As every kind of parting has its stings),
She hoped he would improve—perhaps believed :
A letter, too, she gave (he never read it)
Of good advice—and two or three of credit.

X.

In the mean time, to pass her hours away,
Brave Inez now set up a Sunday-school
For naughty children, who would rather play
(Like truant rogues) the devil or the fool ;
Infants of three years old were taught that day,
Dunces were whipp'd or set upon a stool :
The great success of Juan's education
Spurr'd her to teach another generation.

XI.

Juan embark'd—the ship got under weigh,
The wind was fair, the water passing rough ;
A devil of a sea rolls in that bay,
As I, who 've cross'd it oft, know well enough :
And, standing upon deck, the dashing spray
Flies in one's face, and makes it weather-tough :
And there he stood to take, and take again,
His first—perhaps his last—farewell of Spain.

XII.

I can't but say it is an awkward sight
To see one's native land receding through
The growing waters—it unmans one quite ;
Especially when life is rather new :
I recollect Great Britain's coast looks white,
But almost every other country's blue,
When, gazing on them, mystified by distance,
We enter on our nautical existence.

XIII.

So Juan stood bewilder'd on the deck:
The wind sung, cordage strain'd, and sailors swore,
And the ship creak'd, the town became a speck,
From which away so fair and fast they bore.—
The best of remedies is a beef-steak
Against sea-sickness; try it, sir, before
You sneer, and I assure you this is true,
For I have found it answer—so may you.

XIV.

Don Juan stood, and, gazing from the stern,
Beheld his native Spain receding far:
First partings form a lesson hard to learn,
Even nations feel this when they go to war;
There is a sort of unexpress'd concern,
A kind of shock that sets one's heart ajar:
At leaving even the most unpleasant people
And places, one keeps looking at the steeple.

XV.

But Juan had got many things to leave—
His mother, and a mistress, and no wife,
So that he had much better cause to grieve
Than many persons more advanced in life;
And, if we now and then a sigh must heave
At quitting even those we quit in strife,
No doubt we weep for those the heart endears—
That is, till deeper griefs congeal our tears.

XVI.

So Juan wept, as wept the captive Jews
By Babel's water, still remembering Sion:
I 'd weep, but mine is not a weeping muse,
And such light griefs are not a thing to die on;
Young men should travel, if but to amuse
Themselves; and the next time their servants tie on
Behind their carriages their new portmanteau,
Perhaps it may be lined with this my canto.

XVII.

And Juan wept, and much he sigh'd, and thought,
While his salt tears dropp'd into the salt sea,
«Sweets to the sweet;»(I like so much to quote:
You must excuse this extract, 't is where she,
The Queen of Denmark, for Ophelia brought
Flowers to the grave), and sobbing often, he
Reflected on his present situation,
And seriously resolved on reformation.

XVIII.

«Farewell, my Spain! a long farewell!» he cried,
«Perhaps I may revisit thee no more,
But die, as many an exiled heart hath died,
Of its own thirst to see again thy shore:
Farewell, where Guadalquivir's waters glide!
Farewell, my mother! and, since all is o'er,
Farewell, too, dearest Julia!»—(here he drew
Her letter out again, and read it through.)

XIX.

«And oh! if e'er I should forget, I swear—
But that 's impossible, and cannot be—
Sooner shall this blue ocean melt to air,
Sooner shall earth resolve itself to sea,
Than I resign thine image, oh! my fair!
Or think of any thing, excepting thee;
A mind diseased no remedy can physic»—
(Here the ship gave a lurch, and he grew sea-sick).

XX.

«Sooner shall heaven kiss earth—(here he fell sicker)
Oh, Julia! what is every other woe?—
(For God's sake, let me have a glass of liquor—
Pedro! Battista! help me down below.)
Julia, my love!—(you rascal, Pedro, quicker)—
Oh, Julia!—(this cursed vessel pitches so)—
Beloved Julia! hear me still beseeching»—
(Here he grew inarticulate with retching).

XXI.

He felt that chilling heaviness of heart,
Or rather stomach, which, alas! attends,
Beyond the best apothecary's art,
The loss of love, the treachery of friends,
Or death of those we doat on, when a part
Of us dies with them, as each fond hope ends:
No doubt he would have been much more pathetic,
But the sea acted as a strong emetic.

XXII.

Love 's a capricious power; I 've known it hold
Out through a fever caused by its own heat,
But be much puzzled by a cough and cold,
And find a quinsy very hard to treat;
Against all noble maladies he 's bold,
But vulgar illnesses don't like to meet,
Nor that a sneeze should interrupt his sigh,
Nor inflammations redden his blind eye.

XXIII.

But worst of all is nausea, or a pain
About the lower region of the bowels;
Love, who heroically breathes a vein,
Shrinks from the application of hot towels,
And purgatives are dangerous to his reign,
Sea-sickness death: his love was perfect, how else
Could Juan's passion, while the billows roar,
Resist his stomach, ne'er at sea before?

XXIV.

The ship, called the most holy «Trinidada,»
Was steering duly for the port Leghorn;
For there the Spanish family Moncada
Were settled long ere Juan's sire was born:
They were relations, and for them he had a
Letter of introduction, which the morn
Of his departure had been sent him by
His Spanish friends for those in Italy.

XXV.

His suite consisted of three servants and
A tutor, the licentiate Pedrillo,
Who several languages did understand,
But now lay sick and speechless on his pillow,
And, rocking in his hammock, long'd for land,
His headache being increased by every billow;
And the waves oozing through the port-hole made
His birth a little damp, and him afraid.

XXVI.

'T was not without some reason, for the wind
Increased at night, until it blew a gale;
And though 't was not much to a naval mind,
Some landsmen would have look'd a little pale,
For sailors are, in fact, a different kind:
At sunset they began to take in sail,
For the sky show'd it would come on to blow,
And carry away, perhaps, a mast or so.

XXVII.

At one o'clock, the wind with sudden shift
Threw the ship right into the trough of the sea,
Which struck her aft, and made an awkward rift,
Started the stern-post, also shatter'd the
Whole of her stern-frame, and, ere she could lift
Herself from out her present jeopardy,
The rudder tore away: 't was time to sound
The pumps, and there were four feet water found.

XXVIII.

One gang of people instantly was put
Upon the pumps, and the remainder set
To get up part of the cargo, and what not,
But they could not come at the leak as yet;
At last they did get at it really, but
Still their salvation was an even bet:
The water rush'd through in a way quite puzzling,
While they thrust sheets, shirts, jackets, bales of muslin,

XXIX.

Into the opening; but all such ingredients
Would have been vain, and they must have gone down,
Despite of all their efforts and expedients,
But for the pumps: I 'm glad to make them known
To all the brother-tars who may have need hence,
For fifty tons of water were upthrown
By them per hour, and they had all been undone
But for the maker, Mr Man, of London.

XXX.

As day advanced, the weather seem'd to abate,
And then the leak they reckon'd to reduce,
And keep the ship afloat, though three feet yet
Kept two hand and one chain pump still in use.
The wind blew fresh again: as it grew late
A squall came on, and, while some guns broke loose,
A gust—which all descriptive power transcends—
Laid with one blast the ship on her beam-ends.

XXXI.

There she lay, motionless, and seem'd upset;
The water left the hold, and wash'd the decks,
And made a scene men do not soon forget;
For they remember battles, fires, and wrecks,
Or any other thing that brings regret,
Or breaks their hopes, or hearts, or heads, or necks:
Thus drownings are much talk'd of by the divers
And swimmers who may change to be survivors.

XXXII.

Immediately the masts were cut away,
Both main and mizen; first the mizen went,
The main-mast follow'd: but the ship still lay
Like a mere log, and baffled our intent.
Foremast and bowsprit were cut down, and they
Eased her at last (although we never meant
To part with all till every hope was blighted),
And then with violence the old ship righted.

XXXIII.

It may be easily supposed, while this
Was going on, some people were unquiet;
That passengers would find it much amiss
To lose their lives, as well as spoil their diet;
That even the able-seaman, deeming his
Days nearly o'er, might be disposed to riot,
As upon such occasions tars will ask
For grog, and sometimes drink rum from the cask.

XXXIV.

There 's nought, no doubt, so much the spirit calms
As rum and true religion; thus it was,
Some plunder'd, some drank spirits, some sung psalms,
The high wind made the treble, and as bass
The hoarse harsh waves kept time; fright cured the qualms
Of all the luckless landsmen's sea-sick maws:
Strange sounds of wailing, blasphemy, devotion,
Clamour'd in chorus to the roaring ocean.

XXXV.

Perhaps more mischief had been done, but for
Our Juan, who, with sense beyond his years,
Got to the spirit-room, and stood before
It with a pair of pistols; and their fears,
As if Death were more dreadful by his door
Of fire than water, spite of oaths and tears,
Kept still aloof the crew, who, ere they sunk,
Thought it would be becoming to die drunk.

XXXVI.

«Give us more grog,» they cried, «for it will be
All one an hour hence.» Juan answer'd, «No!
'T is true that death awaits both you and me,
But let us die like men, not sink below
Like brutes:»—and thus his dangerous post kept he,
And none liked to anticipate the blow;
And even Pedrillo, his most reverend tutor,
Was for some rum a disappointed suitor.

XXXVII.

The good old gentleman was quite aghast,
And made a loud and pious lamentation;
Repented all his sins, and made a last
Irrevocable vow of reformation;
Nothing should tempt him more (this peril past)
To quit his academic occupation,
In cloisters of the classic Salamanca,
To follow Juan's wake like Sancho Panca.

XXXVIII.

But now there came a flash of hope once more;
Day broke, and the wind lull'd: the masts were gone,
The leak increased; shoals round her, but no shore,
The vessel swam, yet still she held her own.
They tried the pumps again, and though before
Their desperate efforts seem'd all useless grown,
A glimpse of sunshine set some hands to bale—
The stronger pump'd, the weaker thrumm'd a sail.

XXXIX.

Under the vessel's keel the sail was pass'd,
And for the moment it had some effect;
But with a leak, and not a stick of mast
Nor rag of canvas, what could they expect?
But still 't is best to struggle to the last,
'T is never too late to be wholly wreck'd:
And though 't is true that man can only die once,
'T is not so pleasant in the Gulf of Lyons.

XL.

There winds and waves had hurl'd them, and from thence,
Without their will, they carried them away;
For they were forced with steering to dispense,
And never had as yet a quiet day
On which they might repose, or even commence
A jury-mast or rudder, or could say
The ship would swim an hour, which, by good luck,
Still swam—though not exactly like a duck.

XLI.

The wind, in fact, perhaps was rather less,
But the ship labour'd so, they scarce could hope
To weather out much longer; the distress
Was also great with which they had to cope,
For want of water, and their solid mess
Was scant enough: in vain the telescope
Was used—nor sail nor shore appear'd in sight,
Nought but the heavy sea, and coming night.

XLII.

Again the weather threaten'd,—again blew
A gale, and in the fore and after hold
Water appear'd; yet, though the people knew
All this, the most were patient, and some bold,
Until the chains and leathers were worn through
Of all our pumps:—a wreck complete she roll'd,
At mercy of the waves, whose mercies are
Like human beings during civil war.

XLIII.

Then came the carpenter, at last, with tears
In his rough eyes, and told the captain he
Could do no more; he was a man in years,
And long had voyaged through many a stormy sea,
And if he wept at length, they were not fears
That made his eyelids as a woman's be,
But he, poor fellow, had a wife and children,
Two things for dying people quite bewildering.

XLIV.

The ship was evidently settling now
Fast by the head; and, all distinction gone,
Some went to prayers again, and made a vow
Of candles to their saints—but there were none
To pay them with; and some look'd o'er the bow;
Some hoisted out the boats; and there was one
That begg'd Pedrillo for an absolution,
Who told him to be damn'd—in his confusion.

XLV.

Some lash'd them in their hammocks, some put on
Their best clothes as if going to a fair;
Some cursed the day on which they saw the sun,
And gnash'd their teeth, and, howling, tore their hair;
And others went on, as they had begun,
Getting the boats out, being well aware
That a tight boat will live in a rough sea,
Unless with breakers close beneath her lee.

XLVI.

The worst of all was, that in their condition,
Having been several days in great distress,
'T was difficult to get out such provision
As now might render their long suffering less:
Men, even when dying, dislike inanition;
Their stock was damaged by the weather's stress:
Two casks of biscuit and a keg of butter
Were all that could be thrown into the cutter.

XLVII.

But in the long-boat they contrived to stow
Some pounds of bread, though injured by the wet;
Water, a twenty-gallon cask or so;
Six flasks of wine; and they contrived to get
A portion of their beef up from below,
And with a piece of pork, moreover, met,
But scarce enough to serve them for a luncheon;
Then there was rum, eight gallons in a puncheon.

XLVIII.

The other boats, the yawl and pinnace, had
Been stove in the beginning of the gale;
And the long-boat's condition was but bad,
As there were but two blankets for a sail,
And one oar for a mast, which a young lad
Threw in by good luck over the ship's rail;
And two boats could not hold, far less be stored,
To save one half the people then on board.

XLIX.

'T was twilight, for the sunless day went down
Over the waste of waters; like a veil,
Which, if withdrawn, would but disclose the frown
Of one who hates us, so the night was shown,
And grimly darkled o'er their faces pale,
And hopeless eyes, which o'er the deep alone
Gazed dim and desolate; twelve days had Fear
Been their familiar, and now Death was here.

L.

Some trial had been making at a raft,
With little hope in such a rolling sea,
A sort of thing at which one would have laugh'd,
If any laughter at such times could be,
Unless with people who too much have quaff'd,
And have a kind of wild and horrid glee,
Half epileptical, and half hysterical:—
Their preservation would have been a miracle.

LI.

At half-past eight o'clock, booms, hen-coops, spars,
And all things, for a chance, had been cast loose,
That still could keep afloat the struggling tars,
For yet they strove, although of no great use:
There was no light in heaven but a few stars;
The boats put off o'ercrowded with their crews;
She gave a heel, and then a lurch to port,
And, going down head-foremost—sunk, in short.

LII.

Then rose from sea to sky the wild farewell!
Then shriek'd the timid, and stood still the brave;
Then some leap'd overboard with dreadful yell,
As eager to anticipate their grave;
And the sea yawn'd around her like a hell,
And down she suck'd with her the whirling wave,
Like one who grapples with his enemy,
And strives to strangle him before he die.

LIII.

And first one universal shriek there rush'd,
Louder than the loud ocean, like a crash
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hush'd,
Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash
Of billows; but at intervals there gush'd,
Accompanied with a convulsive splash,
A solitary shriek—the bubbling cry
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.

LIV.

The boats, as stated, had got off before,
And in them crowded several of the crew;
And yet their present hope was hardly more
Than what it had been, for so strong it blew
There was slight chance of reaching any shore;
And then they were too many, though so few—
Nine in the cutter, thirty in the boat,
Were counted in them when they got afloat.

LV.

All the rest perish'd; near two hundred souls
Had left their bodies; and, what 's worse, alas!
When over catholics the ocean rolls,
They must wait several weeks before a mass
Takes off one peck of purgatorial coals,
Because, till people know what's come to pass,
They won't lay out their money on the dead—
It costs three francs for every mass that 's said.

LVI.

Juan got into the long-boat, and there
Contrived to help Pedrillo to a place;
It seem 'd as if they had exchanged their care,
For Juan wore the magisterial face
Which courage gives, while poor Pedrillo's pair
Of eyes were crying for their owner's case;
Battista (though a name called shortly Tita)
Was lost by getting at some aqua-vita.

LVII.

Pedro, his valet, too, he tried to save;
But the same cause, conducive to his loss,
Left him so drunk, he jump'd into the wave,
As o'er the cutter's edge he tried to cross,
And so he found a wine-and-watery grave:
They could not rescue him, although so close,
Because the sea ran higher every minute,
And for the boat—the crew kept crowding in it.

LVIII.

A small old spaniel,—which had been Don Jose's,
His father's, whom he loved, as ye may think,
For on such things the memory reposes
With tenderness,—stood howling on the brink,
Knowing, (dogs have such intellectual noses!)
No doubt, the vessel was about to sink;
And Juan caught him up, and, ere he stepp'd
Off, threw him in, then after him he leap 'd.

LIX.

He also stuff 'd his money where he could
About his person, and Pedrillo's too,
Who let him do, in fact, whate'er he would,
Not knowing what himself to say or do,
As every rising wave his dread renew'd;
But Juan, trusting they might still get through,
And deeming there were remedies for any ill,
Thus re-embark 'd his tutor and his spaniel.

LX.

'T was a rough night, and blew so stiffly yet,
That the sail was becalm'd between the seas,
Though on the wave's high top too much to set,
They dared not take it in for all the breeze;
Each sea curl'd o'er the stern, and kept them wet,
And made them bale without a moment's ease,
So that themselves as well as hopes were damp'd,
And the poor little cutter quickly swamp'd.

LXI.

Nine souls more went in her: the long-boat still
Kept above water, with an oar for mast,
Two blankets stitch'd together, answering ill
Instead of sail, were to the oar made fast;
Though every wave roll'd menacing to fill,
And present peril all before surpass'd,
They grieved for those who perish'd with the cutter,
And also for the biscuit-casks and butter.

LXII.

The sun rose red and fiery, a sure sign
Of the continuance of the gale: to run
Before the sea, until it should grow fine,
Was all that for the present could be done:
A few tea-spoonfuls of their rum and wine
Was served out to the people, who begun
To faint, and damaged bread wet through the bags,
And most of them had little clothes but rags.

LXIII.

They counted thirty, crowded in a space
Which left scarce room for motion or exertion!
They did their best to modify their case,
One half sate up, though numb'd with the immersion,
While t' other half were laid down in their place,
At watch and watch; thus, shivering like the tertian
Ague in its cold fit, they fill'd their boat,
With nothing but the sky for a great-coat.

LXIV.

'T is very certain the desire of life
Prolongs it; this is obvious to physicians,
When patients, neither plagued with friends nor wife,
Survive through very desperate conditions,
Because they still can hope, nor shines the knife
Nor shears of Atropos before their visions:
Despair of all recovery spoils longevity,
And makes men's miseries of alarming brevity.

LXV.

'T is said that persons living on annuities
Are longer lived than others,—God knows why,
Unless to plague the grantors,—yet so true it is,
That some, I really think, *do* never die;
Of any creditors the worst a Jew it is,
And *that's* their mode of furnishing supply:
In my young days they lent me cash that way,
Which I found very troublesome to pay.

LXVI.

'T is thus with people in an open boat,
They live upon the love of life, and bear
More than can be believed, or even thought,
And stand, like rocks, the tempest's wear and tear;
And hardship still has been the sailor's lot,
Since Noah's ark went cruising here and there—
She had a curious crew as well as cargo,
Like the first old Greek privateer, the Argo.

LXVII.

But man is a carnivorous production,
And must have meals, at least one meal a day;
He cannot live, like woodcocks, upon suction,
But, like the shark and tiger, must have prey:
Although his anatomical construction
Bears vegetables in a grumbling way,
Your labouring people think beyond all question,
Beef, veal, and mutton, better for digestion.

LXVIII.

And thus it was with this our hapless crew;
For on the third day there came on a calm,
And though at first their strength it might renew,
And, lying on their weariness like balm,
Lull'd them like turtles sleeping on the blue
Of ocean, when they woke they felt a qualm,
And fell all ravenously on their provision,
Instead of hoarding it with due precision.

LXIX.

The consequence was easily foreseen—
They ate up all they had, and drank their wine,
In spite of all remonstrances, and then
On what, in fact, next day were they to dine?
They hoped the wind would rise, these foolish men!
And carry them to shore; these hopes were fine,
But, as they had but one oar, and that brittle,
It would have been more wise to save their victual.

LXX.

The fourth day came, but not a breath of air,
And ocean slumber'd like an unwean'd child:
The fifth day, and their boat lay floating there,
The sea and sky were blue, and clear, and mild—
With their one oar (I wish they had had a pair)
What could they do? and hunger's rage grew wild:
So Juan's spaniel, spite of his entreating,
Was kill'd, and portion'd out for present eating.

LXXI.

On the sixth day they fed upon his hide,
And Juan, who had still refused, because
The creature was his father's dog that died,
Now feeling all the vulture in his jaws,
With some remorse received (though first denied),
As a great favour, one of the fore-paws,
Which he divided with Pedrillo, who
Devour'd it, longing for the other too.

LXXII.

The seventh day, and no wind—the burning sun
Blister'd and scorch'd; and, stagnant on the sea,
They lay like carcases; and hope was none,
Save in the breeze that came not; savagely
They glared upon each other—all was done,
Water, and wine, and food,—and you might see
The longings of the cannibal arise
(Although they spoke not) in their wolfish eyes.

LXXIII.

At length one whisper'd his companion, who
Whisper'd another, and thus it went round,
And then into a hoarser murmur grew,
An ominous, and wild, and desperate sound;
And when his comrade's thought each sufferer knew,
'T was but his own, suppress'd till now, he found:
And out they spoke of lots for flesh and blood,
And who should die to be his fellows' food.

LXXIV.

But ere they came to this, they that day shared
Some leathern caps, and what remain'd of shoes;
And then they look'd around them, and despair'd,
And none to be the sacrifice would choose;
At length the lots were torn up and prepared,
But of materials that much shock the muse—
Having no paper, for the want of better,
They took by force from Juan Julia's letter.

LXXV.

The lots were made, and mark'd, and mix'd, and handed,
In silent horror, and their distribution
Lull'd even the savage hunger which demanded,
Like the Promethean vulture, this pollution;
None in particular had sought or plann'd it,
'T was nature gnaw'd them to this resolution,
By which none were permitted to be neuter—
And the lot fell on Juan's luckless tutor.

LXXVI.

He but requested to be bled to death:
The surgeon had his instruments and bled
Pedrillo, and so gently ebb'd his breath,
You hardly could perceive when he was dead.
He died as born, a Catholic in faith,
Like most in the belief in which they 're bred,
And first a little crucifix be kiss'd,
And then held out his jugular and wrist.

LXXVII.

The surgeon, as there was no other fee,
Had his first choice of morsels for his pains;
But being thirstiest at the moment, he
Preferr'd a draught from the fast-flowing veins:
Part was divided, part thrown in the sea,
And such things as the entrails and the brains
Regaled two sharks, who follow'd o'er the billow—
The sailors ate the rest of poor Pedrillo.

LXXVIII.

The sailors ate him, all save three or four,
Who were not quite so fond of animal food;
To these was added Juan, who, before
Refusing his own spaniel, hardly could
Feel now his appetite increased much more;
'T was not to be expected that he should,
Even in extremity of their disaster,
Dine with them on his pastor and his master.

LXXIX.

'T was better that he did not; for, in fact,
The consequence was awful in the extreme:
For they, who were most ravenous in the act,
Went raging mad—Lord! how they did blaspheme!
And foam and roll, with strange convulsions rack'd,
Drinking salt water like a mountain-stream,
Tearing, and grinning, howling, screeching, swearing,
And, with hyæna laughter, died despairing.

LXXX.

Their numbers were much thinn'd by this infliction,
And all the rest were thin enough, Heaven knows;
And some of them had lost their recollection,
Happier than they who still perceived their woes;
But others ponder'd on a new dissection,
As if not warn'd sufficiently by those
Who had already perish'd, suffering madly,
For having used their appetites so sadly.

LXXXI.

And next they thought upon the master's mate,
As fattest; but he saved himself, because,
Besides being much averse from such a fate,
There were some other reasons: the first was,
He had been rather indisposed of late,
And that which chiefly proved his saving clause,
Was a small present made to him at Cadiz,
By general subscription of the ladies.

LXXXII.

Of poor Pedrillo something still remain'd,
But it was used sparingly,—some were afraid,
And others still their appetites constrain'd,
Or but at times a little supper made;
All except Juan, who throughout abstain'd,
Chewing a piece of bamboo, and some lead:
At length they caught two boobies and a noddy,
And then they left off eating the dead body.

LXXXIII.

And if Pedrillo's fate should shocking be,
Remember Ugolino condescends
To eat the head of his arch-enemy
The moment after he politely ends
His tale; if foes be food in hell, at sea
'Tis surely fair to dine upon our friends,
When shipwreck's short allowance grows too scanty,
Without being much more horrible than Dante.

LXXXIV.

And the same night there fell a shower of rain,
For which their mouths gaped, like the cracks of earth
When dried to summer dust; till taught by pain,
Men really know not what good water 's worth:
If you had been in Turkey or in Spain,
Or with a famish'd boat's-crew had your birth,
Or in the desert heard the camel's bell,
You 'd wish yourself where Truth is—in a well.

LXXXV.

It pour'd down torrents, but they were no richer,
Until they found a ragged piece of sheet,
Which served them as a sort of spongy pitcher,
And when they deem'd its moisture was complete,
They rung it out, and, though a thirsty ditcher
Might not have thought the scanty draught so sweet
As a full pot of porter, to their thinking
They ne'er till now had known the joys of drinking.

LXXXVI.

And their baked lips, with many a bloody crack,
Suck'd in the moisture, which like nectar stream'd;
Their throats were ovens, their swoln tongues were black,
As the rich man's in hell, who vainly scream'd
To beg the beggar, who could not rain back
A drop of dew, when every drop had seem'd
To taste of heaven—if this be true, indeed,
Some Christians have a comfortable creed.

LXXXVII.

There were two fathers in this ghastly crew,
And with them their two sons, of whom the one
Was more robust and hardy to the view,
But he died early; and when he was gone,
His nearest messmate told his sire, who threw
One glance on him, and said, « Heaven 's will be done!
I can do nothing,» and he saw him thrown
Into the deep, without a tear or groan.

LXXXVIII.

The other father had a weaklier child,
Of a soft cheek, and aspect delicate;
But the boy bore up long, and with a mild
And patient spirit, held aloof his fate;
Little he said, and now and then he smiled,
As if to win a part from off the weight
He saw increasing on his father's heart,
With the deep deadly thought, that they must part.

LXXXIX.

And o'er him bent his sire, and never raised
His eyes from off his face, but wiped the foam
From his pale lips, and ever on him gazed;
And when the wish'd-for shower at length was come,
And the boy's eyes, which the dull film half glazed,
Brighten'd, and for a moment seem'd to roam,
He squeezed from out a rag some drops of rain
Into his dying child 's mouth—but in vain.

XC.

The boy expired—the father held the clay,
And look'd upon it long, and when at last
Death left no doubt, and the dead burthen lay
Stiff on his heart, and pulse and hope were past,
He watch'd it wistfully, until away
'T was borne by the rude wave wherein 't was cast;
Then he himself sunk down, all dumb and shivering,
And gave no signs of life, save his limbs quivering.

XCI.

Now overhead a rainbow, bursting through
The scattering clouds, shone, spanning the dark sea,
Resting its bright base on the quivering blue:
And all within its arch appear'd to be
Clearer than that without, and its wide hue
Wax'd broad and waving like a banner free,
Then changed like to a bow that 's bent, and then
Forsook the dim eyes of these shipwreck'd men.

XCII.

It changed, of course; a heavenly cameleon
The airy child of vapour and the sun,
Brought forth in purple, cradled in vermilion,
Baptised in molten gold, and swathed in dun,
Glittering like crescents o'er a Turk's pavilion,
And blending every colour into one,
Just like a black eye in a recent scuffle
(For sometimes we must box without the muffle).

XCIII.

Our shipwreck'd seamen thought it a good omen—
It is as well to think so, now and then;
'Twas an old custom of the Greek and Roman,
And may become of great advantage when
Folks are discouraged; and most surely no men
Had greater need to nerve themselves again
Than these, and so this rainbow look'd like hope—
Quite a celestial kaleidoscope.

XCIV.

About this time a beautiful white bird,
Webfooted, not unlike a dove in size
And plumage (probably it might have err'd
Upon its course,) pass'd oft before their eyes,
And tried to perch, although it saw and heard
The men within the boat, and in this guise
It came and went, and flutter'd round them till
Night fell:—this seem'd a better omen still.

XCV.

But in this case I also must remark,
'Twas well this bird of promise did not perch,
Because the tackle of our shatter'd bark
Was not so safe for roosting as a church;
And had it been the dove from Noah's ark,
Returning there from her successful search,
Which in their way that moment chanced to fall,
They would have eat her, olive-branch and all.

XCVI.

With twilight it again came on to blow,
But not with violence; the stars shone out,
The boat made way; yet now they were so low,
They knew not where nor what they were about;
Some fancied they saw land, and some said « No!»
The frequent fog-banks gave them cause to doubt—
Some swore that they heard breakers, others guns
And all mistook about the latter once.

XCVII.

As morning broke, the light wind died away,
When he who had the watch sung out, and swore
If 'twas not land that rose with the sun's ray
He wish'd that land he never might see more:
And the rest rubb'd their eyes, and saw a bay,
Or thought they saw, and shaped their course for shore;
For shore it was, and gradually grew
Distinct and high, and palpable to view.

XCVIII.

And then of these some part burst into tears,
And others, looking with a stupid stare,
Could not yet separate their hopes from fears,
And seem'd as if they had no further care;
While a few pray'd—(the first time for some years)—
And at the bottom of the boat three were
Asleep; they shook them by the hand and head,
And tried to awaken them, but found them dead.

XCIX.

The day before, fast sleeping on the water,
They found a turtle of the hawk's-bill kind,
And by good fortune, gliding softly, caught her,
Which yielded a day's life, and to their mind
Proved even still a more nutritious matter,
Because it left encouragement behind:
They thought that in such perils, more than chance
Had sent them this for their deliverance.

C.

The land appear'd, a high and rocky coast,
And higher grew the mountains as they drew,
Set by a current, toward it: they were lost
In various conjectures, for none knew
To what part of the earth they had been toss'd,
So changeable had been the winds that blew;
Some thought it was Mount Ætna, some the highlands
Of Candia, Cyprus, Rhodes, or other islands.

CI.

Meantime the current, with a rising gale,
Still set them onwards to the welcome shore,
Like Charon's bark of spectres, dull and pale:
Their living freight was now reduced to four.
And three dead, whom their strength could not avail
To heave into the deep with those before,
Though the two sharks still follow'd them, and dash'd
The spray into their faces as they splash'd.

CII.

Famine, despair, cold, thirst, and heat had done
Their work on them by turns, and thinn'd them to
Such things, a mother had not known her son
Amidst the skeletons of that gaunt crew;
By night chill'd, by day scorch'd, thus one by one
They perish'd, until wither'd to these few,
But chiefly by a species of self-slaughter,
In washing down Pedrillo with salt water.

CIII.

As they drew nigh the land, which now was seen
Unequal in its aspect here and there,
They felt the freshness of its growing green,
That waved in forest tops, and smooth'd the air,
And fell upon their glazed eyes like a screen
From glistening waves, and skies so hot and bare—
Lovely seem'd any object that should sweep
Away the vast, salt, dread, eternal deep.

CIV.

The shore look'd wild, without a trace of man,
And girt by formidable waves; but they
Were mad for land, and thus their course they ran,
Though right a-head the roaring breakers lay:
A reef between them also now began
To show its boiling surf and bounding spray,
But, finding no place for their landing better,
They ran the boat for shore, and overset her.

CV.

But in his native stream, the Guadalquivir,
Juan to lave his youthful limbs was wont;
And, having learn'd to swim in that sweet river,
Had often turn'd the art to some account.
A better swimmer you could scarce see ever,
He could, perhaps, have pass'd the Hellespont,
As once (a feat on which ourselves we prided)
Leander, Mr Ekenhead, and I did.

CVI.

So, here, though faint, emaciated, and stark,
He buoy'd his boyish limbs, and strove to ply
With the quick wave, and gain, ere it was dark,
The beach which lay before him, high and dry:
The greatest danger here was from a shark,
That carried off his neighbour by the thigh;
As for the other two, they could not swim,
So nobody arrived on shore but him.

CVII.

Nor yet had he arrived but for the oar,
Which, providentially for him, was wash'd
Just as his feeble arms could strike no more,
And the hard wave o'erwhelm'd him as 't was dash'd
Within his grasp; he clung to it, and sore
The waters beat while he thereto was lash'd;
At last, with swimming, wading, scrambling, he
Roll'd on the beach, half senseless, from the sea:

CVIII.

There, breathless, with his digging nails he clung
Fast to the sand, lest the returning wave,
From whose reluctant roar his life he wrung,
Should suck him back to her insatiate grave:
And there he lay, full-length, where he was flung,
Before the entrance of a cliff-worn cave,
With just enough of life to feel its pain,
And deem that it was saved, perhaps in vain.

CIX.

With slow and staggering effort he arose,
But sunk again upon his bleeding knee
And quivering hand; and then he look'd for those
Who long had been his mates upon the sea,
But none of them appear'd to share his woes,
Save one, a corpse from out the famish'd three,
Who died two days before, and now had found
An unknown barren beach for burial ground.

CX.

And, as he gazed, his dizzy brain spun fast,
And down he sunk: and, as he sunk, the sand
Swam round and round, and all his senses pass'd:
He fell upon his side, and his stretch'd hand
Droop'd dripping on the oar (their jury-mast),
And, like a wither'd lily, on the land
His slender frame and pallid aspect lay,
As fair a thing as e'er was form'd of clay.

CXI.

How long in his damp trance young Juan lay
He knew not, for the earth was gone for him,
And Time had nothing more of night nor day
For his congealing blood, and senses dim;
And how this heavy faintness pass'd away
He knew not, till each painful pulse and limb,
And tingling vein, seem'd throbbing back to life,
For Death, though vanquish'd, still retired with strife.

CXII.

His eyes he open'd, shut, again unclosed,
For all was doubt and dizziness; methought
He still was in the boat, and had but dozed,
And felt again with his despair o'erwrought,
And wish'd it death in which he had reposed,
And then once more his feelings back were brought,
And slowly by his swimming eyes was seen
A lovely female face of seventeen.

CXIII.

'T was bending close o'er his, and the small mouth
Seem'd almost prying into his for breath;
And chafing him, the soft warm hand of youth
Recall'd his answering spirits back from death;
And, bathing his chill temples, tried to soothe
Each pulse to animation, till beneath
Its gentle touch and trembling care, a sigh
To these kind efforts made a low reply.

CXIV.

Then was the cordial pour'd, and mantle flung
Around his scarce-clad limbs; and the fair arm
Raised higher the faint head which o'er it hung;
And her transparent cheek, all pure and warm,
Pillow'd his death-like forehead; then she wrung
His dewy curls, long drench'd by every storm;
And watch'd with eagerness each throb that drew
A sigh from his heaved bosom—and hers too.

CXV.

And lifting him with care into the cave,
The gentle girl, and her attendant,—one
Young, yet her elder, and of brow less grave,
And more robust of figure,—then begun
To kindle fire, and as the new flames gave
Light to the rocks that roof'd them, which the sun
Had never seen, the maid, or whatsoe'er
She was, appear'd distinct, and tall, and fair.

CXVI.

Her brow was overhung with coins of gold,
That sparkled o'er the auburn of her hair,
Her clustering hair, whose longer locks were roll'd
In braids behind, and, though her stature were
Even of the highest for a female mould,
They nearly reach'd her heel; and in her air
There was a something which bespoke command,
As one who was a lady in the land.

CXVII.

Her hair, I said, was auburn; but her eyes
Were black as death, their lashes the same hue,
Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow lies
Deepest attraction, for when to the view
Forth from its raven fringe the full glance flies,
Ne'er with such force the swiftest arrow flew;
'T is as the snake, late coil'd, who pours his length,
And hurls at once his venom and his strength.

CXVIII.

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's pure dye
Like twilight rosy still with the set sun;
Short upper lip—sweet lips! that make us sigh
Ever to have seen such; for she was one
Fit for the model of a statuary
(A race of mere impostors, when all 's done—
I 've seen much finer women, ripe and real,
Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal).

CXIX.

I 'll tell you why I say so, for 't is just
One should not rail without a decent cause:
There was an Irish lady, to whose bust
I ne'er saw justice done, and yet she was
A frequent model; and if e'er she must
Yield to stern Time and Nature's wrinkling laws,
They will destroy a face which mortal thought.
Ne'er compass'd, nor less mortal chisel wrought.

CXX.

And such was she, the lady of the cave:
Her dress was very different from the Spanish,
Simpler, and yet of colours not so grave;
For, as you know, the Spanish women banish
Bright hues when out of doors, and yet, while wave
Around them (what I hope will never vanish)
The basquina and the mantilla, they
Seem at the same time mystical and gay.

CXXI.

But with our damsel this was not the case:
Her dress was many-colour'd, finely spun;
Her locks curl'd negligently round her face,
But through them gold and gems profusely shone;
Her girdle sparkled, and the richest lace
Flow'd in her veil, and many a precious stone
Flash'd on her little hand; but, what was shocking,
Her small snow feet had slippers, but no stocking.

CXXII.

The other female's dress was not unlike,
But of inferior materials: she
Had not so many ornaments to strike;
Her hair had silver only, bound to be
Her dowry; and her veil, in form alike,
Was coarser; and her air, though firm, less free;
Her hair was thicker, but less long; her eyes
As black, but quicker, and of smaller size.

CXXIII.

And these two tended him, and cheer'd him both
With food and raiment, and those soft attentions,
Which are (as I must own) of female growth,
And have ten thousand delicate inventions:
They made a most superior mess of broth,
A thing which poesy but seldom mentions,
But the best dish that e'er was cook'd since Homer's
Achilles order'd dinner for new comers.

CXXIV.

I 'll tell you who they were, this female pair,
Lest they should seem princesses in disguise;
Besides, I hate all mystery, and that air
Of clap-trap, which your recent poets prize;
And so, in short, the girls they really were
They shall appear before your curious eyes,
Mistress and maid; the first was only daughter
Of an old man who lived upon the water.

CXXV.

A firsherman he had been in his youth,
And still a sort of fisherman was he;
But other speculations were, in sooth,
Added to his connexion with the sea,
Perhaps not so respectable, in truth:
A little smuggling, and some piracy,
Left him, at last, the sole of many masters
Of an ill-gotten million of piastres.

CXXVI.

A fisher, therefore, was he—though of men,
Like Peter the Apostle,—and he fish'd
For wandering merchant-vessels, now and then,
And sometimes caught as many as he wish'd;
The cargoes he confiscated, and gain
He sought in the slave-market too, and dish'd
Full many a morsel for that Turkish trade,
By which, no doubt, a good deal may be made.

CXXVII.

He was a Greek, and on his isle had built
(One of the wild and smaller Cyclades)
A very handsome house from out his guilt,
And there he lived exceedingly at ease;
Heaven knows what cash he got, or blood he spilt,
A sad old fellow was he, if you please,
But this I know, it was a spacious building,
Full of barbaric carving, paint, and gilding.

CXXVIII.

He had an only daughter, call'd Haidee,
The greatest heiress of the Eastern Isles;
Besides so very beautiful was she,
Her dowry was as nothing to her smiles:
Still in her teens, and like a lovely tree
So grew to womanhood, and between whiles
Rejected several suitors, just to learn
How to accept a better in his turn.

CXXIX.

And walking out upon the beach, below
The cliff, towards sunset, on that day she found,
Insensible,—not dead, but nearly so,—
Don Juan, almost famish'd, and half drown'd;
But being naked, she was shock'd, you know,
Yet deem'd herself in common pity bound,
As far as in her lay, «to take him in,
A stranger» dying, with so white a skin.

CXXX.

But taking him into her father's house
Was not exactly the best way to save,
But like conveying to the cat the mouse,
Or people in a trance into their grave;
Because the good old man had so much «νους,»
Unlike the honest Arab thieves so brave,
He would have hospitably cured the stranger,
And sold him instantly, when out of danger.

CXXXI.

And therefore, with her maid, she thought it best
(A virgin always on her maid relies)
To place him in the cave for present rest:
And when, at last, he open'd his black eyes,
Their charity increased about their guest;
And their compassion grew to such a size,
It open'd half the turnpike-gates to heaven—
(Saint Paul says 't is the toll which must be given).

CXXXII.

They made a fire, but such a fire as they
Upon the moment could contrive with such
Materials as were cast up round the bay,
Some broken planks, and oars, that to the touch
Were nearly tinder, since so long they lay,
A mast was almost crumbled to a crutch;
But, by God's grace, here wrecks were in such plenty,
That there was fuel to have furnish'd twenty.

CXXXIII.

He had a bed of furs and a pelisse,
For Haidee stripp'd her sables off to make
His couch; and, that he might be more at ease,
And warm, in case by chance he should awake,
They also gave a petticoat apiece,
She and her maid, and promised by day-break
To pay him a fresh visit, with a dish
For breakfast, of eggs, coffee, bread, and fish.

CXXXIV.

And thus they left him to his lone repose:
Juan slept like a top, or like the dead,
Who sleep at last, perhaps (God only knows),
Just for the present, and in his lull'd head
Not even a vision of his former woes
Throbb'd in accursed dreams, which sometimes spread
Unwelcome visions of our former years,
Till the eye, cheated, opens thick with tears.

CXXXV.

Young Juan slept all dreamless:—but the maid,
Who smooth'd his pillow, as she left the den
Look'd back upon him, and a moment stay'd,
And turn'd, believing that he call'd again.
He slumber'd; yet she thought, at least she said
(The heart will slip even as the tongue and pen),
He had pronounced her name—but she forgot
That at this moment Juan knew it not.

CXXXVI.

And pensive to her father's house she went,
Enjoining silence strict to Zoë, who
Better than her knew what, in fact, she meant,
She being wiser by a year or two:
A year or two 's an age when rightly spent,
And Zoë spent hers as most women do,
In gaining all that useful sort of knowledge
Which is acquired in nature's good old college.

CXXXVII.

The morn broke, and found Juan slumbering still
Fast in his cave, and nothing clash'd upon
His rest; the rushing of the neighbouring rill,
And the young beams of the excluded sun,
Troubled him not, and he might sleep his fill;
And need he had of slumber yet, for none
Had suffer'd more—his hardships were comparative
To those related in my grand-dad's narrative.

CXXXVIII.

Not so Haidee; she sadly toss'd and tumbled,
And started from her sleep, and, turning o'er,
Dream'd of a thousand wrecks, o'er which she stumbled,
And handsome corpses strew'd upon the shore;
And woke her maid so early that she grumbled,
And call'd her father's old slaves up, who swore
In several oaths—Armenian, Turk, and Greek;—
They knew not what to think of such a freak.

CXXXIX.

But up she got, and up she made them get,
With some pretence about the sun, that makes
Sweet skies just when he rises, or is set;
And 't is, no doubt, a sight to see when breaks
Bright Phœbus, while the mountains still are wet
With mist, and every bird with him awakes,
And night is flung off like a mourning suit
Worn for a husband, or some other brute.

CXL.

I say, the sun is a most glorious sight,
I 've seen him rise full oft, indeed of late
I have sat up on purpose all the night,
Which hastens, as physicians say, one's fate;
And so all ye, who would be in the right
In health and purse, begin your day to date
From day-break, and when coffin'd at fourscore,
Engrave upon the plate, you rose at four.

CXLI.

And Haidee met the morning face to face;
Her own was freshest, though a feverish flush
Had dyed it with the headlong blood, whose race
From heart to cheek is curb'd into a blush,
Like to a torrent which a mountain's base,
That overpowers some Alpine river's rush,
Checks to a lake, whose waves in circles spread
Or the Red Sea—but the sea is not red.

CXLII.

And down the cliff the island virgin came,
And near the cave her quick light footsteps drew,
While the sun smiled on her with his first flame,
And young Aurora kiss'd her lips with dew,
Taking her for a sister; just the same
Mistake you would have made on seeing the two,
Although the mortal, quite as fresh and fair,
Had all the advantage too of not being air.

CXLIII.

And when into the cavern Haidee stepp'd,
All timidly, yet rapidly, she saw
That like an infant Juan sweetly slept;
And then she stopp'd, and stood as if in awe
(For sleep is awful), and on tiptoe crept
And wrapt him closer, lest the air, too raw,
Should reach his blood; then o'er him, still as death,
Bent with hush'd lips that drank his scarce-drawn breath.

CXLIV.

And thus, like to an angel o'er the dying
Who die in righteousness, she lean'd; and there
All tranquilly the shipwreck'd boy was lying,
As o'er him lay the calm and stirless air:
But Zoe the meantime some eggs was frying,
Since, after all, no doubt the youthful pair
Must breakfast, and betimes—lest they should ask it,
She drew out her provision from the basket.

CXLV.

She knew that the best feelings must have victual,
And that a shipwreck'd youth would hungry be;
Besides, being less in love, she yawn'd a little,
And felt her veins chill'd by the neighbouring sea;
And so, she cook'd their breakfast to a tittle;
I can't say that she gave them any tea,
But there were eggs, fruit, coffee, bread, fish, honey,
With Scio wine,—and all for love, not money.

CXLVI.

And Zoë, when the eggs were ready, and
The coffee made, would fain have waken'd Juan;
But Haidee stopp'd her with her quick small hand,
And without word, a sign her finger drew on
Her lip, which Zoë needs must understand;
And, the first breakfast spoil'd, prepared a new one,
Because her mistress would not let her break
That sleep which seem'd as it would ne'er awake.

CXLVII.

For still he lay, and on his thin worn cheek
A purple hectic play'd like dying day
On the snow-tops of distant hills; the streak
Of sufferance yet upon his forehead lay,
Where the blue veins look'd shadowy, shrunk, and weak;
And his black curls were dewy with the spray,
Which weigh'd upon them yet, all damp and salt,
Mix'd with the stony vapours of the vault.

CXLVIII.

And she bent o'er him, and he lay beneath,
Hush'd as the babe upon its mother's breast,
Droop'd as the willow when no winds can breathe,
Lull'd like the depth of ocean when at rest,
Fair as the crowning rose of the whole wreath,
Soft as the callow cygnet in its nest;
In short, he was a very pretty fellow,
Although his woes had turn'd him rather yellow.

CXLIX.

He woke and gazed, and would have slept again,
But the fair face which met his eyes forbade
Those eyes to close, though weariness and pain
Had further sleep a further pleasure made;
For woman's face was never form'd in vain
For Juan, so that even when he pray'd,
He turn'd from grisly saints, and martyrs hairy,
To the sweet portraits of the Virgin Mary.

CL.

And thus upon his elbow he arose,
And look'd upon the lady in whose cheek
The pale contended with the purple rose,
As with an effort she began to speak;
Her eyes were eloquent, her words would pose,
Although she told him, in good modern Greek,
With an Ionian accent, low and sweet,
That he was faint, and must not talk, but eat.

CLI.

Now Juan could not understand a word,
Being no Grecian; but he had an ear,
And her voice was the warble of a bird,
So soft, so sweet, so delicately clear,
That finer, simpler music ne'er was heard;
The sort of sound we echo with a tear,
Without knowing why—an overpowering tone,
Whence melody descends as from a throne.

CLII.

And Juan gazed as one who is awoke
By a distant organ, doubting if he be
Not yet a dreamer, till the spell is broke
By the watchman, or some such reality,
Or by one's early valet's cursed knock;
At least it is a heavy sound to me,
Who like a morning slumber—for the night
Shows stars and women in a better light.

CLIII.

And Juan, too, was help'd out from his dream,
Or sleep, or whatsoe'er it was, by feeling
A most prodigious appetite: the steam
Of Zoë's cookery no doubt was stealing
Upon his senses, and the kindling beam
Of the new fire, which Zoë kept up, kneeling,
To stir her viands, made him quite awake
And long for food, but chiefly a beef-steak.

CLIV.

But beef is rare within ese oxless isles;
Goat's flesh there is, no doubt, and kid, and mutton,
And, when a holiday upon them smiles,
A joint upon their barbarous spits they put on:
But this occurs but seldom, between whiles,
For some of these are rocks with scarce a hut on,
Others are fair and fertile, among which,
This, though not large, was one of the most rich.

CLV.

I say that beef is rare, and can't help thinking
That the old fable of the Minotaur—
From which our modern morals, rightly shrinking,
Condemn the royal lady's taste who wore
A cow's shape for a mask—was only (sinking
The allegory) a mere type, no more,
That Pasiphaë promoted breeding cattle,
To make the Cretans bloodier in battle.

CLVI.

For we all know that English people are
Fed upon beef—I won't say much of beer,
Because 't is liquor only, and being far
From this my subject, has no business here;—
We know, too, they are very fond of war,
A pleasure—like all pleasures—rather dear;
So were the Cretans—from which I infer
That beef and battles both were owing to her.

CLVII.

But to resume. The languid Juan raised
His head upon his elbow, and he saw
A sight on which he had not lately gazed,
As all his latter meals had been quite raw,
Three or four things, for which the Lord he praised,
And, feeling still the famish'd vulture gnaw,
He fell upon whate'er was offer'd, like
A priest, a shark, an alderman, or pike.

CLVIII.

He ate, and he was well supplied; and she,
Who watch'd him like a mother, would have fed
Him past all bounds, because she smiled to see
Such appetite in one she had deem'd dead:
But Zoë, being older than Haidee,
Knew (by tradition, for she ne'er had read)
That famish'd people must be slowly nursed,
And fed by spoonfuls, else they always burst.

CLIX.

And so she took the liberty to state,
Rather by deeds than words, because the case
Was urgent, that the gentleman, whose fate
Had made her mistress quit her bed to trace
The sea shore at this hour, must leave his plate,
Unless he wish'd to die upon the place—
She snatch'd it, and refused another morsel,
Saying, he had gorged enough to make a horse ill.

CLX.

Next they—he being naked, save a tatter'd
Pair of scarce decent trowsers—went to work,
And in the fire his recent rags they scatter'd,
And dress'd him, for the present, like a Turk,
Or Greek—that is, although it not much matter'd,
Omitting turban, slippers, pistols, dirk,—
They furnish'd him, entire except some stitches,
With a clean shirt, and very spacious breeches.

CLXI.

And then fair Haidee tried her tongue at speaking,
But not a word could Juan comprehend,
Although he listen'd so that the young Greek in
Her earnestness would ne'er have made an end;
And, as he interrupted not, went eking
Her speech out to her protégé and friend,
Till, pausing at the last her breath to take,
She saw he did not understand Romaic.

CLXII.

And then she had recourse to nods, and signs,
And smiles, and sparkles of the speaking eye,
And read (the only book she could) the lines
Of his fair face, and found, by sympathy,
The answer eloquent, where the soul shines
And darts in one quick glance a long reply;
And thus in every look she saw express'd
A world of words, and things at which she guess'd.

CLXIII.

And now, by dint of fingers and of eyes,
And words repeated after her, he took
A lesson in her tongue; but by surmise,
No doubt, less of her language than her look:
As he who studies fervently the skies
Turns oftener to the stars than to his book,
Thus Juan learn'd his alpha beta better
From Haidee's glance than any graven letter.

CLXIV.

'T is pleasing to be school'd in a strange tongue
By female lips and eyes—that is, I mean,
When both the teacher and the taught are young,
As was the case, at least, where I have been;
They smile so when one 's right, and when one 's wrong
They smile still more, and then there intervene
Pressure of hands, perhaps even a chaste kiss;—
I learn'd the little that I know by this:

CLXV.

That is, some words of Spanish, Turk, and Greek,
Italian not at all, having no teachers;
Much English I cannot pretend to speak,
Learning that language chiefly from its preachers,
Barrow, South, Tillotson, whom every week
I study, also Blair, the highest reachers
Of eloquence in piety and prose—
I hate your poets, so read none of those.

CLXVI.

As for the ladies, I have nought to say,
A wanderer from the British world of fashion,
Where I, like other «dogs, have had my day,»
Like other men too, may have had my passion—
But that, like other things, has pass'd away:
And all her fools whom I *could* lay the lash on,
Foes, friends, men, women, now are nought to me
But dreams of what has been, no more to be.

CLXVII.

Return we to Don Juan. He begun
To hear new words, and to repeat them; but
Some feelings, universal as the sun,
Were such as could not in his breast be shut
More than within the bosom of a nun:
He was in love—as you would be, no doubt,
With a young benefactress,—so was she
Just in the way we very often see.

CLXVIII.

And every day by bay-break—rather early
For Juan, who was somewhat fond of rest—
She came into the cave, but it was merely
To see her bird reposing in his nest;
And she would softly stir his locks so curly,
Without disturbing her yet slumbering guest,
Breathing all gently o'er his cheek and mouth,
As o'er a bed of roses the sweet south.

CLXIX.

And every morn his colour freshlier came,
And every day help'd on his convalescence;
'T was well, because health in the human frame
Is pleasant, besides being true love's essence,
For health and idleness to passion's flame
Are oil and gunpowder; and some good lessons
Are also learnt from Ceres and from Bacchus,
Without whom Venus will not long attack us.

CLXX.

While Venus fills the heart (without heart really
Love, though good always, is not quite so good),
Ceres presents a plate of vermicelli—
For love must be sustain'd like flesh and blood,—
While Bacchus pours out wine, or hands a jelly:
Eggs, oysters too, are amatory food;
But who is their purveyor from above
Heaven knows,—it may be Neptune, Pan, or Jove.

CLXXI.

When Juan woke, he found some good things ready,
A bath, a breakfast, and the finest eyes
That ever made a youthful heart less steady,
Besides her maid's, as pretty for their size;
But I have spoken of all this already—
And repetition's tiresome and unwise,—
Well—Juan, after bathing in the sea,
Came always back to coffee and Haidee.

CLXXII.

Both were so young, and one so innocent,
That bathing pass'd for nothing; Juan seem'd
To her, as 't were, the kind of being sent,
Of whom these two years she had nightly dream'd,
A something to be loved, a creature meant
To be her happiness, and whom she deem'd
To render happy, all who joy would win
Must share it,—happiness was born a twin.

CLXXIII.

It was such pleasure to behold him, such
Enlargement of existence to partake
Nature with him, to thrill beneath his touch,
To watch him slumbering, and to see him wake.
To live with him for ever were too much;
But then the thought of parting made her quake:
He was her own, her ocean treasure, cast
Like a rich wreck—her first love and her last.

CLXXIV.

And thus a moon roll'd on, and fair Haidee
Paid daily visits to her boy, and took
Such plentiful precautions, that still he
Remain'd unknown within his craggy nook:
At last her father's prows put out to sea,
For certain merchantmen upon the look,
Not as of yore to carry off an Io,
But three Ragusan vessels, bound for Scio.

CLXXV.

Then came her freedom, for she had no mother,
So that, her father being at sea, she was
Free as a married woman, or such other
Female, as where she likes may freely pass,
Without even the incumbrance of a brother,
The freest she that ever gazed on glass:
I speak of christian lands in this comparison,
Where wives, at least, are seldom kept in garrison.

CLXXVI.

Now she prolong'd her visits and her talk
(For they must talk), and he had learnt to say
So much as to propose to take a walk,—
For little had he wander'd since the day
On which, like a young flower snapp'd from the stalk,
Drooping and dewy on the beach he lay,—
And thus they walk'd out in the afternoon,
And saw the sun set opposite the moon.

CLXXVII.

It was a wild and breaker-beaten coast,
With cliffs above, and a broad sandy shore,
Guarded by shoals and rocks as by an host,
With here and there a creek, whose aspect wore
A better welcome to the tempest-toss'd;
And rarely ceased the haughty billow's roar,
Save on the dead long summer days, which make
The outstretch'd ocean glitter like a lake.

CLXXVIII.

And the small ripple spilt upon the beach
Scarcely o'erpass'd the cream of your champagne,
When o'er the brim the sparkling bumpers reach,
That spring-dew of the spirit! the heart's rain!
Few things surpass old wine: and they may preach
Who please,—the more because they preach in vain,—
Let us have wine and woman, mirth and laughter,
Sermons and soda-water the day after.

CLXXIX.

Man, being reasonable, must get drunk;
The best of life is but intoxication:
Glory, the grape, love, gold, in these are sunk
The hopes of all men, and of every nation;
Without their sap, how branchless were the trunk
Of life's strange tree, so fruitful on occasion:
But to return,—get very drunk; and when
You wake with head ache, you shall see what then.

CLXXX.

Ring for your valet—bid him quickly bring
Some hock and soda-water, then you 'll know
A pleasure worthy Xerxes the great king;
For not the bless'd sherbet, sublimed with snow,
Nor the first sparkle of the desert-spring,
Nor Burgundy in all its sunset glow,
After long travel, ennui, love, or slaughter,
Vie with that draught of hock and soda-water.

CLXXXI.

The coast—I think it was the coast that I
Was just describing—Yes, it *was* the coast—
Lay at this period quiet as the sky,
The sands untumbled, the blue waves untoss'd,
And all was stillness, save the sea-bird's cry,
And dolphin's leap, and little billow cross'd
By some low rock or shelve that made it fret
Against the boundary it scarcely wet.

CLXXXII.

And forth they wander'd, her sire being gone,
As I have said, upon an expedition;
And mother, brother, guardian, she had none,
Save Zoë, who although with due precision
She waited on her lady with the sun,
Thought daily service was her only mission,
Bringing warm water, wreathing her long tresses,
And asking now and then for cast-off dresses.

CLXXXIII.

It was the cooling hour, just when the rounded
Red sun sinks down behind the azure hill,
Which then seems as if the whole earth it bounded,
Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim, and still,
With the far mountain-crescent half surrounded
On one side, and the deep sea calm and chill
Upon the other, and the rosy sky,
With one star sparkling through it like an eye.

CLXXXIV.

And thus they wander'd forth, and hand in hand,
Over the shining pebbles and the shells,
Glided along the smooth and harden'd sand,
And in the worn and wild receptacles
Work'd by the storms, yet work'd as it were plann'd,
In hollow halls, with sparry roofs and cells,
They turn'd to rest; and each, clasp'd by an arm,
Yielded to the deep twilight's purple charm.

CLXXXV.

They look'd up to the sky, whose floating glow
Spread like a rosy ocean, vast and bright;
They gazed upon the glittering sea below,
Whence the broad moon rose circling into sight;
They heard the waves splash, and the wind so low,
And saw each other's dark eyes darting light
Into each other—and, beholding this,
Their lips drew near, and clung into a kiss;

CLXXXVI.

A long, long kiss, a kiss of youth, and love,
And beauty, all concentrating like rays
Into one focus, kindled from above;
Such kisses as belong to early days,
Where heart, and soul, and sense, in concert move,
And the blood's lava, and the pulse a blaze,
Each kiss a heart-quake,—for a kiss's strength,
I think it must be reckon'd by its length.

CLXXXVII.

By length I mean duration; theirs endured
Heaven knows how long—no doubt they never reckon'd;
And if they had, they could not have secured
The sum of their sensations to a second:
They had not spoken; but they felt allured,
As if their souls and lips each other beckon'd,
Which, being join'd, like swarming bees they clung—
Their hearts the flowers from whence the honey sprung.

CLXXXVIII.

They were alone, but not alone as they
Who shut in chambers think it loneliness;
The silent ocean, and the starlight bay,
The twilight glow, which momently grew less,
The voiceless sands, and dropping caves, that lay
Around them, made them to each other press,
As if there were no life beneath the sky
Save theirs, and that their life could never die.

CLXXXIX.

They fear'd no eyes nor ears on that lone beach,
They felt no terrors from the night, they were
All in all to each other: though their speech
Was broken words, they *thought* a language there,—
And all the burning tongues the passions teach
Found in one sigh the best interpreter
Of nature's oracle—first love,—that all
Which Eve has left her daughters since her fall.

CXC.

Haidee spoke not of scruples, ask'd no vows,
Nor offer'd any; she had never heard
Of plight and promises to be a spouse,
Or perils by a loving maid incurr'd;
She was all which pure ignorance allows,
And flew to her young mate like a young bird;
And, never having dreamt of falsehood, she
Had not one word to say of constancy.

CXCI.

She loved, and was beloved—she adored,
And she was worshipp'd; after nature's fashion,
Their intense souls, into each other pour'd,
If souls could die, had perish'd in that passion,—
But by degrees their senses were restored,
Again to be o'ercome, again to dash on;
And, beating 'gainst *his* bosom, Haidee's heart
Felt as if never more to beat apart.

CXCII.

Alas! they were so young, so beautiful,
So lonely, loving, helpless, and the hour
Was that in which the heart is always full,
And, having o'er itself no further power,
Prompts deeds eternity can not annul,
But pays off moments in an endless shower
Of hell-fire—all prepared for people giving
Pleasure or pain to one another living.

CXCIII.

Alas! for Juan and Haidee! they were
So loving and so lovely—till then never,
Excepting our first parents, such a pair
Had run the risk of being damn'd for ever;
And Haidee, being devout as well as fair,
Had, doubtless, heard about the Stygian river,
And hell and purgatory—but forgot
Just in the very crisis she should not.

CXCIV.

They look upon each other, and their eyes
Gleam in the moonlight; and her white arm clasps
Round Juan's head, and his around hers lies
Half buried in the tresses which it grasps;
She sits upon his knee, and drinks his sighs,
He hers until they end in broken gasps;
And thus they form a group that 's quite antique,
Half naked, loving, natural, and Greek.

CXCV.

And when those deep and burning moments pass'd,
And Juan sunk to sleep within her arms,
She slept not, but all tenderly, though fast,
Sustain'd his head upon her bosom's charms,
And now and then her eye to heaven is cast,
And then on the pale cheek her breast now warms,
Pillow'd on her o'erflowing heart, which pants
With all it granted, and with all it grants.

CXCVI.

An infant when it gazes on a light,
A child the moment when it drains the breast,
A devotee when soars the Host in sight,
An Arab with a stranger for a guest,
A sailor when the prize has struck in fight,
A miser filling his most hoarded chest,
Feel rapture; but not such true joy are reaping
As they who watch o'er what they love while sleeping.

CXCVII.

For there it lies so tranquil, so beloved,
All that it hath of life with us is living;
So gentle, stirless, helpless, and unmoved,
And all unconscious of the joy 't is giving,
All it hath felt, inflicted, pass'd, and proved,
Hush'd into depths beyond the watcher's diving;
There lies the thing we love with all its errors
And all its charms, like death without its terrors.

CXCVIII.

The lady watch'd her lover—and that hour
Of Love's, and Night's, and Ocean's solitude,
O'erflow'd her soul with their united power;
Amidst the barren sand and rocks so rude
She and her wave-worn love had made their bower,
Where nought upon their passion could intrude,
And all the stars that crowded the blue space
Saw nothing happier than her glowing face.

CXCIX.

Alas! the love of women! it is known
To be a lovely and a fearful thing;
For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,
And if 't is lost, life hath no more to bring
To them but mockeries of the past alone,
And their revenge is as the tiger's spring,
Deadly, and quick, and crushing; yet, as real
Torture is theirs, what they inflict they feel.

CC.

They are right; for man, to man so oft unjust,
Is always so to women; one sole bond
Awaits them, treachery is all their trust;
Taught to conceal, their bursting hearts despond
Over their idol, till some wealthier lust
Buys them in marriage—and what rests beyond?
A thankless husband, next a faithless lover,
Then dressing, nursing, praying, and all 's over.

CCI.

Some take a lover, some take drams or prayers,
Some mind their household, others dissipation,
Some run away, and but exchange their cares,
Losing the advantage of a virtuous station;
Few changes e'er can better their affairs,
Theirs being an unnatural situation,
From the dull palace to the dirty hovel:
Some play the devil, and then write a novel.

CCII.

Haidee was nature's bride, and knew not this;
Haidee was passion's child, born where the sun
Showers triple light, and scorches even the kiss
Of his gazelle-eyed daughters; she was one
Made but to love, to feel that she was his
Who was her chosen: what was said or done
Elsewhere was nothing—She had nought to fear,
Hope, care, nor love beyond, her heart beat *here*.

CCIII.

And oh! that quickening of the heart, that beat;
How much it costs us! yet each rising throb
Is in its cause as its effect so sweet,
That wisdom, ever on the watch to rob
Joy of its alchymy, and to repeat
Fine truths; even conscience, too, has a tough job
To make us understand each good old maxim,
So good—I wonder Castlereagh don't tax 'em.

CCIV.

And now 't was done—on the lone shore were plighted
Their hearts; the stars, their nuptial torches, shed
Beauty upon the beautiful they lighted:
Ocean their witness, and the cave their bed,
By their own feelings hallow'd and united,
Their priest was solitude, and they were wed:
And they were happy, for to their young eyes
Each was an angel, and earth paradise.

CCV.

Oh love! of whom great Cæsar was the suitor,
Titus the master, Antony the slave,
Horace, Catullus, scholars, Ovid tutor,
Sappho the sage blue-stocking, in whose grave
All those may leap who rather would be neuter—
(Leucadia's rock still overlooks the wave)—
Oh Love! thou art the very god of evil,
For, after all, we cannot call thee devil.

CCVI.

Thou mak'st the chaste connubial state precarious,
And jestest with the brows of mightiest men:
Cæsar and Pompey, Mahomet, Belisarius,
Have much employ'd the muse of history's pen;
Their lives and fortunes were extremely various,—
Such worthies time will never see again;—
Yet to these four in three things the same luck holds,
They all were heroes, conquerors, and cuckolds.

CCVII.

Thou mak'st philosophers: there 's Epicurus
And Aristippus, a material crew!
Who to immoral courses would allure us
By theories, quite practicable too;
If only from the devil they would insure us
How pleasant were the maxim (not quite new),
«Eat, drink, and love, what can the rest avail us?»
So said the royal sage, Sardanapalus.

CCVIII.

But Juan! had he quite forgotten Julia?
And should he have forgotten her so soon?
I can't but say it seems to me most truly a
Perplexing question; but, no doubt, the moon
Does these things for us, and whenever newly a
Palpitation rises, 't is her boon,
Else how the devil is it that fresh features
Have such a charm for us poor human creatures?

CCIX.

I hate inconstancy—I loathe, detest,
Abhor, condemn, abjure the mortal made
Of such quicksilver clay that in his breast
No permanent foundation can be laid;
Love, constant love, has been my constant guest,
And yet last night, being at a masquerade,
I saw the prettiest creature, fresh from Milan,
Which gave me some sensations like a villain.

CCX.

But soon philosophy came to my aid,
And whisper'd «think of every sacred tie!»
«I will, my dear philosophy!» I said,
«But then her teeth, and then, oh heaven! her eye!
I 'll just inquire if she be wife or maid,
Or neither—out of curiosity.»
«Stop!» cried philosophy, with air so Grecian
(Though she was mask'd then as a fair Venetian)—

CCXI.

«Stop!» so I stopp'd.—But to return: that which
Men call inconstancy is nothing more
Than admiration due where nature's rich
Profusion with young beauty covers o'er
Some favour'd object; and as in the niche
A lovely statue we almost adore,
This sort of adoration of the real
Is but a heightening of the «beau ideal.»

CCXII.

'T is the perception of the beautiful,
A fine extension of the faculties,
Platonic, universal, wonderful,
Drawn from the stars and filter'd through the skies,
Without which life would be extremely dull;
In short, it is the use of our own eyes,
With one or two small senses added, just
To hint that flesh is form'd of fiery dust.

CCXIII.

Yet 't is a painful feeling, and unwilling,
For surely if we always could perceive
In the same object graces quite as killing
As when she rose upon us like an Eve,
'T would save us many a heart-ache, many a shilling
(For we must get them any how, or grieve),
Whereas, if one sole lady pleased for ever,
How pleasant for the heart, as well as liver!

CCXIV.

The heart is like the sky, a part of heaven,
But changes night and day too, like the sky;
Now o'er it clouds and thunder must be driven,
And darkness and destruction as on high;
But when it hath been scorch'd, and pierced, and riven,
Its storms expire in water-drops; the eye
Pours forth at last the heart's blood turn'd to tears,
Which make the English climate of our years.

CCXV.

The liver is the lazaret of bile,
But very rarely executes its function,
For the first passion stays there such a while
That all the rest creep in and form a junction,
Like knots of vipers on a dunghill's soil,
Rage, fear, hate, jealousy, revenge, compunction,
So that all mischiefs spring up from this entrail,
Like earthquakes from the hidden fire call'd «central.»

CCXVI.

In the mean time, without proceeding more
In this anatomy, I 've finish'd now
Two hundred and odd stanzas as before,
That being about the number I 'll allow
Each canto of the twelve, or twenty-four;
And, laying down my pen, I make my bow,
Leaving Don Juan and Haidee to plead
For them and theirs with all who deign to read.

CANTO III.

I.

Hail, Muse! *et cetera.*—We left Juan sleeping,
Pillow'd upon a fair and happy breast,
And watch'd by eyes that never yet knew weeping,
And loved by a young heart, too deeply bless'd
To feel the poison through her spirit creeping,
Or knew who rested there; a foe to rest
Had soil'd the current of her sinless years,
And turn'd her pure heart's purest blood to tears.

II.

Oh, love! what is it in this world of ours
Which makes it fatal to be loved? Ah, why
With cypress branches hast thou wreathed thy bowers,
And made thy best interpreter a sigh?
As those who dote on odours pluck the flowers,
And place them on their breast—but place to die—
Thus the frail beings we would fondly cherish
Are laid within our bosoms but to perish.

III.

In her first passion woman loves her lover,
In all the others all she loves is love,
Which grows a habit she can ne'er get over,
And fits her loosely—like an easy glove,
As you may find, whene'er you like to prove her:
One man alone at first her heart can move;
She then prefers him in the plural number,
Not finding that the additions much encumber.

IV.

I know not if the fault be men's or theirs;
But one thing 's pretty sure; a woman planted
(Unless at once she plunge for life in prayers),
After a decent time must be gallanted;
Although, no doubt, her first of love affairs
Is that to which her heart is wholly granted;
Yet there are some, they say, who have had *none*,
But those who have ne'er end with only *one*.

V.

'T is melancholy, and a fearful sign
Of human frailty, folly, also crime,
That love and marriage rarely can combine,
Although they both are born in the same clime;
Marriage from love, like vinegar from wine—
A sad, sour, sober beverage—by time
Is sharpen'd from its high celestial flavour
Down to a very homely household savour.

VI.

There 's something of antipathy, as 't were,
Between their present and their future state;
A kind of flattery that 's hardly fair
Is used, until the truth arrives too late—
Yet what can people do, except despair?
The same things change their names at such a rate;
For instance—passion in a lover 's glorious,
But in a husband is pronounced uxorious.

VII.

Men grow ashamed of being so very fond;
They sometimes also get a little tired
(But that, of course, is rare), and then despond:
The same things cannot always be admired,
Yet 't is «so nominated in the bond,»
That both are tied till one shall have expired.
Sad thought! to lose the spouse that was adorning
Our days, and put one's servants into mourning.

VIII.

There 's doubtless something in domestic doings
Which forms, in fact, true love's antithesis;
Romances paint at full length people's wooings,
But only give a bust of marriages;
For no one cares for matrimonial cooings,
There 's nothing wrong in a connubial kiss:
Think you, if Laura had been Petrarch's wife,
He would have written sonnets all his life?

IX.

All tragedies are finish'd by a death,
All comedies are ended by a marriage;
The future states of both are left to faith,
For authors fear description might disparage
The worlds to come of both, or fall beneath,
And then both worlds would punish their miscarriage;
So leaving each their priest and prayer-book ready,
They say no more of Death or of the Lady.

X.

The only two that in my recollection
Have sung of heaven and hell, or marriage, are
Dante and Milton, and of both the affection
Was hapless in their nuptials, for some bar
Of fault or temper ruin'd the connexion
(Such things, in fact, it don't ask much to mar);
But Dante's Beatrice and Milton's Eve
Were not drawn from their spouses, you conceive.

XI.

Some persons say that Dante meant theology
By Beatrice, and not a mistress—I,
Although my opinion may require apology,
Deem this a commentator's phantasy,
Unless indeed it was from his own knowledge he
Decided thus, and show'd good reason why;
I think that Dante's more abstruse ecstatics
Meant to personify the mathematics.

XII.

Haidee and Juan were not married, but
The fault was theirs, not mine: it is not fair,
Chaste reader, then, in any way to put
The blame on me, unless you wish they were;
Then if you 'd have them wedded, please to shut
The book which treats of this erroneous pair,
Before the consequences grow too awful—
'T is dangerous to read of loves unlawful.

XIII.

Yet they were happy,—happy in the illicit
Indulgence of their innocent desires;
But more imprudent grown with every visit,
Haidee forgot the island was her sire's;
When we have what we like, 't is hard to miss it,
At least in the beginning, ere one tires;
Thus she came often, not a moment losing,
Whilst her piratical papa was cruising.

XIV.

Let not his mode of raising cash seem strange,
Although he fleeced the flags of every nation,
For into a prime-minister but change
His title, and 't is nothing but taxation;
But he, more modest, took an humbler range
Of life, and in an honester vocation
Pursued o'er the high seas his watery journey,
And merely practised as a sea-attorney.

XV.

The good old gentleman had been detain'd
By winds and waves, and some important captures;
And, in the hope of more, at sea remain'd,
Although a squall or two had damp'd his raptures
By swamping one of the prizes; he had chain'd
His prisoners, dividing them like chapters,
In number'd lots; they all had cuffs and collars,
And averaged each from ten to a hundred dollars.

XVI.

Some he disposed of off Cape Matapan,
Among his friends the Mainots; some he sold
To his Tunis correspondents, save one man
Toss'd overboard unsaleable (being old);
The rest—save here and there some richer one,
Reserved for future ransom in the hold,—
Were link'd alike; as for the common people, he
Had a large order from the Dey of Tripoli.

XVII.

The merchandise was served in the same way,
Pieced out for different marts in the Levant,
Except some certain portions of the prey,
Light classic articles of female want,
French stuffs, lace, tweezers, toothpicks, teapot tray,
Guitars and castanets from Alicant,
All which selected from the spoil he gathers,
Robb'd for his daughter by the best of fathers.

XVIII.

A monkey, a Dutch mastiff, a mackaw,
Two parrots, with a Persian cat and kittens,
He chose from several animals he saw—
A terrier too, which once had been a Briton's,
Who dying on the coast of Ithaca,
The peasants gave the poor dumb thing a pittance;
These to secure in this strong blowing weather,
He caged in one huge hamper altogether.

XIX.

Then having settled his marine affairs,
Despatching single cruisers here and there,
His vessel having need of some repairs,
He shaped his course to where his daughter fair
Continued still her hospitable cares;
But that part of the coast being shoal and bare,
And rough with reefs which ran out many a mile,
His port lay on the other side o' the isle.

XX.

And there he went ashore without delay,
Having no custom-house nor quarantine
To ask him awkward questions on the way
About the time and place where he had been:
He left his ship to be hove down next day,
With orders to the people to careen;
So that all hands were busy beyond measure,
In getting out goods, ballast, guns, and treasure.

XXI.

Arriving at the summit of a hill
Which overlook'd the white walls of his home,
He stopp'd.—What singular emotions fill
Their bosoms who have been induced to roam!
With fluttering doubts if all be well or ill—
With love for many, and with fears for some;
All feelings which o'erleap the years long lost,
And bring our hearts back to their starting-post.

XXII.

The approach of home to husbands and to sires,
After long travelling by land or water,
Most naturally some small doubt inspires—
A female family 's a serious matter
(None trusts the sex more, or so much admires—
But they hate flattery, so I never flatter);
Wives in their husbands' absences grow subtler,
And daughters sometimes run off with the butler.

XXIII.

An honest gentleman at his return
May not have the good fortune of Ulysses;
Not all lone matrons for their husbands mourn,
Or show the same dislike to suitors' kisses;
The odds are that he finds a handsome urn
To his memory, and two or three young misses
Born to some friend, who holds his wife and riches,
And that his Argus bites him by—the Breeches.

XXIV.

If single, probably his plighted fair
Has in his absence wedded some rich miser;
But all the better, for the happy pair
May quarrel, and the lady growing wiser,
He may resume his amatory care
As cavalier servente, or despise her;
And that his sorrow may not be a dumb one,
Write odes on the Inconstancy of Woman.

XXV.

And oh! ye gentlemen who have already
Some chaste *liaison* of the kind—I mean
An honest friendship with a married lady—
The only thing of this sort ever seen
To last—of all connexions the most steady,
And the true Hymen (the first 's but a screen)—
Yet for all that keep not too long away;
I 've known the absent wrong'd four times a-day.

XXVI.

Lambro, our sea-solicitor, who had
Must less experience of dry land than ocean,
On seeing his own chimney-smoke, felt glad;
But not knowing metaphysics, had no notion
Of the true reason of his not being sad,
Or that of any other strong emotion;
He loved his child, and would have wept the loss of her,
But knew the cause no more than a philosopher.

XXVII.

He saw his white walls shining in the sun,
His garden trees all shadowy and green;
He heard his rivulet's light bubbling run,
The distant dog-bark; and perceived between
The umbrage of the wood, so cool and dun,
The moving figures and the sparkling sheen
Of arms (in the East all arm), and various dyes
Of colour'd garbs, as bright as butterflies.

XXVIII.

And as the spot where they appear he nears,
Surprised at these unwonted signs of idling,
He hears—alas! no music of the spheres,
But an unhallow'd, earthly sound of fiddling!
A melody which made him doubt his ears,
The cause being past his guessing, or unriddling;
A pipe, too, and a drum, and, shortly after,
A most unoriental roar of laughter.

XXIX.

And still more nearly to the place advancing,
Descending rather quickly the declivity,
Through the waved branches, o'er the greensward glancing,
'Midst other indications of festivity,
Seeing a troop of his domestics dancing
Like dervises, who turn as on a pivot, he
Perceived it was the Pyrrhic dance so martial,
To which the Levantines are very partial.

XXX.

And further on a group of Grecian girls,
The first and tallest her white kerchief waving,
Were strung together like a row of pearls;
Link'd hand in hand, and dancing; each too having
Down her white neck long floating auburn curls—
(The least of which would set ten poets raving);
Their leader sang—and bounded to her song,
With choral step and voice, the virgin throng.

XXXI.

And here, assembled cross-legg'd round their trays,
Small social parties just begun to dine;
Pilaus and meats of all sorts met the gaze,
And flasks of Samian and of Chian wine,
And sherbet cooling in the porous vase;
Above them their dessert grew on its vine,
The orange and pomegranate nodding o'er,
Dropp'd in their laps, scarce pluck'd, their mellow store.

XXXII.

A band of children, round a snow-white ram,
There wreathe his venerable horns with flowers;
While peaceful as if still an unwean'd lamb,
The patriarch of the flock all gently cowers
His sober head majestically tame,
Or eats from out the palm, or playful lowers
His brow, as if in act to butt, and then,
Yielding to their small hands, draws back again.

XXXIII.

Their classical profiles, and glittering dresses,
Their large black eyes, and soft seraphic cheeks,
Crimson as cleft pomegranates, their long tresses,
The gesture which enchants, the eye that speaks,
The innocence which happy childhood blesses,
Made quite a picture of these little Greeks;
So that the philosophical beholder
Sigh'd for their sakes—that they should e'er grow older.

XXXIV.

Afar, a dwarf buffoon stood telling tales
To a sedate gray circle of old smokers,
Of secret treasures found in hidden vales,
Of wonderful replies from Arab jokers,
Of charms to make good gold and cure bad ails,
Of rocks bewitch'd that open to the knockers,
Of magic ladies, who, by one sole act,
Transform'd their lords to beasts (but that 's a fact).

XXXV.

Here was no lack of innocent diversion
For the imagination or the senses,
Song, dance, wine, music, stories from the Persian,
All pretty pastime in which no offence is;
But Lambro saw all these things with aversion,
Perceiving in his absence such expenses,
Dreading that climax of all human ills,
The inflammation of his weekly bills.

XXXVI.

Ah! what is man? what perils still environ
The happiest mortals even after dinner—
A day of gold from out an age of iron
Is all that life allows the luckiest sinner;
Pleasure (whene'er she sings, at least) 's a siren,
That lures to flay alive the young beginner;
Lambro's reception at his people's banquet
Was such as fire accords to wet a blanket.

XXXVII.

He—being a man who seldom used a word
Too much, and wishing gladly to surprise
(In general he surprised men with the sword)
His daughter—had not sent before to advise
Of his arrival, so that no one stirr'd;
And long he paused to re-assure his eyes,
In fact much more astonish'd than delighted
To find so much good company invited.

XXXVIII.

He did not know—(alas! how men will lie)—
That a report—(especially the Greeks)—
Avouch'd his death (such people never die),
And put his house in mourning several weeks.
But now their eyes and also lips were dry;
The bloom too had return'd to Haidee's cheeks;
Her tears too being return'd into their fount,
She now kept house upon her own account.

XXXIX.

Hence all this rice, meat, dancing, wine, and fiddling,
Which turn'd the isle into a place of pleasure;
The servants all were getting drunk or idling,
A life which made them happy beyond measure.
Her father's hospitality seem'd middling,
Compared with what Haidee did with his treasure;
'T was wonderful how things went on improving,
While she had not one hour to spare from loving.

XL.

Perhaps you think, in stumbling on this feast
He flew into a passion, and in fact
There was no mighty reason to be pleased;
Perhaps you prophesy some sudden act,
The whip, the rack, or dungeon at the least,
To teach his people to be more exact,
And that, proceeding at a very high rate,
He show'd the royal *penchants* of a pirate.

XLI.

You 're wrong.—He was the mildest manner'd man
That ever scuttled ship or cut a throat;
With such true breeding of a gentleman,
You never could divine his real thought;
No courtier could, and scarcely woman can
Gird more deceit within a petticoat;—
Pity he loved adventurous life's variety,
He was so great a loss to good society.

XLII.

Advancing to the nearest dinner tray,
Tapping the shoulder of the nighest guest,
With a peculiar smile, which, by the way,
Boded no good, whatever it express'd,
He asked the meaning of this holiday;
The vinous Greek to whom he had address'd
His question, much too merry to divine
The questioner, fill'd up a glass of wine,

XLIII.

And, without turning his facetious head,
Over his shoulder, with a Bacchant air,
Presented the o'erflowing cup, and said,
« Talking 's dry work, I have no time to spare.»
A second hiccup'd, « Our old master 's dead,
You 'd better ask our mistress, who 's his heir.»
« Our mistress!» quoth a third: « Our mistress!—pooh!
You mean our master—not the old, but new.»

XLIV.

These rascals, being new comers, knew not whom
They thus address'd—and Lambro's visage fell—
And o'er his eye a momentary gloom
Pass'd, but he strove quite courteously to quell
The expression, and, endeavouring to resume
His smile, requested one of them to tell
The name and quality of his new patron,
Who seem'd to have turn'd Haidee into a matron.

XLV.

« I know not,» quoth the fellow, « who or what
He is, nor whence he came—and little care;
But this I know, that this roast capon 's fat,
And that good wine ne'er wash'd down better fare;
And if you are not satisfied with that,
Direct your questions to my neighbour there;
He 'll answer all for better or for worse,
For none likes more to hear himself converse.»

XLVI.

I said that Lambro was a man of patience,
And certainly he show 'd the best of breeding,
Which scarce even France, the paragon of nations,
E'er saw her most polite of sons exceeding;
He bore these sneers against his near relations,
His own anxiety, his heart too bleeding,
The insults too of every servile glutton,
Who all the time were eating up his mutton.

XLVII.

Now in a person used to much command—
To bid men come, and go, and come again—
To see his orders done too out of hand—
Whether the word was death, or but the chain—
It may seem strange to find his manners bland;
Yet such things are, which I can not explain,
Though doubtless he who can command himself
Is good to govern—almost as a Guelf.

XLVIII.

Not that he was not sometimes rash or so,
But never in his real and serious mood;
Then calm, concentrated, and still, and slow,
He lay coil'd like the boa in the wood;
With him it never was a word and blow,
His angry word once o'er, he shed no blood,
But in his silence there was much to rue,
And his *one* blow left little work for *two*.

XLIX.

He ask'd no further questions, and proceeded
On to the house, but by a private way,
So that the few who met him hardly heeded,
So little they expected him that day;
If love paternal in his bosom pleaded
For Haidee's sake, is more than I can say,
But certainly to one, deem'd dead, returning,
This revel seem'd a curious mode of mourning.

L.

If all the dead could now return to life,
(Which God forbid!) or some, or a great many;
For instance, if a husband or his wife
(Nuptial examples are as good as any),
No doubt whate'er might be their former strife,
The present weather would be much more rainy—
Tears shed into the grave of the connexion
Would share most probably its resurrection.

LI.

He enter'd in the house no more his home,
A thing to human feelings the most trying,
And harder for the heart to overcome,
Perhaps, than even the mental pangs of dying;
To find our hearthstone turn'd into a tomb,
And round its once warm precincts palely lying
The ashes of our hopes, is a deep grief,
Beyond a single gentleman's belief.

LII.

He enter'd in the house—his home no more,
For without hearts there is no home—and felt
The solitude of passing his own door
Without a welcome; *there* he long had dwelt,
There his few peaceful days Time had swept o'er,
There his worn bosom and keen eye would melt
Over the innocence of that sweet child,
His only shrine of feelings undefiled.

LIII.

He was a man of a strange temperament,
Of mild demeanour though of savage mood,
Moderate in all his habits, and content
With temperance in pleasure as in food,
Quick to perceive, and strong to bear, and meant
For something better, if not wholly good;
His country's wrongs and his despair to save her
Had stung him from a slave to an enslaver.

LIV.

The love of power, and rapid gain of gold,
The hardness by long habitude produced,
The dangerous life in which he had grown old,
The mercy he had granted oft abused,
The sights he was accustom'd to behold,
The wild seas and wild men with whom he cruised,
Had cost his enemies a long repentance,
And made him a good friend, but bad acquaintance.

LV.

But something of the spirit of old Greece
Flash'd o'er his soul a few heroic rays,
Such as lit onward to the golden fleece
His predecessors in the Colchian days:
'T is true he had no ardent love for peace
Alas! his country show'd no path to praise:
Hate to the world and war with every nation
He waged, in vengeance of her degradation.

LVI.

Still o'er his mind the influence of the clime
Shed its Ionian elegance, which show'd
Its power unconsciously full many a time,—
A taste seen in the choice of his abode,
A love of music and of scenes sublime,
A pleasure in the gentle stream that flow'd
Past him in crystals, and a joy in flowers,
Bedew'd his spirit in his calmer hours.

LVII.

But whatso'er he had of love, reposed
On that beloved daughter; she had been
The only thing which kept his heart unclosed
Amidst the savage deeds he had done and seen;
A lonely pure affection unopposed:
There wanted but the loss of this to wean
His feelings from all milk of human kindness,
And turn him, like the Cyclops, mad with blindness.

LVIII.

The cubless tigress in her jungle raging
Is dreadful to the shepherd and the flock:
The ocean when its yeasty war is waging
Is awful to the vessel near the rock:
But violent things will sooner bear assuaging—
Their fury being spent by its own shock,—
Than the stern, single, deep, and wordless ire
Of a strong human heart, and in a sire.

LIX.

It is a hard, although a common case,
To find our children running restive—they
In whom our brightest days we would retrace,
Our little selves re-form'd in finer clay;
Just as old age is creeping on apace,
And clouds come o'er the sunset of our day,
They kindly leave us, though not quite alone,
But in good company—the gout and stone.

LX.

Yet a fine family is a fine thing
(Provided they don't come in after dinner);
'T is beautiful to see a matron bring
Her children up (if nursing them don't thin her);
Like cherubs round an altar-piece they cling
To the fire-side (a sight to touch a sinner).
A lady with her daughters or her nieces
Shine like a guinea and seven-shilling pieces.

LXI.

Old Lambro pass'd unseen a private gate,
And stood within his hall at eventide;
Meantime the lady and her lover sate
At wassail in their beauty and their pride:
An ivory inlaid table spread with state
Before them, and fair slaves on every side;
Gems, gold, and silver, form'd the service mostly,
Mother of pearl and coral the less costly.

LXII.

The dinner made about a hundred dishes;
Lamb and pistachio nuts—in short, all meats,
And saffron soups, and sweetbreads; and the fishes
Were of the finest that e'er flounced in nets,
Dress'd to a Sybarite's most pamper'd wishes;
The beverage was various sherbets
Of raisin, orange, and pomegranate juice,
Squeezed through the rind, which makes it best for use.

LXIII.

These were ranged round, each in its crystal ewer,
And fruits and date-bread loaves closed the repast,
And Mocha's berry, from Arabia pure,
In small fine China cups came in at last—
Gold cups of filigree, made to secure
The hand from burning, underneath them placed;
Cloves, cinnamon, and saffron too, were boil'd
Up with the coffee, which (I think) they spoil'd.

LXIV.

The hangings of the room were tapestry, made
Of velvet pannels, each of different hue,
And thick with damask flowers of silk inlaid:
And round them ran a yellow border too;
The upper border, richly wrought, display'd,
Embroider'd delicately o'er with blue,
Soft Persian sentences, in lilac letters,
From poets, or the moralists their betters.

LXV.

These oriental writings on the wall,
Quite common in those countries, are a kind
Of monitors adapted to recal,
Like skulls at Memphian banquets, to the mind
The words which shook Belshazzar in his hall,
And took his kingdom from him.—You will find,
Though sages may pour out their wisdom's treasure,
There is no sterner moralist than pleasure.

LXVI.

A beauty at the season's close grown hectic,
A genius who has drunk himself to death,
A rake turn'd methodistic or eclectic—
(For that 's the name they like to pray beneath)—
But most, an alderman struck apoplectic,
Are things that really take away the breath,
And show that late hours, wine, and love, are able
To do not much less damage than the table.

LXVII.

Haidee and Juan carpeted their feet
On crimson satin, border'd with pale blue;
Their sofa occupied three parts complete
Of the apartment—and appear'd quiet new;
The velvet cushions—(for a throne more meet)—
Were scarlet, from whose glowing centre grew
A sun emboss'd in gold, whose rays of tissue,
Meridian-like, were seen all light to issue.

LXVIII.

Crystal and marble, plate and porcelain,
Had done their work of splendour, Indian mats
And Persian carpets, which the heart bled to stain,
Over the floors were spread; gazelles and cats,
And dwarfs and blacks, and such like things, that gain
Their bread as ministers and favourites—'that 's
To say, by degradation,—mingled there
As plentiful as in a court or fair.

LXIX.

There was no want of lofty mirrors, and
The tables, most of ebony inlaid
With mother of pearl or ivory, stood at hand,
Or were of tortoise-shell or rare woods made,
Fretted with gold or silver:—by command,
The greater part of these were ready spread
With viands, and sherbets in ice, and wine—
Kept for all comers, at all hours to dine.

LXX.

Of all the dresses I select Haidee's:
She wore two jelicks—one was of pale yellow;
Of azure, pink, and white, was her chemise—
'Neath which her breast heaved like a little billow;
With buttons form'd of pearls as large as pease,
All gold and crimson shone her jelick's fellow,
And the striped white gauze baracan that bound her,
Like fleecy clouds about the moon, flow'd round her.

LXXI.

One large gold bracelet clasp'd each lovely arm,
Lockless—so pliable from the pure gold
That the hand stretch'd and shut it without harm,
The limb which it adorn'd its only mould;
So beautiful—its very shape would charm,
And clinging as if loth to lose its hold,
The purest ore inclosed the whitest skin
That e'er by precious metal was held in.[2]

LXXII.

Around, as princess of her father's land,
A like gold bar, above her instep roll'd,[3]
Announced her rank; twelve rings were on her hand;
Her hair was starr'd with gems; her veil's fine fold
Below her breast was fasten'd with a band
Of lavish pearls, whose worth could scarce be told;
Her orange silk full Turkish trowsers furl'd
About the prettiest ankle in the world.

LXXIII.

Her hair's long auburn waves down to her heel
Flow'd like an Alpine torrent which the sun
Dyes with his morning light,—and would conceal
Her person[4] if allow'd at large to run;
And still they seem resentfully to feel
The silken fillet's curb, and sought to shun
Their bonds whene'er some Zephyr caught began
To offer his young pinion as her fan.

LXXIV.

Round her she made an atmosphere of life,
The very air seem'd lighter from her eyes,
They were so soft and beautiful, and rife
With all we can imagine of the skies,
And pure as Psyche ere she grew a wife—
Too pure even for the purest human ties;
Her overpowering presence made you feel
It would not be idolatry to kneel.

LXXV.

Her eyelashes, though dark as night, were tinged
(It is the country's custom), but in vain;
For those large black eyes were so blackly fringed,
The glossy rebels mock'd the jetty stain,
And in their native beauty stood avenged:
Her nails were touch'd with henna; but again
The power of art was turn'd to nothing, for
They could not look more rosy than before.

LXXVI.

The henna should be deeply dyed to make
The skin relieved appear more fairly fair;
She had no need of this, day ne'er will break
On mountain tops more heavenly white than her:
The eye might doubt if it were well awake,
She was so like a vision; I might err,
But Shakspeare also says 'tis very silly
« To gild refined gold, or paint the lily.»

LXXVII.

Juan had on a shawl of black and gold,
But a white baracan, and so transparent
The sparkling gems beneath you might behold,
Like small stars through the milky way apparent;
His turban, furl'd in many a graceful fold,
An emerald aigrette with Haidee's hair in't
Surmounted as its clasp—a glowing crescent,
Whose rays shone ever trembling, but incessant.

LXXVIII.

And now they were diverted by their suite,
Dwarfs, dancing girls, black eunuchs, and a poet,
Which made their new establishment complete;
The last was of great fame, and liked to show it:
His verses rarely wanted their due feet—
And for his theme—he seldom sung below it.
He being paid to satirise or flatter,
As the psalm says, «inditing a good matter.»

LXXIX.

He praised the present and abused the past,
Reversing the good custom of old days,
An eastern anti-jacobin at last
He turn'd, preferring pudding to *no* praise—
For some few years his lot had been o'ercast
By his seeming independent in his lays,
But now he sung the Sultan and the Pacha,
With truth like Southey, and with verse like Crashaw.

LXXX.

He was a man who had seen many changes,
And always changed as true as any needle,
His polar star being one which rather ranges,
And not the fix'd—he knew the way to wheedle:
So vile he 'scaped the doom which oft avenges;
And being fluent (save indeed when fee'd ill),
He lied with such a fervour of intention—
There was no doubt he earn'd his laureate pension.

LXXXI.

But he had genius,—when a turncoat has it
The « vates irritabilis » takes care
That without notice few full moons shall pass it;
Even good men like to make the public stare:—
But to my subject—let me see—what was it?
Oh!—the third canto—and the pretty pair—
Their loves, and feasts, and house, and dress, and mode
Of living in their insular abode.

LXXXII.

Their poet, a sad trimmer, but no less
In company a very pleasant fellow,
Had been the favourite of full many a mess
Of men, and made them speeches when half mellow;
And though his meaning they could rarely guess,
Yet still they deign'd to hiccup or to bellow
The glorious meed of popular applause,
Of which the first ne'er knows the second cause.

LXXXIII.

But now being lifted into high society,
And having pick'd up several odds and ends
Of free thoughts in his travels, for variety,
He deem'd, being in a lone isle among friends,
That without any danger of a riot, he
Might for long lying make himself amends;
And, singing as he sung in his warm youth,
Agree to a short armistice with truth.

LXXXIV.

He had travell'd 'mongst the Arabs, Turks, and Franks,
And knew the self-loves of the different nations!
And having lived with people of all ranks,
Had something ready upon most occasions—
Which got him a few presents and some thanks.
He varied with some skill his adulations;
To « do at Rome as Romans do,» a piece
Of conduct was which he observed in Greece.

LXXXV.

Thus, usually, when he was ask'd to sing,
He gave the different nations something national;
'T was all the same to him—« God save the king,»
Or « *Ça ira*,» according to the fashion all;
His muse made increment of any thing,
From the high lyrical to the low rational:
If Pindar sang horse-races, what should hinder
Himself from being as pliable as Pindar?

LXXXVI.

In France, for instance, he would write a chanson;
In England, a six-canto quarto tale;
In Spain, he'd make a ballad or romance on
The last war—much the same in Portugal;
In Germany, the Pegasus he'd prance on
Would be old Goëthe's—(see what says de Staël);
In Italy, he'd ape the « Trecentisti;»
In Greece, he'd sing some sort of hymn like this t' ye.

The isles of Greece! the isles of Greece!
Where burning Sappho loved and sung,—
Where grew the arts of war and peace,—
Where Delos rose and Phœbus sprung!
Eternal summer gilds them yet,
But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,
The hero's harp, the lover's lute,
Have found the fame your shores refuse;
Their place of birth alone is mute
To sounds which echo further west
Than your sires' « Islands of the Blest.»

The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone,
I dream'd that Greece might still be free;
For, standing on the Persians' grave,
I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below,
And men in nations;—all were his!
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,
My country? On thy voiceless shore
The heroic lay is tuneless now—
The heroic bosom beats no more!
And must thy lyre, so long divine,
Degenerate into hands like mine?

'T is something, in the dearth of fame,
Though link'd among a fetter'd race,
To feel at least a patriot's shame,
Even as I sing, suffuse my face;
For what is left the poet here?
For Greeks a blush—for Greece a tear.

Must *we* but weep o'er days more bless'd?
Must *we* but blush?—Our fathers bled.
Earth! render back from out thy breast
A remnant of our Spartan dead!
Of the three hundred grant but three,
To make a new Thermopylæ!

What, silent still? and silent all?
Ah! no;—the voices of the dead
Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
And answer, «Let one living head,
But one arise,—we come, we come!»
'T is but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain: strike other chords;
Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
Leave battles to the Turkish hordes,
And shed the blood of Scio's vine!
Hark! rising to the ignoble call—
How answers each bold bacchanal!

You have the Pyrrhic dance as yet,
Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
Of two such lessons, why forget
The nobler and the manlier one?
You have the letters Cadmus gave—
Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
We will not think of themes like these!
It made Anacreon's song divine:
He served—but served Polycrates—
A tyrant; but our masters then
Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
Was freedom's best and bravest friend;
That tyrant was Miltiades!
Oh! that the present hour would lend
Another despot of the kind!
Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
On Suli's rock, and Parga's shore,
Exists the remnant of a line
Such as the Doric mothers bore;
And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
They have a king who buys and sells.
In native swords, and native ranks,
The only hope of courage dwells;
But Turkish force, and Latin fraud,
Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
I see their glorious black eyes shine;
But, gazing on each glowing maid,
My own the burning tear-drop laves,
To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place me on Sunium's marbled steep—
Where nothing, save the waves and I,
May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
There, swan-like, let me sing and die:
A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

LXXXVII.

Thus sung, or would, or could, or should have sung,
The modern Greek, in tolerable verse;
If not like Orpheus quite, when Greece was young,
Yet in these times he might have done much worse:
His strain display'd some feeling—right or wrong;
And feeling, in a poet, is the source
Of others' feeling; but they are such liars,
And take all colours—like the hands of dyers.

LXXXVIII.

But words are things, and a small drop of ink,
Falling like dew upon a thought, produces
That which makes thousands, perhaps millions, think;
'T is strange, the shortest letter which man uses,
Instead of speech, may form a lasting link
Of ages; to what straits old Time reduces
Frail man, when paper—even a rag like this,
Survives himself, his tomb, and all that 's his.

LXXXIX.

And when his bones are dust, his grave a blank,
His station, generation, even his nation,
Become a thing, or nothing, save to rank
In chronological commemoration,
Some dull MS. oblivion long has sank,
Or graven stone found in a barrack's station,
In digging the foundation of a closet,
May turn his name up as a rare deposit.

XC.

And glory long has made the sages smile;
'T is something, nothing, words, illusion, wind—
Depending more upon the historian's style
Than on the name a person leaves behind:
Troy owes to Homer what whist owes to Hoyle;
The present century was growing blind
To the great Marlborough's skill in giving knocks,
Until his late Life by Archdeacon Coxe.

XCI.

Milton 's the prince of poets—so we say;
A little heavy, but no less divine;
An independent being in his day—
Learn'd, pious, temperate in love and wine,
But his life falling into Johnson's way,
We 're told this great high priest of all the Nine
Was whipt at college—a harsh sire—odd spouse,
For the first Mrs Milton left his house.

XCII.

All these are, *certes,* entertaining facts,
Like Shakspeare's stealing deer, Lord Bacon's bribes;
Like Titus' youth, and Cæsar's earliest acts;
Like Burns (whom Doctor Currie well describes);
Like Cromwell's pranks;—but although truth exacts
These amiable descriptions from the scribes,
As most essential to their hero's story,
They do not much contribute to his glory.

XCIII.

All are not moralists like Southey, when
He prated to the world of "Pantisocracy;"
Or Wordsworth unexcised, unhired, who then
Season'd his pedlar poems with democracy;
Or Coleridge, long before his flighty pen
Let to the Morning Post its aristocracy;
When he and Southey, following the same path,
Espoused two partners (milliners of Bath).

XCIV.

Such names at present cut a convict figure,
The very Botany Bay in moral geography;
Their loyal treason, renegado vigour,
Are good manure for their more bare biography.
Wordsworth's last quarto, by the way, is bigger
Than any since the birthday of typography;
A clumsy frowzy poem, call'd the "Excursion,"
Writ in a manner which is my aversion.

XCV.

He there builds up a formidable dyke
Between his own and others' intellect;
But Wordsworth's poem, and his followers, like
Joanna Southcote's Shiloh and her sect,
Are things which in this century don't strike
The public mind, so few are the elect;
And the new births of both their stale virginities
Have proved but dropsies taken for divinities.

XCVI.

But let me to my story: I must own,
If I have any fault, it is digression;
Leaving my people to proceed alone,
While I soliloquize beyond expression;
But these are my addresses from the throne,
Which put off business to the ensuing session:
Forgetting each omission is a loss to
The world, not quite so great as Ariosto.

XCVII.

I know that what our neighbours call "*longueurs*"
(We 've not so good a *word*, but have the *thing*
In that complete perfection which ensures
An epic from Bob Southey every spring),—
Form not the true temptation which allures
The reader; but 't would not be hard to bring
Some fine examples of the *épopée,*
To prove its grand ingredient is *ennui.*

XCVIII.

We learn from Horace, Homer sometimes sleeps;
We feel without him: Wordsworth sometimes wakes,
To show with what complacency he creeps,
With his dear "*Waggoners,*" around his lakes;
He wishes for "a boat" to sail the deeps—
Of ocean?—no, of air; and then he makes
Another outcry for "a little boat,"
And drivels seas to set it well afloat.

XCIX.

If he must fain sweep o'er the etherial plain,
And Pegasus runs restive in his "waggon,"
Could he not beg the loan of Charles's Wain?
Or pray Medea for a single dragon?
Or if, too classic for his vulgar brain,
He fear'd his neck to venture such a nag on,
And he must needs mount nearer to the moon,
Could not the blockhead ask for a balloon?

C.

"Pedlars," and "boats," and "waggons!" Oh! ye shades
Of Pope and Dryden, are we come to this?
That trash of such sort not alone evades
Contempt, but from the bathos' vast abyss
Floats scum-like uppermost, and these Jack Cades
Of sense and song above your graves may hiss—
The "little boatman" and his "Peter Bell"
Can sneer at him who drew "Achitophel!"

CI.

T' our tale.—The feast was over, the slaves gone,
The dwarfs and dancing girls had all retired;
The Arab lore and poet's song were done,
And every sound of revelry expired;
The lady and her lover, left alone,
The rosy flood of twilight sky admired;—
Ave Maria! o'er the earth and sea,
That heavenliest hour of Heaven is worthiest thee!

CII.

Ave Maria! blessed be the hour!
The time, the clime, the spot, where I so oft
Have felt that moment in its fullest power
Sink o'er the earth so beautiful and soft,
While swung the deep bell in the distant tower,
Or the faint dying day-hymn stole aloft,
And not a breath crept through the rosy air,
And yet the forest leaves seem stirr'd with prayer.

CIII.

Ave Maria! 't is the hour of prayer!
Ave Maria! 't is the hour of love!
Ave Maria! may our spirits dare
Look up to thine and to thy Son's above!
Ave Maria! oh that face so fair!
Those downcast eyes beneath the almighty dove—
What though 't is but a pictured image strike—
That painting is no idol, 't is too like.

CIV.

Some kinder casuists are pleased to say,
In nameless print—that I have no devotion;
But set those persons down with me to pray,
And you shall see who has the properest notion
Of getting into heaven the shortest way;
My altars are the mountains and the ocean,
Earth, air, stars,—all that springs from the great whole,
Who hath produced, and will receive the soul.

CV.

Sweet hour of twilight!—in the solitude
Of the pine forest, and the silent shore
Which bounds Ravenna's immemorial wood,
Rooted where once the Adrian wave flow'd o'er,
To where the last Cæsarean fortress stood,
Ever-green forest! which Boccaccio's lore
And Dryden's lay made haunted ground to me,
How have I loved the twilight hour and thee!

CVI.

The shrill cicalas, people of the pine,
Making their summer lives one ceaseless song,
Were the sole echos, save my steed's and mine,
And vesper bell's that rose the boughs along;
The spectre huntsman of Onesti's line,
His hell-dogs, and their chase, and the fair throng,
Which learn'd from this example not to fly
From a true lover, shadow'd my mind's eye.

CVII.

Oh Hesperus![5] thou bringest all good things—
Home to the weary, to the hungry cheer,
To the young bird the parent's brooding wings,
The welcome stall to the o'erlabour'd steer;
Whate'er of peace about our hearthstone clings,
Whate'er our household gods protect of dear,
Are gather'd round us by thy look of rest;
Thou bring'st the child, too, to the mother's breast.

CVIII.

Soft hour![6] which wakes the wish and melts the heart
Of those who sail the seas, on the first day
When they from their sweet friends are torn apart;
Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way,
As the far bell of vesper makes him start,
Seeming to weep the dying day's decay;
Is this a fancy which our reason scorns?
Ah! surely nothing dies but something mourns!

CIX.

When Nero perish'd by the justest doom
Which ever the destroyer yet destroy'd,
Amidst the roar of liberated Rome,
Of nations freed, and the world overjoy'd,
Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb:[7]
Perhaps the weakness of a heart not void
Of feeling for some kindness done, when power
Had left the wretch an uncorrupted hour.

CX.

But I 'm digressing: what on earth was Nero,
Or any such like sovereign buffoons,
To do with the transactions of my hero,
More than such madmen's fellow-man—the moon's?
Sure my invention must be down at zero,
And I grown one of many «wooden spoons»
Of verse (the name with which we Cantabs please
To dub the last of honours in degrees).

CXI.

I feel this tediousness will never do—
'T is being *too* epic, and I must cut down
(In copying) this long canto into two:
They 'll never find it out, unless I own
The fact, excepting some experienced few;
And then as an improvement 't will be shown:
I 'll prove that such the opinion of the critic is,
From Aristotle *passim*.—See Ποιητικης.

CANTO IV.

I.

Nothing so difficult as a beginning
In poesy, unless perhaps the end;
For oftentimes when Pegasus seems winning
The race, he sprains a wing, and down we tend,
Like Lucifer when hurl'd from heaven for sinning;
Our sin the same, and hard as his to mend,
Being pride, which leads the mind to soar too far,
Till our own weakness shows us what we are.

II.

But time, which brings all beings to their level,
And sharp adversity, will teach at last
Man,—and, as we would hope,—perhaps the devil,
That neither of their intellects are vast:
While youth's hot wishes in our red veins revel,
We know not this—the blood flows on too fast;
But as the torrent widens towards the ocean,
We ponder deeply on each past emotion.

III.

As boy, I thought myself a clever fellow,
And wish'd that others held the same opinion;
They took it up when my days grew more mellow,
And other minds acknowledged my dominion:
Now my sere fancy «falls into the yellow
Leaf,» and imagination droops her pinion,
And the sad truth which hovers o'er my desk
Turns what was once romantic to burlesque.

IV.

And if I laugh at any mortal thing,
'T is that I may not weep; and if I weep,
'T is that our nature cannot always bring
Itself to apathy, which we must steep
First in the icy depths of Lethe's spring
Ere what we least wish to behold will sleep;
Thetis baptized her mortal son in Styx;
A mortal mother would on Lethe fix.

V.

Some have accused me of a strange design
Against the creed and morals of the land,
And trace it in this poem every line:
I don't pretend that I quite understand
My own meaning when I would be *very* fine;
But the fact is that I have nothing plann'd,
Unless it was to be a moment merry,
A novel word in my vocabulary.

VI.

To the kind reader of our sober clime
This way of writing will appear exotic;
Pulci was sire of the half-serious rhyme,
Who sang when chivalry was more Quixotic,
And revell'd in the fancies of the time,
True knights, chaste dames, huge giants, kings despotic;
But all these, save the last, being obsolete,
I chose a modern subject as more meet.

VII.

How I have treated it, I do not know—
Perhaps no better than they have treated me
Who have imputed such designs as show,
Not what they saw, but what they wish'd to see;
But if it gives them pleasure, be it so,—
This is a liberal age, and thoughts are free:
Meantime Apollo plucks me by the ear,
And tells me to resume my story here.

VIII.

Young Juan and his lady-love were left
To their own hearts' most sweet society;
Even time the pitiless in sorrow cleft
With his rude scythe such gentle bosoms; he
Sigh'd to behold them of their hours bereft,
Though foe to love; and yet they could not be
Meant to grow old, but die in happy spring,
Before one charm or hope had taken wing.

IX.

Their faces were not made for wrinkles, their
Pure blood to stagnate, their great hearts to fail;
The blank gray was not made to blast their hair,
But, like the climes that know nor snow nor hail,
They were all summer: lightning might assail
And shiver them to ashes, but to trail
A long and snake-like life of dull decay
Was not for them—they had too little clay.

X.

They were alone once more; for them to be
Thus was another Eden; they were never
Weary, unless when separate: the tree
Cut from its forest root of years—the river
Damm'd from its fountain—the child from the knee
And breast maternal wean'd at once for ever,
Would wither less than these two torn apart;
Alas! there is no instinct like the heart—

XI.

The heart—which may be broken: happy they!
Thrice fortunate! who, of that fragile mould,
The precious porcelain of human clay,
Break with the first fall: they can ne'er behold
The long year link'd with heavy day on day,
And all which must be borne, and never told;
While life's strange principle will often lie
Deepest in those who long the most to die.

XII.

"Whom the gods love die young," was said of yore,[1]
And many deaths do they escape by this:
The death of friends, and that which slays even more—
The death of friendship, love, youth, all that is,
Except mere breath; and since the silent shore
Awaits at last even those whom longest miss
The old archer's shafts, perhaps the early grave
Which men weep over may be meant to save.

XIII.

Haidee and Juan thought not of the dead;
The heavens, and earth, and air, seem'd made for them:
They found no fault with time, save that he fled;
They saw not in themselves aught to condemn:
Each was the other's mirror, and but read
Joy sparkling in their dark eyes like a gem,
And knew such brightness was but the reflection
Of their exchanging glances of affection.

XIV.

The gentle pressure, and the thrilling touch,
The least glance better understood than words,
Which still said all, and ne'er could say too much;
A language, too, but like to that of birds,
Known but to them, at least appearing such
As but to lovers a true sense affords;
Sweet playful phrases, which would seem absurd
To those who have ceased to hear such, or ne'er heard:

XV.

All these were theirs, for they were children still,
And children still they should have ever been;
They were not made in the real world to fill
A busy character in the dull scene;
But like two beings born from out a rill,
A nymph and her beloved, all unseen
To pass their lives in fountains and on flowers,
And never know the weight of human hours.

XVI.

Moons changing had roll'd on, and changeless found
Those their bright rise had lighted to such joys
As rarely they beheld throughout their round:
And these were not of the vain kind which cloys;
For theirs were buoyant spirits, never bound
By the mere senses; and that which destroys
Most love, possession, unto them appear'd
A thing which each endearment more endear'd.

XVII.

Oh beautiful! and rare as beautiful!
But theirs was love in which the mind delights
To lose itself, when the whole world grows dull,
And we are sick of its hack sounds and sights,
Intrigues, adventures of the common school,
Its petty passions, marriages, and flights,
Where Hymen's torch but brands one strumpet more,
Whose husband only knows her not a wh—re.

XVIII.

Hard words; harsh truth; a truth which many know.
Enough.—The faithful and the fairy pair,
Who never found a single hour too slow,
What was it made them thus exempt from care?
Young innate feelings all have felt below,
Which perish in the rest, but in them were
Inherent; what we mortals call romantic,
And always envy, though we deem it frantic.

XIX.

This is in others a factitious state,
An opium dream of too much youth and reading,
But was in them their nature or their fate;
No novels e'er had set their young hearts bleeding,
For Haidee's knowledge was by no means great,
And Juan was a boy of saintly breeding;
So that there was no reason for their loves,
More than for those of nightingales or doves.

XX.

They gazed upon the sunset; 't is an hour
Dear unto all, but dearest to *their* eyes,
For it had made them what they were: the power
Of love had first o'erwhelm'd them from such skies,
When happiness had been their only dower,
And twilight saw them link'd in passion's ties;
Charm'd with each other, all things charm'd that brought
The past still welcome as the present thought.

XXI.

I know not why, but in that hour to-night,
Even as they gazed, a sudden tremor came,
And swept, as 't were across their hearts' delight,
Like the wind o'er a harp-string, or a flame,
When one is shook in sound, and one in sight;
And thus some boding flash'd through either frame,
And call'd from Juan's breast a faint low sigh,
While one new tear arose in Haidee's eye.

XXII.

That large black prophet eye seem'd to dilate
And follow far the disappearing sun,
As if their last day of a happy date
With his broad, bright, and dropping orb were gone;
Juan gazed on her as to ask his fate—
He felt a grief, but knowing cause for none,
His glance inquired of hers for some excuse
For feelings causeless, or at least abstruse.

XXIII.

She turn'd to him, and smiled, but in that sort
Which makes not others smile; then turn'd aside:
Whatever feeling shook her, it seem'd short,
And master'd by her wisdom or her pride;
When Juan spoke, too—it might be in sport—
Of this their mutual feeling, she replied—
«If it should be so,—but—it cannot be—
Or I at least shall not survive to see.»

XXIV.

Juan would question further, but she press'd
His lips to hers, and silenced him with this,
And then dismiss'd the omen from her breast,
Defying augury with that fond kiss;
And no doubt of all methods 't is the best:
Some people prefer wine—'t is not amiss;
I have tried both; so those who would a part take
May choose between the headache and the heartache.

XXV.

One of the two, according to your choice,
Woman or wine, you 'll have to undergo;
Both maladies are taxes on our joys:
But which to choose I really hardly know;
And if I had to give a casting voice,
For both sides I could many reasons show,
And then decide, without great wrong to either,
It were much better to have both than neither.

XXVI.

Juan and Haidee gazed upon each other
With swimming looks of speechless tenderness,
Which mix'd all feelings, friend, child, lover, brother,
All that the best can mingle and express,
When two pure hearts are pour'd in one another,
And love too much, and yet can not love less;
But almost sanctify the sweet excess
By the immortal wish and power to bless.

XXVII.

Mix'd in each other's arms, and heart in heart,
Why did they not then die?—they had lived too long,
Should an hour come to bid them breathe apart;
Years could but bring them cruel things or wrong,
The world was not for them, nor the world's art
For beings passionate as Sappho's song;
Love was born *with* them, *in* them, so intense,
It was their very spirit—not a sense.

XXVIII.

They should have lived together deep in woods,
Unseen as sings the nightingale; they were
Unfit to mix in these thick solitudes
Called social, where all vice and hatred are:
How lonely every freeborn creature broods!
The sweetest song-birds nestle in a pair;
The eagle soars alone; the gull and crow
Flock o'er their carrion, just as mortals do.

XXIX.

Now pillow'd, cheek to cheek, in loving sleep,
Haidee and Juan their siesta took,
A gentle slumber, but it was not deep,
For ever and anon a something shook
Juan, and shuddering o'er his frame would creep;
And Haidee's sweet lips murmur'd like a brook
A wordless music, and her face so fair
Stirr'd with her dream as rose-leaves with the air;

XXX.

Or as the stirring of a deep clear stream
Within an Alpine hollow, when the wind
Walks over it, was she shaken by the dream,
The mystical usurper of the mind—
O'erpowering us to be whate'er may seem
Good to the soul which we no more can bind;
Strange state of being! (for 't is still to be)
Senseless to feel, and with seal'd eyes to see.

XXXI.

She dream'd of being alone on the sea-shore,
Chain'd to a rock; she knew not how, but stir
She could not from the spot, and the loud roar
Grew, and each wave rose roughly, threatening her;
And o'er her upper lip they seem'd to pour,
Until she sobb'd for breath, and soon they were
Foaming o'er her lone head, so fierce and high
Each broke to drown her, yet she could not die.

XXXII.

Anon—she was released, and then she stray'd
O'er the sharp shingles with her bleeding feet,
And stumbled almost every step she made;
And something roll'd before her in a sheet,
Which she must still pursue howe'er afraid;
'T was white and indistinct, nor stopp'd to meet
Her glance nor grasp, for still she gazed and grasp'd,
And ran, but it escaped her as she clasp'd.

XXXIII.

The dream changed; in a cave she stood, its walls
Were hung with marble icicles; the work
Of ages on its water-fretted halls,
Where waves might wash, and seals might breed and lurk;
Her hair was dripping, and the very balls
Of her black eyes seem'd turn'd to tears, and murk
The sharp rocks look'd below each drop they caught,
Which froze to marble as it fell, she thought.

XXXIV.

And wet, and cold, and lifeless at her feet,
Pale as the foam that froth'd on his dead brow,
Which she essay'd in vain to clear, (how sweet
Were once her cares, how idle seem'd they now!)
Lay Juan, nor could aught renew the beat
Of his quench'd heart; and the sea-dirges low
Rang in her sad ears like a mermaid's song,
And that brief dream appear'd a life too long.

XXXV.

And gazing on the dead, she thought his face
Faded, or alter'd into something new—
Like to her father's features, till each trace
More like and like to Lambro's aspect grew—
With all his keen worn look and Grecian grace;
And starting, she awoke, and what to view?
Oh! Powers of Heaven! what dark eye meets she there?
'T is—'t is her father's—fix'd upon the pair!

XXXVI.

Then shrieking, she arose, and shrieking fell,
With joy and sorrow, hope and fear, to see
Him whom she deem'd a habitant where dwell
The ocean-buried, risen from death, to be
Perchance the death of one she loved too well;
Dear as her father had been to Haidee,
It was a moment of that awful kind——
I have seen such—but must not call to mind.

XXXVII.

Up Juan sprung to Haidee's bitter shriek,
And caught her falling, and from off the wall
Snatch'd down his sabre, in hot haste to wreak
Vengeance on him who was the cause of all:
Then Lambro, who till now forbore to speak,
Smiled scornfully, and said, «Within my call
A thousand scimitars await the word;
Put up, young man, put up your silly sword.»

XXXVIII.

And Haidee clung around him; «Juan, 't is—
'T is Lambro—'t is my father! Kneel with me—
He will forgive us—yes—it must be—yes.
Oh! dearest father, in this agony
Of pleasure and of pain—even while I kiss
Thy garment's hem with transport, can it be
That doubt should mingle with my filial joy?
Deal with me as thou wilt, but spare this boy.»

XXXIX.

High and inscrutable the old man stood,
Calm in his voice, and calm within his eye—
Not always signs with him of calmest mood:
He look'd upon her, but gave no reply;
Then turn'd to Juan, in whose cheek the blood
Oft came and went, as there resolved to die;
In arms, at least, he stood, in act to spring
On the first foe whom Lambro's call might bring.

XL.

«Young man, your sword;» so Lambro once more said:
Juan replied, «Not while this arm is free.»
The old man's cheek grew pale, but not with dread,
And drawing from his belt a pistol, he
Replied, «Your blood be then on your own head.»
Then look'd close at the flint, as if to see
'T was fresh—for he had lately used the lock—
And next proceeded quietly to cock.

XLI.

It has a strange quick jar upon the ear,
That cocking of a pistol, when you know
A moment more will bring the sight to bear
Upon your person, twelve yards off, or so;
A gentlemanly distance, not too near,
If you have got a former friend for foe;
But after being fired at one or twice,
The ear becomes more Irish, and less nice.

XLII.

Lambro presented, and one instant more
Had stopp'd this Canto, and Don Juan's breath,
When Haidee threw herself her boy before;
Stern as her sire: «On me,» she cried, «let death
Descend—the fault is mine; this fatal shore
He found—but sought not. I have pledged my faith;
I love him—I will die with him: I knew
Your nature's firmness—know your daughter's too.»

XLIII.

A minute past, and she had been all tears,
And tenderness, and infancy: but now
She stood as one who champion'd human fears—
Pale, statue-like, and stern, she woo'd the blow;
And tall beyond her sex and their compeers,
She drew up to her height, as if to show
A fairer mark; and with a fix'd eye scann'd
Her father's face—but never stopp'd his hand.

XLIV.

He gazed on her, and she on him; 't was strange
How like they look'd! the expression was the same;
Serenely savage, with a little change
In the large dark eye's mutual-darted flame;
For she too was as one who could avenge,
If cause should be—a lioness, though tame:
Her father's blood before her father's face
Boil'd up, and proved her truly of his race.

XLV.

I said they were alike, their features and
Their stature differing but in sex and years;
Even to the delicacy of their hands
There was resemblance, such as true blood wears;
And now to see them, thus divided, stand
In fix'd ferocity, when joyous tears,
And sweet sensations, should have welcomed both,
Show what the passions are in their full growth.

XLVI.

The father paused a moment, then withdrew
His weapon, and replaced it; but stood still,
And looking on her, as to look her through,
«Not *I*,» he said, «have sought this stranger's ill;
Not *I* have made this desolation: few
Would bear such outrage, and forbear to kill;
But I must do my duty—how thou hast
Done thine, the present vouches for the past.

XLVII.

«Let him disarm; or, by my father's head,
His own shall roll before you like a ball!»
He raised his whistle, as the word he said,
And blew; another answer'd to the call,
And rushing in disorderly, though led,
And arm'd from boot to turban, one and all,
Some twenty of his train came, rank on rank;
He gave the word, «Arrest or slay the Frank.»

XLVIII.

Then, with a sudden movement, he withdrew
His daughter; while compress'd within his grasp,
'T wixt her and Juan interposed the crew;
In vain she struggled in her father's grasp—
His arms were like a serpent's coil: then flew
Upon their prey, as darts an angry asp,
The file of pirates; save the foremost, who
Had fallen, with his right shoulder half cut through.

XLIX.

The second had his cheek laid open; but
The third, a wary, cool old sworder, took
The blows upon his cutlass, and then put
His own well in; so well, ere you could look,
His man was floor'd, and helpless at his foot,
With the blood running like a little brook
From two smart sabre gashes, deep and red—
One on the arm, the other on the head.

L.

And then they bound him where he fell, and bore
Juan from the apartment: with a sign
Old Lambro bade them take him to the shore,
Where lay some ships which were to sail at nine.
They laid him in a boat, and plied the oar
Until they reach'd some galliots, placed in line;
On board of one of these, and under hatches,
They stow'd him, with strict orders to the watches.

LI.

The world is full of strange vicissitudes,
And here was one exceedingly unpleasant:
A gentleman so rich in the world's goods,
Handsome and young, enjoying all the present,
Just at the very time when he least broods
On such a thing, is suddenly to sea sent,
Wounded and chain'd, so that he cannot move,
And all because a lady fell in love.

LII.

Here I must leave him, for I grow pathetic,
Moved by the Chinese nymph of tears, green tea!
Than whom Cassandra was not more prophetic;
For if my pure libations exceed three,
I feel my heart become so sympathetic,
That I must have recourse to black Bohea:
'T is pity wine should be so deleterious,
For tea and coffee leave us much more serious.

LIII.

Unless when qualified with thee, Cogniac!
Sweet Naiad of the Phlegethontic rill!
Ah! why the liver wilt thou thus attack,
And make, like other nymphs, thy lovers ill?
I would take refuge in weak punch, but *rack*
(In each sense of the word), whene'er I fill
My mild and midnight beakers to the brim,
Wakes me next morning with its synonym.

LIV.

I leave Don Juan for the present safe—
Not sound, poor fellow, but severely wounded;
Yet could his corporal pangs amount to half
Of those with which his Haidee's bosom bounded?
She was not one to weep, and rave, and chafe,
And then give way, subdued because surrounded;
Her mother was a Moorish maid, from Fez,
Where all is Eden, or a wilderness.

LV.

There the large olive rains its amber store
In marble fonts; there grain, and flower, and fruit,
Gush from the earth until the land runs o'er;
But there too many a poison-tree has root,
And midnight listens to the lion's roar,
And long, long deserts scorch the camel's foot,
Or heaving whelm the helpless caravan,
And as the soil is, so the heart of man.

LVI.

Afric is all the sun's, and as her earth
Her human clay is kindled, full of power
For good or evil, burning from its birth,
The Moorish blood partakes the planet's hour,
And like the soil beneath it will bring forth:
Beauty and love were Haidee's mother's dower:
But her large dark eye show'd deep Passion's force,
Though sleeping like a lion near a source.

LVII.

Her daughter, temper'd with a milder ray,
Like summer clouds all silvery, smooth, and fair,
Till slowly charged with thunder they display
Terror to earth, and tempest to the air,
Had held till now her soft and milky way;
But, overwrought with passion and despair,
The fire burst forth from her Numidian veins,
Even as the Simoom sweeps the blasted plains.

LVIII.

The last sight which she saw was Juan's gore,
And he himself o'ermaster'd and cut down;
His blood was running on the very floor
Where late he trod, her beautiful, her own:
Thus much she view'd an instant and no more,—
Her struggles ceased with one convulsive groan;
On her sire's arm, which until now scarce held
Her writhing, fell she like a cedar fell'd.

LIX.

A vein had burst, and her sweet lips' pure dyes
Were dabbled with the deep blood which ran o'er;
And her head droop'd as when the lily lies
O'ercharged with rain: her summon'd handmaids bore
Their lady to her couch with gushing eyes,
Of herbs and cordials they produced their store,
But she defied all means they could employ,
Like one life could not hold, nor death destroy.

LX.

Days lay she in that state unchanged, though chill,
With nothing livid, still her lips were red;
She had no pulse, but death seem'd absent still;
No hideous sign proclaim'd her surely dead;
Corruption came not in each mind to kill
All hope; to look upon her sweet face bred
New thoughts of life, for it seem'd full of soul,
She had so much, earth could not claim the whole.

LXI.

The ruling passion, such as marble shows
When exquisitely chisell'd, still lay there,
But fix'd as marble's unchanged aspect throws
O'er the fair Venus, but for ever fair;
O'er the Laocoon's all eternal throes,
And ever-dying Gladiator's air,
Their energy like life forms all their fame,
Yet looks not life, for they are still the same.

LXII.

She woke at length, but not as sleepers wake,
Rather the dead, for life seem'd something new,
A strange sensation which she must partake
Perforce, since whatsoever met her view
Struck not on memory, though a heavy ache
Lay at her heart, whose earliest beat still true
Brought back the sense of pain without the cause,
For, for a while, the furies made a pause.

LXIII.

She look'd on many a face with vacant eye,
On many a token without knowing what;
She saw them watch her without asking why,
And reck'd not who around her pillow sat;
Not speechless though she spoke not; not a sigh
Relieved her thoughts; dull silence and quick chat
Were tried in vain by those who served; she gave
No sign, save breath, of having left the grave.

LXIV.

Her handmaids tended, but she heeded not;
Her father watch'd, she turn'd her eyes away;
She recognised no being, and no spot,
However dear or cherish'd in their day;
They changed from room to room, but all forgot,
Gentle, but without memory, she lay;
And yet those eyes, which they would fain be weaning
Back to old thoughts, seem'd full of fearful meaning.

LXV.

At last a slave bethought her of a harp;
The harper came, and tuned his instrument;
At the first notes, irregular and sharp,
On him her flashing eyes a moment bent,
Then to the wall she turn'd, as if to warp
Her thoughts from sorrow through her heart re-sent,
And he began a long low island song
Of ancient days, ere tyranny grew strong.

LXVI.

Anon her thin wan fingers beat the wall
In time to his old tune; he changed the theme,
And sung of love; the fierce name struck through all
Her recollections, on her flash'd the dream
Of what she was, and is, if ye could call
To be so being; in a gushing stream
The tears rush'd forth from her o'erclouded brain,
Like mountain mists at length dissolved in rain.

LXVII.

Short solace, vain relief!—thought came too quick,
And whirl'd her brain to madness; she arose
As one who ne'er had dwelt among the sick,
And flew at all she met, as on her foes;
But no one ever heard her speak or shriek,
Although her paroxysm drew towards its close:
Hers was a frenzy which disdain'd to rave,
Even when they smote her, in the hope to save.

LXVIII.

Yet she betray'd at times a gleam of sense;
Nothing could make her meet her father's face,
Though on all other things with looks intense
She gazed, but none she ever could retrace;
Food she refused and raiment; no pretence
Avail'd for either; neither change of place
Nor time nor skill, nor remedy, could give her
Senses to sleep—the power seem'd gone for ever.

LXIX.

Twelve days and nights she wither'd thus; at last,
Without a groan, or sigh, or glance, to show
A parting pang, the spirit from her pass'd:
And they who watch'd her nearest could not know
The very instant, till the change that cast
Her sweet face into shadow, dull and slow,
Glazed o'er her eyes—the beautiful, the black—
Oh! to possess such lustre—and then lack!

LXX.

She died, but not alone; she held within
A second principle of life, which might
Have dawn'd a fair and sinless child of sin:
But closed its little being without light,
And went down to the grave unborn, wherein
Blossom and bough lie wither'd with one blight;
In vain the dews of heaven descend above
The bleeding flower and blasted fruit of love.

LXXI.

Thus lived—thus died she; never more on her
Shall sorrow light or shame. She was not made
Through years or moons the inner weight to bear,
Which colder hearts endure till they are laid
By age in earth; her days and pleasures were
Brief, but delightful—such as had not stay'd
Long with her destiny; but she sleeps well
By the sea-shore whereon she loved to dwell.

LXXII.

That isle is now all desolate and bare,
Its dwellings down, its tenants pass'd away;
None but her own and father's grave is there,
And nothing outward tells of human clay:
Ye could not know where lies a thing so fair,
No stone is there to show, no tongue to say
What was; no dirge, except the hollow sea's,
Mourns o'er the beauty of the Cyclades.

LXXIII.

But many a Greek maid in a loving song
Sighs o'er her name, and many an islander
With her sire's story makes the night less long;
Valour was his, and beauty dwelt with her;
If she loved rashly, her life paid for wrong—
A heavy price must all pay who thus err,
In some shape; let none think to fly the danger,
For soon or late Love is his own avenger.

LXXIV.

But let me change this theme, which grows too sad,
And lay this sheet of sorrow on the shelf;
I don't much like describing people mad,
For fear of seeming rather touch'd myself—
Besides, I've no more on this head to add:
And as my Muse is a capricious elf,
We'll put about and try another tack
With Juan, left half-kill'd some stanzas back.

LXXV.

Wounded and fetter'd, « cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,»
Some days and nights elapsed before that he
Could altogether call the past to mind;
And when he did, he found himself at sea,
Sailing six knots an hour before the wind;
The shores of Ilion lay beneath their lee—
Another time he might have liked to see 'em,
But now was not much pleased with Cape Sigæum.

LXXVI.

There, on the green and village-cotted hill, is
(Flank'd by the Hellespont and by the sea)
Entomb'd the bravest of the brave, Achilles;
They say so—(Bryant says the contrary):
And further downward, tall and towering, still is
The tumulus—of whom? Heaven knows; 't may be
Patroclus, Ajax, or Protesilaus,—
All heroes who if living still would slay us.

LXXVII.

High barrows, without marble or a name,
A vast, untill'd, and mountain-skirted plain,
And Ida in the distance, still the same,
And old Scamander (if 'tis he), remain;
The situation seems still form'd for fame—
A hundred thousand men might fight again
With ease; but where I sought for Ilion's walls,
The quiet sheep feeds, and the tortoise crawls;

LXXVIII.

Troops of untended horses; here and there
Some little hamlets with new names uncouth;
Some shepherds (unlike Paris), led to stare
A moment at the European youth
Whom to the spot their schoolboy feelings bear;
A Turk, with beads in hand and pipe in mouth,
Extremely taken with his own religion,
Are what I found there—but the devil a Phrygian.

LXXIX.

Don Juan, here permitted to emerge
From his dull cabin, found himself a slave;
Forlorn, and gazing on the deep blue surge,
O'ershadow'd there by many a hero's grave:
Weak still with loss of blood, he scarce could urge
A few brief questions; and the answers gave
No very satisfactory information
About his past or present situation.

LXXX.

He saw some fellow-captives, who appear'd
To be Italians—as they were, in fact;
From them, at least, *their* destiny he heard,
Which was an odd one: a troop going to act
In Sicily—all singers, duly rear'd
In their vocation,—had not been attack'd,
In sailing from Livorno, by the pirate,
But sold by the impresario at no high rate.[3]

LXXXI.

By one of these, the buffo of the party,
Juan was told about their curious case;
For, although destined to the Turkish mart, he
Still kept his spirits up—at least his face;
The little fellow really look'd quite hearty,
And bore him with some gaiety and grace,
Showing a much more reconciled demeanour
Than did the prima donna and the tenor.

LXXXII.

In few words he told their hapless story,
Saying, «Our Machiavelian impresario,
Making a signal off some promontory,
Hail'd a strange brig; Corpo di Caio Mario!
We were transferr'd on board her in a hurry,
Without a single scudo of salario;
But, if the sultan has a taste for song,
We will revive our fortunes before long.

LXXXIII.

«The prima donna, though a little old,
And haggard with a dissipated life,
And subject, when the house is thin, to cold,
Has some good notes; and then the tenor's wife,
With no great voice, is pleasing to behold;
Last carnival she made a deal of strife
By carrying off Count Cesar Cicogna
From an old Roman princess at Bologna.

LXXXIV.

«And then there are the dancers; there's the Nini,
With more than one profession gains by all;
Then there 's that laughing slut the Pelegrini,
She too was fortunate last carnival,
And made at least five hundred good zecchini,
But spends so fast, she has not now a paul;
And then there 's the Grotesca—such a dancer!
Where men have souls or bodies she must answer.

LXXXV.

«As for the figuranti, they are like
The rest of all that tribe; with here and there
A pretty person, which perhaps may strike,
The rest are hardly fitted for a fair;
There 's one, though tall and stiffer than a pike,
Yet has a sentimental kind of air,
Which might go far, but she don't dance with vigour;
The more 's the pity, with her face and figure.

LXXXVI.

«As for the men, they are a middling set;
The Musico is but a crack'd old basin,
But, being qualified in one way yet,
May the seraglio do to set his face in,
And as a servant some preferment get;
His singing I no further trust can place in:
From all the pope[4] makes yearly, 't would perplex
To find three perfect pipes of the *third* sex.

LXXXVII.

«The tenor's voice is spoilt by affectation,
And for the bass, the beast can only bellow;
In fact, he had no singing education,
An ignorant, noteless, timeless, tuneless fellow,
But being the prima donna's near relation,
Who swore his voice was very rich and mellow,
They hired him, though to hear him you 'd believe
An ass was practising recitative.

LXXXVIII.

«'T would not become myself to dwell upon
My own merits, and though young—I see, Sir—you
Have got a travell'd air, which shows you one
To whom the opera is by no means new:
You 've heard of Raucocanti?—I 'm the man;
The time may come when you may hear me too;
You was not last year at the fair of Lugo,
But next, when I 'm engaged to sing there—do go.

LXXXIX.

«Our barytone I almost had forgot,
A pretty lad, but bursting with conceit;
With graceful action, science not a jot,
A voice of no great compass, and not sweet,
He always is complaining of his lot,
Forsooth, scarce fit for ballads in the street;
In lovers' parts his passion more to breathe,
Having no heart to show, he shows his teeth.»

XC.

Here Raucocanti's eloquent recital
Was interrupted by the pirate crew,
Who came at stated moments to invite all
The captives back to their sad births; each threw
A rueful glance upon the waves (which bright all,
From the blue skies derived a double blue,
Dancing all free and happy in the sun),
And then went down the hatchway one by one.

XCI.

They heard, next day, that in the Dardanelles,
Waiting for his sublimity's firman—
The most imperative of sovereign spells,
Which every body does without who can,—
More to secure them in their naval cells,
Lady to lady, well as man to man,
Were to be chain'd and lotted out per couple
For the slave-market of Constantinople.

XCII.

It seems when this allotment was made out,
There chanced to be an odd male and odd female,
Who (after some discussion and some doubt
If the soprano might be doom'd to be male,
They placed him o'er the women as a scout)
Were link'd together, and it happen'd the male
Was Juan, who—an awkward thing at his age—
Pair'd off with a Bacchante blooming visage.

XCIII.

With Raucocanti lucklessly was chain'd
The tenor; these two hated with a hate
Found only on the stage, and each more pain'd
With this his tuneful neighbour than his fate;
Sad strife arose, for they were so cross-grain'd,
Instead of bearing up without debate,
That each pull'd different ways with many an oath,
«Arcades ambo,» *id est*—blackguards both.

XCIV.

Juan's companion was a Romagnole,
But bred within the March of old Ancona,
With eyes that look'd into the very soul
(And other chief points of a «bella donna»),
Bright—and as black and burning as a coal;
And through her clear brunette complexion shone a
Great wish to please—a most attractive dower,
Especially when added to the power.

XCV.

But all that power was wasted upon him,
For sorrow o'er each sense held stern command;
Her eye might flash on his, but found it dim;
And though thus chain'd, as natural her hand
Touch'd his, nor that—nor any handsome limb
(And she had some not easy to withstand)
Could stir his pulse, or make his faith feel brittle;
Perhaps his recent wounds might help a little.

XCVI.

No matter; we should ne'er too much inquire,
But facts are facts,—no knight could be more true,
And firmer faith no ladye-love desire;
We will omit the proofs, save one or two.
'T is said no one in hand «can hold a fire
By thought of frosty Caucasus,» but few
I really think; yet Juan's then ordeal
Was more triumphant, and not much less real.

XCVII.

Here I might enter on a chaste description,
Having withstood temptation in my youth,
But hear that several people take exception
At the first two books having too much truth;
Therefore I 'll make Don Juan leave the ship soon,
Because the publisher declares, in sooth,
Through needles' eyes it easier for the camel is
To pass, than those two cantos into families.

XCVIII.

'T is all the same to me, I 'm fond of yielding,
And therefore leave them to the purer page
Of Smollet, Prior, Ariosto, Fielding,
Who say strange things for so correct an age;
I once had great alacrity in wielding
My pen, and liked poetic war to wage,
And recollect the time when all this cant
Would have provoked remarks which now it shan't.

XCIX.

As boys love rows, my boyhood liked a squabble;
But at this hour I wish to part in peace,
Leaving such to the literary rabble,
Whether my verse's fame be doom'd to cease
While the right hand which wrote it still is able,
Or of some centuries to take a lease;
The grass upon my grave will grow as long,
And sigh to midnight winds, but not to song.

C.

Of poets who come down to us through distance
Of time and tongues, the foster-babes of fame,
Life seems the smallest portion of existence;
Where twenty ages gather o'er a name,
'T is as a snowball which derives assistance
From every flake, and yet rolls on the same,
Even till an iceberg it may chance to grow,—
But after all 't is nothing but cold snow.

CI.

And so great names are nothing more than nominal,
And love of glory 's but an airy lust,
Too often in its fury overcoming all
Who would, as 't were, identify their dust
From out the wide destruction, which, entombing all,
Leaves nothing till the coming of the just—
Save change: I 've stood upon Achilles' tomb,
And heard Troy doubted; time will doubt of Rome.

CII.

The very generations of the dead
Are swept away, and tomb inherits tomb,
Until the memory of an age is fled,
And, buried, sinks beneath its offspring's doom:
Where are the epitaphs our fathers read?
Save a few gleân'd from the sepulchral gloom,
Which once-named myriads nameless lie beneath,
And lose their own in universal death.

CIII.

I canter by the spot each afternoon
Where perish'd in his fame the hero-boy,
Who lived too long for men, but died too soon
For human vanity, the young De Foix!
A broken pillar not uncouthly hewn,
But which neglect is hastening to destroy,
Records Ravenna's carnage on its face,
While weeds and ordure rankle round the base.[5]

CIV.

I pass each day where Dante's bones are laid:
A little cupola, more neat than solemn,
Protects his dust, but reverence here is paid
To the bard's tomb, and not the warrior's column.
The time must come when both, alike decay'd,
The chieftain's trophy and the poet's volume,
Will sink where lie the songs and wars of earth,
Before Pelides' death, or Homer's birth.

CV.

With human blood that column was cemented,
With human filth that column is defiled,
As if the peasant's coarse contempt were vented
To show his loathing of the spot he soil'd;
Thus is the trophy used, and thus lamented
Should ever be those blood-hounds, from whose wild
Instinct of gore and glory earth has known
Those sufferings Dante saw in hell alone.

CVI.

Yet there will still be bards; though fame is smoke,
Its fumes are frankincense to human thought;
And the unquiet feelings, which first woke
Song in the world, will seek what then they sought;
As on the beach the waves at last are broke,
Thus to their extreme verge the passions brought,
Dash into poetry, which is but passion,
Or at least was so ere it grew a fashion.

CVII.

If in the course of such a life as was
At once adventurous and contemplative,
Men who partake all passions as they pass,
Acquire the deep and bitter power to give
Their images again, as in a glass,
And in such colours that they seem to live;
You may do right forbidding them to show 'em,
But spoil (I think) a very pretty poem.

CVIII.

Oh! ye, who make the fortunes of all books!
Benign ceruleans of the second sex!
Who advertise new poems by your looks,
Your «imprimatur» will ye not annex,—
What, must I go to the oblivious cooks,—
Those Cornish plunderers of Parnassian wrecks?
Ah! must I then the only minstrel be
Proscribed from tasting your Castalian tea?

CIX.

What, can I prove «a lion» then no more?
A ball-room bard, a foolscap, hot-press darling,
To bear the compliments of many a bore,
And sigh «I can't get out,» like Yorick's starling.
Why then I 'll swear, as poet Wordy swore
(Because the world won't read him, always snarling),
That taste is gone, that fame is but a lottery,
Drawn by the blue-coat misses of a coterie.

CX.

Oh! «darkly, deeply, beautifully blue,»
As some one somewhere sings about the sky,
And I, ye learned ladies, say of you;
They say your stockings are so (Heaven knows why,
I have examined few pair of that hue);
Blue as the garters which serenely lie
Round the patrician left-legs, which adorn
The festal midnight and the levee morn.

CXI.

Yet some of you are most seraphic creatures—
But times are alter'd since, a rhyming lover,
You read my stanzas, and I read your features:
And—but no matter, all those things are over;
Still I have no dislike to learned natures,
For sometimes such a world of virtues cover;
I know one woman of that purple school,
The loveliest, chastest, best, but—quite a fool.

CXII.

Humboldt, «the first of travellers,» but not
The last, if late accounts be accurate,
Invented, by some name I have forgot,
As well as the sublime discovery's date,
An airy instrument, with which he sought
To ascertain the atmospheric state,
By measuring «the *intensity of blue*:»
Oh, Lady Daphne! let me measure you!

CXIII.

But to the narrative.—The vessel bound
With slaves to sell off in the capital,
After the usual process, might be found
At anchor under the seraglio wall;
Her cargo, from the plague being safe and sound,
Were landed in the market, one and all,
And there, with Georgians, Russians, and Circassians,
Bought up for different purposes and passions.

CXIV.

Some went off dearly: fifteen hundred dollars
For one Circassian, a sweet girl, were given,
Warranted virgin; beauty's brightest colours
Had deck'd her out in all the hues of heaven:
Her sale sent home some disappointed bawlers,
Who bade on till the hundreds reach'd eleven;
But when the offer went beyond, they knew
'T was fo the sultan, and at once withdrew.

CXV.

Twelve negresses from Nubia brought a price
Which the West-Indian market scarce would bring;
Though Wilberforce, at last, has made it twice
What 't was ere abolition; and the thing
Need not seem very wonderful, for vice
Is always much more splendid than a king:
The virtues, even the most exalted, charity,
Are saving—vice spares nothing for a rarity.

CXVI.

But for the destiny of this young troop,
How some were bought by pachas, some by Jews,
How some to burdens were obliged to stoop,
And others rose to the command of crews
As renegadoes; while in hapless group,
Hoping no very old vizier might choose,
The females stood, as one by one they pick'd 'em,
To make a mistress, or fourth wife, or victim.

CXVII.

All this must be reserved for further song;
Also our hero's lot, howe'er unpleasant
(Because this canto has become too long),
Must be postponed discreetly for the present;
I 'm sensible redundancy is wrong,
But could not for the muse of me put less in 't:
And now delay the progress of Don Juan,
Till what is call'd in Ossian the fifth Duan.

CANTO V.

I.

When amatory poets sing their loves
In liquid lines mellifluously bland,
And praise their rhymes as Venus yokes her doves,
They little think what mischief is in hand;
The greater their success the worse it proves,
As Ovid's verse may make you understand;
Even Petrarch's self, if judged with due severity,
Is the Platonic pimp of all posterity.

II.

I therefore do denounce all amorous writing,
Except in such a way as not to attract;
Plain—simple—short, and by no means inviting,
But with a moral to each error tack'd,
Form'd rather for instructing than delighting,
And with all passions in their turn attack'd;
Now, if my Pegasus should not be shod ill,
This poem will become a moral model.

III.

The European with the Asian shore
Sprinkled with palaces; the ocean-stream[1]
Here and there studded with a seventy-four;
Sophia's cupola with golden gleam;
The cypress groves; Olympus high and hoar;
The twelve isles, and the more than I could dream,
Far less describe, present the very view
Which charm'd the charming Mary Montagu.

IV.

I have a passion for the name of "Mary,"
For once it was a magic sound to me,
And still it half calls up the realms of fairy,
Where I beheld what never was to be;
All feelings changed, but this was last to vary,
A spell from which even yet I am not quite free:
But I grow sad—and let a tale grow cold,
Which must not be pathetically told.

V.

The wind swept down the Euxine, and the wave
Broke foaming o'er the blue Symplegades,
'T is a grand sight from off "the Giant's Grave"[2]
To watch the progress of those rolling seas
Between the Bosphorus, as they lash and lave
Europe and Asia, you being quite at ease;
There 's not a sea the passenger e'er pukes in,
Turns up more dangerous breakers than the Euxine.

VI.

'T was a raw day of Autumn's bleak beginning,
When nights are equal, but not so the days;
The Parcæ then cut short the further spinning
Of seamen's fates, and the loud tempests raise
The waters, and repentance for past sinning
In all who o'er the great deep take their ways:
They vow to amend their lives, and yet they don't;
Because if drown'd, they can't—if spared, they won't.

VII.

A crowd of shivering slaves of every nation,
And age, and sex, were in the market ranged;
Each bevy with the merchant in his station:
Poor creatures! their good looks were sadly changed.
All save the blacks seem'd jaded with vexation,
From friends, and home, and freedom far estranged;
The negroes more philosophy display'd,—
Used to it, no doubt, as eels are to be flay'd.

VIII.

Juan was juvenile, and thus was full,
As most at his age are, of hope, and health;
Yet I must own he look'd a little dull,
And now and then a tear stole down by stealth;
Perhaps his recent loss of blood might pull
His spirit down; and then the loss of wealth,
A mistress, and such comfortable quarters,
To be put up for auction amongst Tartars,

IX.

Were things to shake a stoic; ne'ertheless,
Upon the whole his carriage was serene:
His figure, and the splendour of his dress,
Of which some gilded remnants still were seen,
Drew all eyes on him, giving them to guess
He was above the vulgar by his mien;
And then, though pale, he was so very handsome;
And then—they calculated on his ransom.

X.

Like a backgammon-board the place was dotted
With whites and blacks, in groups on show for sale,
Though rather more irregularly spotted:
Some bought the jet, while others chose the pale.
It chanced, amongst the other people lotted,
A man of thirty, rather stout and hale,
With resolution in his dark gray eye,
Next Juan stood, till some might choose to buy.

XI.

He had an English look; that is, was square
In make, of a complexion white and ruddy,
Good teeth, with curling rather dark brown hair,
And, it might be from thought, or toil, or study,
An open brow a little mark'd with care:
One arm had on a bandage rather bloody;
And there he stood with such *sang-froid*, that greater
Could scarce be shown even by a mere spectator.

XII.

But seeing at his elbow a mere lad,
Of a high spirit evidently, though
At present weigh'd down by a doom which had
O'erthrown even men, he soon began to show
A kind of blunt compassion for the sad
Lot of so young a partner in the woe,
Which for himself he seem'd to deem no worse
Than any other scrape, a thing of course.

XIII.

"My boy!"—said he, "amidst this motley crew
Of Georgians, Russians, Nubians, and what not,
All ragamuffins differing but in hue,
With whom it is our luck to cast our lot,
The only gentlemen seem I and you,
So let us be acquainted, as we ought:
If I could yield you any consolation,
'T would give me pleasure.—Pray, what is your nation?"

XIV.

When Juan answer'd «Spanish!» he replied,
«I thought, in fact, you could not be a Greek;
Those servile dogs are not so proudly eyed:
Fortune has play'd you here a pretty freak,
But that 's her way with all men till they 're tried:
But never mind,—she 'll turn, perhaps, next week;
She has served me also much the same as you,
Except that I have found it nothing new.»

XV.

«Pray, sir,» said Juan, «if I may presume,
What brought you here?»—«Oh! nothing very rare—
Six Tartars and a drag-chain———»—«To this doom
But what conducted, if the question 's fair,
Is that which I would learn.»—«I served for some
Months with the Russian army here and there,
And taking lately, by Suwarrow's bidding,
A town, was ta'en myself instead of Widin.»

XVI.

«Have you no friends?»—«I had—but, by God's blessing,
Have not been troubled with them lately. Now
I have answer'd all your questions without pressing,
And you an equal courtesy should show.»—
«Alas!» said Juan, «'t were a tale distressing,
And long besides.»—«Oh! if 't is really so,
You 're right on both accounts to hold your tongue;
A sad tale saddens doubly when 't is long.

XVII.

«But droop not: Fortune at your time of life,
Although a female moderately fickle,
Will hardly leave you (as she 's not your wife)
For any length of days in such a pickle.
To strive too with our fate were such a strife
As if the corn-sheaf should oppose the sickle:
Men are the sport of circumstances, when
The circumstances seem the sport of men.»

XVIII.

«'T is not,» said Juan, «for my present doom
I mourn, but for the past;—I loved a maid:»
He paused, and his dark eye grew full of gloom;
A single tear upon his eyelash staid
A moment, and then dropped; «but to resume,
'T is not my present lot, as I have said,
Which I deplore so much; for I have borne
Hardships which have the hardiest overworn,

XIX.

«On the rough deep. But this last blow—» and here
He stopp'd again, and turn'd away his face.
«Ay,» quoth his friend, «I thought it would appear
That there had been a lady in the case;
And these are things which ask a tender tear,
Such as I too would shed if in your place:
I cried upon my first wife's dying day,
And also when my second ran away:

XX.

«My third»—«Your third!» quoth Juan, turning round;
«You scarcely can be thirty: have you three?»
«No—only two at present above ground:
Surely 't is nothing wonderful to see
One person thrice in holy wedlock bound!»
«Well, then, your third,» said Juan; «what did she?
She did not run away, too, did she, sir?»
«No, faith.»—«What then?»—«I ran away from her.»

XXI.

«You take things coolly, sir,» said Juan. «Why,»
Replied the other, «what can a man do?
There still are many rainbows in your sky,
But mine have vanish'd. All, when life is new,
Commence with feelings warm and prospects high;
But time strips our illusions of their hue,
And one by one in turn, some grand mistake
Casts off its bright skin yearly, like the snake.

XXII.

«'T is true, it gets another bright and fresh,
Or fresher, brighter, but the year gone through,
This skin must go the way too of all flesh,
Or sometimes only wear a week or two;—
Love 's the first net which spreads its deadly mesh;
Ambition, Avarice, Vengeance, Glory, glue
The glittering lime-twigs of our latter days,
Where still we flutter on for pence or praise.»

XXIII.

«All this is very fine, and may be true,»
Said Juan; «but I really don't see how
«It betters present times with me or you.»
«No?» quoth the other; «yet you will allow
By setting things in their right point of view,
Knowledge, at least, is gain'd; for instance, now,
We know what slavery is, and our disasters
May teach us better to behave when masters.»

XXIV.

«Would we were masters now, if but to try
Their present lessons on our Pagan friends here,»
Said Juan—swallowing a heart-burning sigh:
«Heav'n help the scholar whom his fortune sends here!»
«Perhaps we shall be one day, by and by,»
Rejoin'd the other, «when our bad luck mends here,
Meantime (you old black eunuch seems to eye us)
I wish to G-d that somebody would buy us!

XXV.

«But after all, what *is* our present state?
'T is bad, and may be better—all men's lot:
Most men are slaves, none more so than the great,
To their own whims and passions, and what not;
Society itself, which should create
Kindness, destroys what little we had got:
To feel for none is the true social art
Of the world's stoics—men without a heart.»

XXVI.

Just now a black old neutral personage
Of the third sex stepp'd up, and peering over
The captives, seem'd to mark their looks, and age,
And capabilities, as to discover
If they were fitted for the purposed cage:
No lady e'er is ogled by a lover,
Horse by a blackleg, broadcloth by a tailor,
Fee by a counsel, felon by a jailor,

XXVII.

As is a slave by his intended bidder.
'T is pleasant purchasing our fellow-creatures;
And all are to be sold, if you consider
Their passions, and are dext'rous; some by features
Are bought up, others by a warlike leader,
Some by a place—as tend their years or natures;
The most by ready cash—but all have prices,
From crowns to kicks, according to their vices.

XXVIII.

The eunuch having eyed them o'er with care,
Turn'd to the merchant, and begun to bid
First but for one, and after for the pair;
They haggled, wrangled, swore, too—so they did!
As though they were in a mere christian fair,
Cheapening an ox, an ass, a lamb, or kid;
So that their bargain sounded like a battle
For this superior yoke of human cattle.

XXIX.

At last they settled into simple grumbling,
And pulling out reluctant purses, and
Turning each piece of silver o'er, and tumbling
Some down, and weighing others in their hand,
And by mistake sequins with paras jumbling,
Until the sum was accurately scann'd,
And then the merchant, giving change and signing
Receipts in full, began to think of dining.

XXX.

I wonder if his appetite was good;
Or, if it were, if also his digestion.
Methinks at meals some odd thoughts might intrude,
And conscience ask a curious sort of question,
About the right divine how far we should
Sell flesh and blood. When dinner has oppress'd one,
I think it is perhaps the gloomiest hour
Which turns up out of the sad twenty-four.

XXXI.

Voltaire says «No;» he tells you that Candide
Found life most tolerable after meals;
He 's wrong—unless man was a pig, indeed,
Repletion rather adds to what he feels;
Unless he 's drunk, and then no doubt he 's freed
From his own brain's oppression while it reels.
Of food I think with Philip's son, or rather
Ammon's (ill pleased with one world and one father);

XXXII.

I think with Alexander, that the act
Of eating, with another act or two,
Makes us feel our mortality in fact
Redoubled; when a roast and a ragout,
And fish and soup, by some side dishes back'd,
Can give us either pain or pleasure, who
Would pique himself on intellects, whose use
Depends so much upon the gastric juice?

XXXIII.

The other evening ('t was on Friday last)—
This is a fact and no poetic fable—
Just as my great coat was about me cast,
My hat and gloves still lying on the table,
I heard a shot—'t was eight o'clock scarce past—
And running out as fast as I was able,[3]
I found the military commandant
Stretch'd in the street, and able scarce to pant.

XXXIV.

Poor Fellow! for some reason, surely bad,
They had slain him with five slugs; and left him there
To perish on the pavement: so I had
Him borne into the house and up the stair,
And stripp'd, and look'd to——But why should I add
More circumstances? vain was every care;
The man was gone: in some Italian quarrel
Kill'd by five bullets from an old gun-barrel.[4]

XXXV.

I gazed upon him, for I knew him well;
And, though I have seen many corpses, never
Saw one, whom such an accident befel,
So calm; though pierced through stomach, heart, and liver,
He seem'd to sleep, for you could scarcely tell
(As he bled inwardly, no hideous river
Of gore divulged the cause) that he was dead:—
So as I gazed on him, I thought or said—

XXXVI.

«Can this be death? then what is life or death?
Speak!» but he spoke not: «wake!» but still he slept:
But yesterday and who had mightier breath?
A thousand warriors by his word were kept
In awe: he said, as the centurion saith,
'Go,' and he goeth; 'come,' and forth he stepp'd.
The trump and bugle till he spake were dumb—
And now nought left him but the muffled drum.»

XXXVII.

And they who waited once and worshipp'd—they
With their rough faces throng'd about the bed,
To gaze once more on the commanding clay
Which for the last though not the first time bled;
And such an end! that he who many a day
Had faced Napoleon's foes until they fled,—
The foremost in the charge or in the sally,
Should now be butcher'd in a civic alley.

XXXVIII.

The scars of his old wounds were near his new,
Those honourable scars which brought him fame;
And horrid was the contrast to the view—
But let me quit the theme, as such things claim
Perhaps even more attention than is due
From me: I gazed (as oft I have gazed the same)
To try if I could wrench aught out of death
Which should confirm, or shake, or make a faith;

XXXIX.

But it was all a mystery. Here we are,
And there we go:—but *where?* five bits of lead,
Or three, or two, or one, send very far!
And is this blood, then, form'd but to be shed?
Can every element our elements mar?
And air—earth—water—fire live—and we dead?
We, whose minds comprehend all things? No more;
But let us to the story as before.

XL.

The purchaser of Juan and acquaintance
Bore off his bargains to a gilded boat,
Embark'd himself and them, and off they went thence
As fast as oars could pull and water float;
They look'd like persons being led to sentence,
Wondering what next, till the caique was brought
Up in a little creek below a wall
O'ertopp'd with cypresses dark-green and tall.

XLI.

Here their conductor tapping at the wicket
Of a small iron door, 't was open'd, and
He led them onward, first through a low thicket
Flank'd by large groves which tower'd on either hand:
They almost lost their way, and had to pick it—
For night was closing ere they came to land.
The eunuch made a sign to those on board,
Who row'd off, leaving them without a word.

XLII.

As they were plodding on their winding way,
Through orange bowers, and jasmine, and so forth
(Of which I might have a good deal to say,
There being no such profusion in the North
Of oriental plants, «et cætera,»
But that of late your scribblers think it worth
Their while to rear whole hotbeds in *their* works
Because one poet travell'd 'mongst the Turks):

XLIII.

As they were threading on their way, there came
Into Don Juan's head a thought, which he
Whisper'd to his companion:—'t was the same
Which might have then occurr'd to you or me.
«Methinks,»—said he—«it would be no great shame
If we should strike a stroke to set us free;
Let 's knock that old black fellow on the head,
And march away—'t were easier done than said.»

XLIV.

«Yes,» said the other, «and when done, what then:
How get out? how the devil got we in?
And when we once were fairly out, and when
From Saint Bartholomew we have saved our skin,
To-morrow 'd see us in some other den,
And worse off than we hitherto have been;
Besides, I 'm hungry, and just now would take,
Like Esau, for my birthright a beef-steak.

XLV.

«We must be near some place of man's abode;
For the old negro's confidence in creeping,
With his two captives, by so queer a road,
Shows that he thinks his friends have not been sleeping;
A single cry would bring them all abroad:
'Tis therefore better looking before leaping—
And there, you see, this turn has brought us through.
By Jove, a noble palace!—lighted too.»

XLVI.

It was indeed a wide extensive building
Which open'd on their view, and o'er the front
There seem'd to be bespreut a deal of gilding
And various hues, as in the Turkish wont,—
A gaudy taste; for they are little skill'd in
The arts of which these lands were once the font:
Each villa on the Bosphorus looks a screen
New painted, or a pretty opera-scene.

XLVII.

And nearer as they came, a genial savour
Of certain stews, and roast-meats, and pilaus,
Things which in hungry mortals' eyes find favour,
Made Juan in his harsh intentions pause,
And put himself upon his good behaviour:
His friend, too, adding a new saving clause,
Said, «In Heaven's name let 's get some supper now,
And then I 'm with you, if you 're for a row.»

XLVIII.

Some talk of an appeal unto some passion,
Some to men's feelings, others to their reason;
The last of these was never much the fashion,
For reason thinks all reasoning out of season.
Some speakers whine, and others lay the lash on,
But more or less continue still to teaze on,
With arguments according to their «forte;»
But no one ever dreams of being short.

XLIX.

But I digress: of all appeals,—although
I grant the power of pathos, and of gold,
Of beauty, flattery, threats, a shilling,—no
Method 's more sure at moments to take hold
Of the best feelings of mankind, which grow
More tender, as we every day behold,
Than that all-softening, o'er-powering knell,
The tocsin of the soul—the dinner bell.

L.

Turkey contains no bells, and yet men dine:
And Juan and his friend, albeit they heard
No christian knoll to table, saw no line
Of lacqueys usher to the feast prepared,
Yet smelt roast-meat, beheld a huge fire shine,
And cooks in motion with their clean arms bared,
And gazed around them to the left and right
With the prophetic eye of appetite.

LI.

And giving up all notions of resistance,
They follow'd close behind their sable guide,
Who little thought that his own crack'd existence
Was on the point of being set aside:
He motion'd them to stop at some small distance,
And knocking at the gate, 't was open'd wide,
And a magnificent large hall display'd
The Asian pomp of Ottoman parade.

LII.

I won't describe; description is my forte,
But every fool describes in these bright days
His wond'rous journey to some foreign court,
And spawns his quarto, and demands your praise—
Death to his publisher, to him 't is sport;
While nature, tortured twenty thousand ways,
Resigns herself with exemplary patience
To guide-books, rhymes, tours, sketches, illustrations.

LIII.

Along this hall, and up and down, some, squatted
Upon their hams, were occupied at chess;
Others in monosyllable talk chatted,
And some seem'd much in love with their own dress,
And divers smoked superb pipes decorated
With amber mouths of greater price or less;
And several strutted, others slept, and some
Prepared for supper with a glass of rum.[5]

LIV.

As the black eunuch enter'd with his brace
Of purchased infidels, some raised their eyes
A moment without slackening from their pace;
But those who sate ne'er stirr'd in any wise:
One or two stared the captives in the face,
Just as one views a horse to guess his price;
Some nodded to the negro from their station,
But no one troubled him with conversation.

LV.

He leads them through the hall, and, without stopping,
On through a farther range of goodly rooms,
Splendid but silent, save in *one*, where, dropping,[6]
A marble fountain echoes through the glooms
Of night, which robe the chamber, or where popping
Some female head most curiously presumes
To thrust its black eyes through the door or lattice,
As wondering what the devil noise that is.

LVI.

Some faint lamps gleaming from the lofty walls
  Gave light enough to hint their farther way,
But not enough to show the imperial halls
  In all the flashing of their full array;
Perhaps there 's nothing—I 'll not say appals,
  But saddens more by night as well as day,
Than an enormous room without a soul
To break the lifeless splendor of the whole.

LVII.

Two or three seem so little, *one* seems nothing:
  In deserts, forests, crowds, or by the shore,
There solitude, we know, has her full growth in
  The spots which were her realms for evermore;
But in a mighty hall or gallery, both in
  More modern buildings and those built of yore,
A kind of death comes o'er us all alone,
Seeing what 's meant for many with but one.

LVIII.

A neat, snug study on a winter's night,
  A book, friend, single lady, or a glass
Of claret, sandwich, and an appetite,
  Are things which make an English evening pass;
Though *certes* by no means so grand a sight
  As is a theatre lit up by gas.
I pass my evenings in long galleries solely,
And that 's the reason I 'm so melancholy.

LIX.

Alas! man makes that great which makes him little:
  I grant you in a church 't is very well:
What speaks of Heaven should by no means be brittle,
  But strong and lasting, till no tongue can tell
Their names who rear'd it; but huge houses fit ill—
  And huge tombs worse—mankind, since Adam fell:
Methinks the story of the tower of Babel
Might teach them this much better than I 'm able.

LX.

Babel was Nimrod's hunting seat, and then
  A town of gardens, walls, and wealth amazing,
Where Nabuchadonosor, king of men,
  Reign'd, till one summer's day he took to grazing,
And Daniel tamed the lions in their den,
  The people's awe and admiration raising;
'T was famous, too, for Thisbe and for Pyramus,
And the calumniated Queen Semiramis.

LXI.

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LXII.

But to resume,—should there be (what may not
  Be in these days?) some infidels, who don't,
Because they can't find out the very spot
  Of that same Babel, or because they won't
(Though Claudius Rich, esquire, some bricks has got,
  And written lately two memoirs upon't),
Believe the Jews, those unbelievers, who
Must be believed, though they believe not you:—

LXIII.

Yet let them think that Horace has express'd
  Shortly and sweetly the masonic folly
Of those, forgetting the great place of rest,
  Who give themselves to architecture wholly;
We know where things and men must end at last;
  A moral (like all morals) melancholy,
And «Et sepulcri immemor struis domos»
Shows that we build when we should but entomb us.

LXIV.

At last they reach'd a quarter most retired,
  Where echo woke as if from a long slumber:
Though full of all things which could be desired,
  One wonder'd what to do with such a number
Of articles which nobody required;
  Here wealth had done its utmost to encumber
With furniture an exquisite apartment,
Which puzzled nature much to know what art meant.

LXV.

It seem'd, however, but to open on
  A range or suite of further chambers, which
Might lead to heaven knows where; but in this one
  The moveables were prodigally rich:
Sofas 't was half a sin to sit upon,
  So costly were they; carpets every stitch
Of workmanship so rare, that made you wish
You could glide o'er them like a golden fish.

LXVI.

The black, however, without hardly deigning
  A glance at that which wrapt the slaves in wonder,
Trampled what they scarce trod for fear of staining,
  As if the milky way their feet was under
With all its stars; and with a stretch attaining
  A certain press or cupboard, niched in yonder
In that remote recess which you may see—
Or if you don't the fault is not in me:

LXVII.

I wish to be perspicuous; and the black,
  I say, unlocking the recess, pull'd forth
A quantity of clothes fit for the back
  Of any Mussulman, whate'er his worth;
And of variety there was no lack—
  And yet, though I have said there was no dearth,
He chose himself to point out what he thought
Most proper for the Christians he had bought.

LXVIII.

The suit he thought most suitable to each
  Was, for the elder and the stouter, first
A Candiote cloak, which to the knee might reach,
  And trowsers not so tight that they would burst,
But such as fit an Asiatic breech;
  A shawl, whose folds in Cashmire had been nurst,
Slippers of saffron, dagger rich and handy;
In short, all things which form a Turkish Dandy.

LXIX.

While he was dressing, Baba, their black friend,
  Hinted the vast advantages which they
Might probably attain both in the end,
  If they would but pursue the proper way
Which Fortune plainly seem'd to recommend;
  And then he added, that he needs must say,
«'T would greatly tend to better their condition,
If they would condescend to circumcision.

LXX.

«For his own part, he really should rejoice
To see them true believers, but no less
Would leave his proposition to their choice.»
The other, thanking him for this excess
Of goodness in thus leaving them a voice
In such a trifle, scarcely could express
«Sufficiently (he said) his approbation
Of all the customs of this polish'd nation.

LXXI.

«For his own share—he saw but small objection
To so respectable an ancient rite,
And after swallowing down a slight refection,
For which he own'd a present appetite,
He doubted not a few hours of reflection
Would reconcile him to the business quite.»—
«Will it?» said Juan, sharply; «Strike me dead,
But they as soon shall circumcise my head—

LXXII.

«Cut of a thousand heads, before——»—«Now pray,»
Replied the other, «do not interrupt:
You put me out in what I had to say.
Sir!—as I said, as soon as I have supp'd,
I shall perpend if your proposal may
Be such as I can properly accept:
Provided always your great goodness still
Remits the matter to our own free-will.»

LXXIII.

Baba eyed Juan, and said «Be so good
As dress yourself—» and pointed out a suit
In which a princess with great pleasure would
Array her limbs; but Juan standing mute,
As not being in a masquerading mood,
Gave it a slight kick with his christian foot;
And when the old negro told him to «Get ready,»
Replied, «Old gentleman, I 'm not a lady.»

LXXIV.

«What you may be, I neither know nor care,»
Said Baba; «but pray do as I desire:
I have no more time nor many words to spare.»
«At least,» said Juan, «sure I may inquire
The cause of this odd travesty?»—«Forbear,»
Said Baba, «to be curious: 't will transpire,
No doubt, in proper place, and time, and season:
I have no authority to tell the reason.»

LXXV.

«Then if I do,» said Juan, «I 'll be ——» «Hold!»
Rejoin'd the negro, «pray be not provoking;
This spirit 's well, but it may wax too bold,
And you will find us not too fond of joking»
«What, sir,» said Juan, «shall it e'er be told
That I unsex'd my dress?» But Baba, stroking
The things down, said—«Incense me, and I call
Those who will leave you of no sex at all.

LXXVI.

«I offer you a handome suit of clothes:
A woman's, true; but then there is a cause
Why you should wear them.»—«What, though my soul loathes
The effeminate garb?»—Thus after a short pause,
Sigh'd Juan, muttering also some slight oaths,
«What the devil shall I do with all this gauze?»
Thus he profanely term'd the finest lace
Which e'er set off a marriage-morning face.

LXXVII.

And then he swore; and, sighing, on he slipp'd
A pair of trowsers of flesh-colour'd silk;
Next with a virgin zone he was equipp'd,
Which girt a slight chemise as white as milk;
But, tugging on his petticoat, he tripp'd,
Which—as we say—or as the Scotch say, *whilk*,
(The rhyme obliges me to this: sometimes
Kings are not more imperative than rhymes)—

LXXVIII.

Whilk, which (or what you please) was owing to
His garment's novelty, and his being awkward;
And yet at last he managed to get through
His toilet, though no doubt a little backward:
The negro Baba help'd a little too,
When some untoward part of raiment stuck hard;
And, wrestling both his arms into a gown,
He paused and took a survey up and down.

LXXIX.

One difficulty still remain'd,—his hair
Was hardly long enough; but Baba found
So many false long tresses all to spare,
That soon his head was most completely crown'd,
After the manner then in fashion there;
And this addition with such gems was bound
As suited the *ensemble* of his toilet,
While Baba made him comb his head and oil it.

LXXX.

And now being femininely all array'd,
With some small aid from scissars, paint, and tweezers,
He look'd in almost all respects a maid,
And Baba smilingly exclaim'd, «You see, sirs,
A perfect transformation here display'd;
And now, then, you must come along with me, sirs,
That is—the lady:»—clapping his hands twice,
Four blacks were at his elbow in a trice.

LXXXI.

«You, sir,» said Baba nodding to the one,
«Will please to accompany those gentlemen
To supper; but you, worthy christian nun,
Will follow me: no trifling, sir: for when
I say a thing it must at once be done.
What fear you? think you this a lion's den?
Why, 't is a palace, where the truly wise
Anticipate the Prophet's paradise.

LXXXII.

«You fool! I tell you no one means you harm.»
«So much the better,» Juan said, «for them;
Else they shall feel the weight of this my arm,
Which is not quite so light as you may deem.
I yield thus far; but soon will break the charm,
If any take me for that which I seem;
So that I trust, for every body's sake,
That this disguise may lead to no mistake.»

LXXXIII.

«Blockhead! come on and see,» quoth Baba; while
Don Juan, turning to his comrade, who,
Though somewhat grieved, could scarce forbear a smile
Upon the metamorphosis in view,
«Farewell!» they mutually exclaim'd: «this soil
Seems fertile in adventures strange and new;
One 's turn'd half Mussulman, and one a maid,
By this old black enchanter's unsought aid.»

LXXXIV.

« Farewell!» said Juan; « should we meet no more,
I wish you a good appetite.»—« Farewell!»
Replied the other; « though it grieves me sore;
When we next meet we 'll have a tale to tell:
We needs must follow when Fate puts from shore.
Keep your good name; though Eve herself once fell.»
« Nay,» quoth the maid, the Sultan's self shan't carry me,
Unless his highness promises to marry me.»

LXXXV.

And thus they parted, each by separate doors;
Baba led Juan onward, room by room,
Through glittering galleries and o'er marble floors,
Till a gigantic portal through the gloom,
Haughty and huge, along the distance towers;
And wafted far arose a rich perfume:
It seem'd as though they came upon a shrine,
For all was vast, still, fragrant, and divine.

LXXXVI.

The giant door was broad, and bright and high,
Of gilded bronze, and carved in curious guise;
Warriors thereon were battling furiously;
Here stalks the victor, there the vanquish'd lies;
There captives led in triumph droop the eye,
And in perspective many a squadron flies:
It seems the work of times before the line
Of Rome transplanted fell with Constantine.

LXXXVII.

This massy portal stood at the wide close
Of a huge hall, and on its either side
Two little dwarfs, the least you could suppose,
Were sate, like ugly imps, as if allied
In mockery to the enormous gate which rose
O'er them in almost pyramidic pride:
The gate so splendid was in all its *features*,
You never thought about those little creatures,

LXXXVIII.

Until you nearly trod on them, and then,
You started back in horror to survey
The wondrous hideousness of those small men,
Whose colour was not black, nor white, nor grey,
But an extraneous mixture, which no pen
Can trace, although perhaps the pencil may;
They were mis-shapen pigmies, deaf and dumb—
Monsters, who cost a no less monstrous sum.

LXXXIX.

Their duty was—for they were strong, and though
They look'd so little, did strong things at times—
To ope this door, which they could really do,
The hinges being as smooth as Rogers' rhymes;
And now and then, with tough strings of the bow,
As is the custom of those eastern climes,
To give some rebel Pacha a cravat;
For mutes are generally used for that.

XC.

They spoke by signs—that is, not spoke at all:
And, looking like two incubi, they glared
As Baba with his fingers made them fall
To heaving back the portal folds: it scared
Juan a moment, as this pair so small
With shrinking serpent optics on him stared;
It was as if their little looks could poison
Or fascinate whome'er they fix'd their eyes on.

XCI.

Before they enter'd Baba paused to hint
To Juan some slight lessons as his guide:
« If you could just contrive,» he said, « to stint
That somewhat manly majesty of stride,
'T would be as well, and—(though there 's not much in 't—
To swing a little less from side to side,
Which has at times an aspect of the oddest;
And also, could you look a little modest,

XCII.

'T would be convenient; for these mutes have eyes
Like needles, which may pierce those petticoats;
And if they should discover your disguise,
You know how near us the deep Bosphorus floats;
And you and I may chance, ere morning rise,
To find our way to Marmora without boats,
Stitch'd up in sacks—a mode of navigation
A good deal practised here upon occasion.»

XCIII.

With this encouragement, he led the way
Into a room still nobler than the last;
A rich confusion form'd a disarray
In such sort, that the eye along it cast
Could hardly carry any thing away,
Object on object flash'd so bright and fast;
A dazzling mass of gems, and gold, and glitter,
Magnificently mingled in a litter.

XCIV.

Wealth had done wonders—taste not much; such things
Occur in orient palaces, and even
In the more chasten'd domes of western kings
(Of which I've also seen some six or seven),
Where I can't say or gold or diamond flings
Much lustre, there is much to be forgiven;
Groups of bad statues, tables, chairs, and pictures,
On which I cannot pause to make my strictures.

XCV.

In this imperial hall, at distance lay
Under a canopy, and there reclined
Quite in a confidential queenly way,
A lady. Baba stopp'd, and kneeling sign'd
To Juan, who, though not much used to pray,
Knelt down by instinct, wondering in his mind
What all this meant: while Baba bow'd and bended
His head, until the ceremony ended.

XCVI.

The lady, rising up with such an air
As Venus rose with from the wave, on them
Bent like an antelope a Paphian pair
Of eyes, which put out each surrounding gem:
And, raising up an arm as moonlight fair,
She sign'd to Baba, who first kiss'd the hem
Of her deep-purple robe, and, speaking low,
Pointed to Juan, who remain'd below.

XCVII.

Her presence was as lofty as her state;
Her beauty of that overpowering kind,
Whose force description only would abate:
I 'd rather leave it much to your own mind,
Than lessen it by what I could relate
Of forms and features; it would strike you blind
Could I do justice to the full detail:
So, luckily for both, my phrases fail.

XCVIII.

This much however I may add,—her years
Were ripe, they might make six and twenty springs,
But there are forms which Time to touch forbears,
And turns aside his scythe to vulgar things,
Such as was Mary's Queen of Scots; true—tears
And love destroy; and sapping sorrow wrings
Charms from the charmer, yet some never grow
Ugly; for instance—Ninon de l'Enclos.

XCIX.

She spake some words to her attendants, who
Composed a choir of girls, ten or a dozen,
And were all clad alike; like Juan, too,
Who wore their uniform, by Baba chosen:
They form'd a very nymph-like looking crew,
Which might have call'd Diana's chorus «cousin,»
As far as outward show may correspond;
I won't be bail for any thing beyond.

C.

They bow'd obeisance and withdrew, retiring,
But not by the same door through which came in
Baba and Juan, which last stood admiring,
At some small distance, all he saw within
This strange saloon, much fitted for inspiring
Marvel and praise: for both or none things win;
And I must say I ne'er could see the very
Great happiness of the «Nil Admirari.»

CI.

«Not to admire is all the art I know
(Plain truth, dear Murray, needs few flowers of speech)
To make men happy, or to keep them so;»
(So take it in the very words of Creech).
Thus Horace wrote we all know long ago;
And thus Pope quotes the precept to re-teach
From his translation; but had *none admired,*
Would Pope have sung, or Horace been inspired?

CII.

Baba, when all the damsels were withdrawn,
Motion'd to Juan to approach, and then
A second time desired him to kneel down
And kiss the lady's foot, which maxim when
He heard repeated, Juan with a frown
Drew himself up to his full height again,
And said «It grieved him, but he could not stoop
To any shoe, unless it shod the Pope.»

CIII.

Baba, indignant at this ill-timed pride,
Made fierce remonstrances, and then a threat
He mutter'd (but the last was given aside)
About a bow-string—quite in vain; not yet
Would Juan stoop, though 't were to Mahomet's bride:
There's nothing in the world like *etiquette,*
In kingly chambers or imperial halls,
As also at the race and county balls.

CIV.

He stood like Atlas, with a world of words
About his ears, and nathless would not bend;
The blood of all his line's Castilian lords
Boil'd in his veins, and rather than descend
To stain his pedigree, a thousand swords
A thousand times of him had made an end;
At length perceiving the «*foot*» could not stand,
Baba proposed that he should kiss the hand.

CV.

Here was an honourable compromise,
A half-way house of diplomatic rest,
Where they might meet in much more peaceful guise;
And Juan now his willingness express'd
To use all fit and proper courtesies,
Adding, that this was commonest and best,
For through the South the custom still commands
The gentleman to kiss the lady's hands.

CVI.

And he advanced, though with but a bad grace,
Though on more *thorough-bred*[8] or fairer fingers
No lips e'er left their transitory trace:
On such as these the lip too fondly lingers,
And for one kiss would fain imprint a brace,
As you will see, if she you love will bring hers
In contact; and sometimes even a fair stranger's
An almost twelvemonth's constancy endangers.

CVII.

The lady eyed him o'er and o'er, and bade
Baba retire, which he obey'd in style,
As if well-used to the retreating trade;
And taking hints in good part all the while,
He whisper'd Juan not to be afraid,
And, looking on him with a sort of smile,
Took leave with such a face of satisfaction,
As good men wear who have done a virtuous action.

CVIII.

When he was gone, there was a sudden change:
I know not what might be the lady's thought,
But o'er her bright brow flash'd a tumult strange,
And into her clear cheek the blood was brought,
Blood-red as sunset summer clouds which range
The verge of heaven; and in her large eyes wrought
A mixture of sensations might be scann'd,
Of half voluptuousness and half command.

CIX.

Her form had all the softness of her sex,
Her features all the sweetness of the devil,
When he put on the cherub to perplex
Eve, and paved (God knows how) the road to evil;
The sun himself was scarce more free from specks
Than she from aught at which the eye could cavil;
Yet, somehow, there was something somewhere wanting,
As if she rather *order'd* than was *granting.*—

CX.

Something imperial, or imperious, threw
A chain o'er all she did; that is, a chain
Was thrown as 't were about the neck of you,—
And rapture's self will seem almost a pain
With aught which looks like despotism in view:
Our souls at least are free, and 't is in vain
We would against them make the flesh obey—
The spirit in the end will have its way.

CXI.

Her very smile was haughty, though so sweet;
Her very nod was not an inclination;
There was a self-will even in her small feet,
As though they were quite conscious of her station—
They trod as upon necks; and to complete
Her state (it is the custom of her nation),
A poignard deck'd her girdle, as the sign
She was a sultan's bride (thank Heaven, not mine).

CXII.

« To hear and to obey» had been from birth
The law of all around her; to fulfil
All phantasies which yielded joy or mirth,
Had been her slaves' chief pleasure, as her will;
Her blood was high, her beauty scarce of earth:
Judge, then, if her caprices e'er stood still;
Had she but been a Christian, I've a notion
We should have found out the « perpetual motion.»

CXIII.

Whate'er she saw and coveted was brought;
Whate'er she did *not* see, if she supposed
It might be seen, with diligence was sought,
And when 't was found straightway the bargain closed:
There was no end unto the things she bought,
Nor to the trouble which her fancies caused;
Yet even her tyranny had such a grace,
The women pardon'd all except her face.

CXIV.

Juan, the latest of her whims, had caught
Her eye in passing on his way to sale;
She order'd him directly to be bought,
And Baba, who had ne'er been known to fail
In any kind of mischief to be wrought,
Had his instructions where and how to deal:
She had no prudence, but he had; and this
Explains the garb which Juan took amiss.

CXV.

His youth and features favour'd the disguise,
And should you ask how she, a sultan's bride,
Could risk or compass such strange phantasies,
This I must leave sultanas to decide:
Emperors are only husbands in wives' eyes,
And kings and consorts oft are mystified,
As we may ascertain with due precision,
Some by experience, others by tradition.

CXVI.

But to the main point, where we have been tending:—
She now conceived all difficulties past,
And deem'd herself extremely condescending
When, being made her property at last,
Without more preface, in her blue eyes blending
Passion and power, a glance on him she cast,
And merely saying, « Christian, canst thou love?»
Conceived that phrase was quite enough to move.

CXVII.

And so it was, in proper time and place;
But Juan, who had still his mind o'erflowing
With Haidee's isle and soft Ionian face,
Felt the warm blood, which in his face was glowing,
Rush back upon his heart, which fill'd apace,
And left his cheeks as pale as snowdrops blowing:
These words went through his soul like Arab spears,
So that he spoke not, but burst into tears.

CXVIII.

She was a good deal shock'd; not shock'd at tears,
For women shed and use them at their liking;
But there is something when man's eye appears
Wet, still more disagreeable and striking:
A woman's tear-drop melts, a man's half sears,
Like molten lead, as if you thrust a pike in
His heart to force it out, for (to be shorter)
To them 't is a relief, to us a torture.

CXIX.

And she would have consoled, but knew not how;
Having no equals, nothing which had e'er
Infected her with sympathy till now,
And never having dreamt what 't was to bear
Aught of a serious sorrowing kind, although
There might arise some pouting petty care
To cross her brow, she wonder'd how so near
Her eyes another's eye could shed a tear.

CXX.

But nature teaches more than power can spoil,
And when a *strong* although a strange sensation
Moves—female hearts are such a genial soil
For kinder feelings, whatsoe'er their nation,
They naturally pour the « wine and oil,»
Samaritans in every situation;
And thus Gulleyaz, though she knew not why,
Felt an odd glistening moisture in her eye.

CXXI.

But tears must stop like all things else; and soon
Juan, who for an instant had been moved
To such a sorrow by the intrusive tone
Of one who dared to ask if « he *had* loved,»
Call'd back the stoic to his eyes, which shone
Bright with the very weakness he reproved;
And although sensitive to beauty, he
Felt most indignant still at not being free.

CXXII.

Gulleyaz, for the first time in her days,
Was much embarrass'd, never having met
In all her life with aught save prayers and praise;
And as she also risk'd her life to get
Him whom she meant to tutor in love's ways
Into a comfortable tête-à-tête,
To lose the hour would make her quite a martyr,
And they had wasted now almost a quarter.

CXXIII.

I also would suggest the fitting time,
To gentlemen in any such like case,
That is to say—in a meridian clime;
With us there is more law given to the case,
But here a small delay forms a great crime:
So recollect that the extremest grace
Is just two minutes for your declaration—
A moment more would hurt your reputation.

CXXIV.

Juan's was good; and might have been still better,
But he had got Haidee into his head:
However strange, he could not yet forget her,
Which made him seem exceedingly ill-bred.
Gulleyaz, who look'd on him as her debtor
For having had him to her palace led,
Began to blush up to the eyes, and then
Grow deadly pale, and then blush back again.

CXXV.

At length, in an imperial way, she laid
Her hand on his, and bending on his eyes,
Which needed not an empire to persuade,
Look'd into his for love, where none replies:
Her brow grew black, but she would not upbraid,
That being the last thing a proud woman tries;
She rose, and, pausing one chaste moment, threw
Herself upon his breast, and there she grew.

CXXVI.

This was an awkward test, as Juan found,
But he was steel'd by sorrow, wrath, and pride:
With gentle force her white arms he unwound,
And seated her all drooping by his side.
Then rising haughtily he glanced around,
And looking coldly in her face, he cried,
«The prison'd eagle will not pair, nor I
Serve a sultana's sensual phantasy.

CXXVII.

«Thou ask'st if I can love? be this the proof
How much I *have* loved—that I love not *thee!*
In this vile garb, the distaff's web and woof
Were fitter for me: love is for the free!
I am not dazzled by this splendid roof.
Whate'er thy power, and great it seems to be,
Heads bow, knees bend, eyes watch around a throne,
And hands obey—our hearts are still our own.»

CXXVIII.

This was a truth to us extremely trite,
Not so to her who ne'er had heard such things;
She deem'd her least command must yield delight,
Earth being only made for queens and kings.
If hearts lay on the left side or the right
She hardly knew, to such perfection brings
Legitimacy its born votaries, when
Aware of their due royal rights o'er men.

CXXIX.

Besides, as has been said, she was so fair
As even in a much humbler lot had made
A kingdom or confusion any where;
And also, as may be presumed, she laid
Some stress upon those charms, which seldom are
By the possessors thrown into the shade;—
She thought hers gave a double «right divine,»
And half of that opinion 's also mine.

CXXX.

Remember, or (if you cannot) imagine,
Ye! who have kept your chastity when young,
While some more desperate dowager has been waging
Love with you, and been in the dog-days stung
By your refusal, recollect her raging!
Or recollect all that was said or sung
On such a subject; then suppose the face
Of a young downright beauty in this case.

CXXXI.

Suppose, but you already have supposed,
The spouse of Potiphar, the Lady Booby,
Phedra, and all which story has disclosed
Of good examples; pity that so few by
Poets and private tutors are exposed,
To educate—ye youth of Europe—you by!
But when you have supposed the few we know,
You can't suppose Gulleyaz' angry brow.

CXXXII.

A tigress robb'd of young, a lioness,
Or any interesting beast of prey,
Are similes at hand for the distress
Of ladies who cannot have their own way;
But though my turn will not be served with less,
These don't express one half what I should say:
For what is stealing young ones, few or many,
To cutting short their hopes of having any?

CXXXIII.

The love of offspring 's nature's general law,
From tigresses and cubs to ducks and ducklings;
There 's nothing whets the beak or arms the claw
Like an invasion of their babes and sucklings;
And all who have seen a human nursery, saw
How mothers love their children's squalls and chucklings;
And this strong extreme effect (to tire no longer
Your patience) shows the cause must still be stronger.

CXXXIV.

If I said fire flash'd from Gulleyaz' eyes,
'T were nothing—for her eyes flash'd always fire;
Or said her cheeks assumed the deepest dyes,
I should but bring disgrace upon the dyer,
So supernatural was her passion's rise;
For ne'er till now she knew a check'd desire:
Even you who know what a check'd woman is
(Enough, God knows!) would much fall short of this.

CXXXV.

Her rage was but a minute's, and 't was well—
A moment's more had slain her; but the while
It lasted 't was like a short glimpse of hell:
Nought 's more sublime than energetic bile,
Though horrible to see yet grand to tell,
Like ocean warring 'gainst a rocky isle;
And the deep passions flashing through her form
Made her a beautiful embodied storm.

CXXXVI.

A vulgar tempest 't were to a Typhoon
To match a common fury with her rage,
And yet she did not want to reach the moon,
Like moderate Hotspur on the immortal page;
Her anger pitch'd into a lower tune,
Perhaps the fault of her soft sex and age—
Her wish was but to «kill, kill, kill,» like Lear's,
And then her thirst of blood was quench'd in tears.

CXXXVII.

A storm it raged, and like the storm it pass'd,
Pass'd without words—in fact she could not speak;
And then her sex's shame broke in at last,
A sentiment till then in her but weak,
But now it flow'd in natural and fast,
As water through an unexpected leak,
For she felt humbled—and humiliation
Is sometimes good for people in her station.

CXXXVIII.

It teaches them that they are flesh and blood,
It also gently hints to them that others,
Although of clay, are not yet quite of mud;
That urns and pipkins are but fragile brothers,
And works of the same pottery, bad or good,
Though not all born of the same sires and mothers:
It teaches—Heaven knows only what it teaches,
But sometimes it may mend, and often reaches.

CXXXIX.

Her first thought was to cut off Juan's head;
Her second, to cut only his—acquaintance;
Her third, to ask him where he had been bred;
Her fourth, to rally him into repentance;
Her fifth, to call her maids and go to bed,
Her sixth, to stab herself; her seventh, to sentence
The lash to Baba;—but her grand resource
Was to sit down again, and cry of course.

CXL.

She thought to stab herself, but then she had
The dagger close at hand, which made it awkward;
For eastern stays are little made to pad,
So that a poniard pierces if 't is stuck hard;
She thought of killing Juan—but, poor lad!
Though he deserved it well for being so backward,
The cutting of his head was not the art
Most likely to attain her aim—his heart.

CXLI.

Juan was moved: he had made up his mind
To be impaled, or quarter'd as a dish
For dogs, or to be slain with pangs refined,
Or thrown to lions, or made baits for fish,
And thus heroically stood resign'd,
Rather than sin—except to his own wish:
But all his great preparatives for dying
Dissolved like snow before a woman crying.

CXLII.

As through his palms Bob Acres' valour oozed,
So Juan's virtue ebb'd, I know not how;
And first he wonder'd why he had refused;
And then, if matters could be made up now;
And next his savage virtue he accused,
Just as a friar may accuse his vow,
Or as a dame repents her of her oath,
Which mostly ends in some small breach of both.

CXLIII.

So he began to stammer some excuses;
But words are not enough in such a matter,
Although you borrow'd all that e'er the muses
Have sung, or even a Dandy's dandiest chatter,
Or all the figures Castlereagh abuses;
Just as a languid smile began to flatter
His peace was making, but before he ventured
Further, old Baba rather briskly enter'd.

CXLIV.

«Bride of the Sun! and Sister of the Moon!»
('T was thus he spake) «and Empress of the Earth!
Whose frown would put the spheres all out of tune,
Whose smile makes all the planets dance with mirth,
Your slave brings tidings—he hopes not too soon—
Which your sublime attention may be worth;
The Sun himself has sent me like a ray
To hint that he is coming up this way.»

CXLV.

«Is it,» exclaim'd Gulleyaz, «as you say?
I wish to heaven he would not shine till morning!
But bid my women form the milky way.
Hence, my old comet! give the stars due warning—
And, Christian! mingle with them as you may;
And, as you 'd have me pardon your past scorning——»
Here they were interrupted by a humming
Sound, and then by a cry, «the Sultan's coming!»

CXLVI.

First came her damsels, a decorous file,
And then his highness' eunuchs, black and white;
The train might reach a quarter of a mile:
His majesty was always so polite
As to announce his visits a long while
Before he came, especially at night;
For being the last wife of the emperor,
She was of course the favourite of the four.

CXLVII.

His highness was a man of solemn port,
Shawl'd to the nose, and bearded to the eyes,
Snatch'd from a prison to preside at court,
His lately bowstrung brother caused his rise;
He was as good a sovereign of the sort
As any mention'd in the histories
Of Cantemir, or Knolles, where few shine
Save Solyman, the glory of their line.9

CXLVIII.

He went to mosque in state, and said his prayers
With more than «Oriental scrupulosity;»
He left to his vizier all state affairs,
And show'd but little royal curiosity:
I know not if he had domestic cares—
No process proved connubial animosity;
Four wives and twice five hundred maids, unseen,
Were ruled as calmly as a christian queen.

CXLIX.

If now and then there happen'd a slight slip,
Little was heard of criminal or crime;
The story scarcely pass'd a single lip—
The sack and sea had settled all in time,
From which the secret nobody could rip:
The public knew no more than does this rhyme;
No scandals made the daily press a curse—
Morals were better, and the fish no worse.

CL.

He saw with his own eyes the moon was round,
Was also certain that the earth was square,
Because he had journey'd fifty miles and found,
No sign that it was circular any where;
His empire also was without a bound:
'T is true, a little troubled here and there,
By rebel pachas, and encroaching giaours,
But then they never came to «the Seven Towers;»

CLI.

Except in shape of envoys, who were sent
To lodge there when a war broke out, according
To the true law of nations, which ne'er meant
Those scoundrels, who have never had a sword in
Their dirty diplomatic hands, to vent
Their spleen in making strife, and safely wording
Their lies, yclep'd despatches, without risk or
The singeing of a single inky whisker.

CLII.

He had fifty daughters and four dozen sons,
Of whom all such as came of age were stow'd,
The former in a palace, where like nuns
They lived till some bashaw was sent abroad,
When she, whose turn it was, wedded at once,
Sometimes at six years old—though this seems odd,
'T is true; the reason is, that the bashaw
Must make a present to his sire in law.

CLIII.

His sons were kept in prison till they grew
Of years to fill a bowstring or the throne,
One or the other, but which of the two
Could yet be known unto the fates alone;
Meantime the education they went through
Was princely, as the proofs have always shown:
So that the heir-apparent still was found
No less deserving to be hang'd than crown'd.

CLIV.

His majesty saluted his fourth spouse
With all the ceremonies of his rank,
Who clear'd her sparkling eyes and smooth'd her brows,
As suits a matron who has play'd a prank:
These must seem doubly mindful of their vows,
To save the credit of their breaking bank;
To no men are such cordial greetings given
As those whose wives have made them fit for heaven.

CLV.

His highness cast around his great black eyes,
And looking, as he always look'd, perceived
Juan amongst the damsels in disguise,
At which he seem'd no whit surprised nor grieved,
But just remark'd with air sedate and wise,
While still a fluttering sigh Gulleyaz heaved,
« I see you 've bought another girl; 't is pity
That a mere christian should be half so pretty.»

CLVI.

This compliment, which drew all eyes upon
The new-bought virgin, made her blush and shake.
Her comrades, also, thought themselves undone:
Oh, Mahomet! that his majesty should take
Such notice of a giaour, while scarce to one
Of them his lips imperial ever spake!
There was a general whisper, toss, and wriggle,
But etiquette forbade them all to giggle.

CLVII.

The Turks do well to shut—at least, sometimes—
The women up—because in sad reality,
Their chastity in these unhappy climes
Is not a thing of that astringent quality,
Which in the north prevents precarious crimes,
And makes our snow less pure than our morality;
The sun, which yearly melts the polar ice,
Has quite the contrary effect on vice.

CLVIII.

Thus far our chronicle; and now we pause,
Though not for want of matter; but 't is time,
According to the ancient epic laws,
To slacken sail, and anchor with our rhyme.
Let this fifth canto meet with due applause,
The sixth shall have a touch of the sublime;
Meanwhile, as Homer sometimes sleeps, perhaps
You 'll pardon to my muse a few short naps.

PREFACE

TO

CANTOS VI. VII. VIII.

The details of the siege of Ismail in two of the following cantos (*i. e.* the 7th and 8th) are taken from a French work, entitled « Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie.» Some of the incidents attributed to Don Juan really occurred, particularly the circumstance of his saving the infant, which was the actual case of the late Duc de Richelieu, then a young volunteer in the Russian service, and afterwards the founder and benefactor of Odessa, where his name and memory can never cease to be regarded with reverence. In the course of these cantos, a stanza or two will be found relative to the late Marquis of Londonderry, but written some time before his decease.—Had that person's oligarchy died with him, they would have been suppressed; as it is, I am aware of nothing in the manner of his death or of his life to prevent the free expression of the opinions of all whom his whole existence was consumed in endeavouring to enslave. That he was an amiable man in *private* life, may or may not be true; but with this the public have nothing to do: and as to lamenting his death, it will be time enough when Ireland has ceased to mourn for his birth. As a minister, I, for one of millions, looked upon him as the most despotic in intention, and the weakest in intellect, that ever tyrannized over a country. It is the first time indeed since the Normans, that England has been insulted by a *minister* (at least) who could not speak English, and that Parliament permitted itself to be dictated to in the language of Mrs Malaprop.

Of the manner of his death little need be said, except that if a poor radical, such as Waddington or Watson, had cut his throat, he would have been buried in a cross-road, with the usual appurtenances of the stake and mallet. But the minister was an elegant lunatic—a sentimental suicide—he merely cut the « carotid artery» (blessings on their learning!)—and lo! the pageant, and the abbey and « the syllables of dolour yelled forth» by the newspapers—and the harangue of the coroner in an eulogy over the bleeding body of the deceased—(an Anthony worthy of such a Cæsar)—and the nauseous and atrocious cant of a degraded crew of conspirators against all that is sincere or honourable. In his death he was necessarily one of two things by the *law*—a felon or a madman—and in either case no great subject for panegyric.[1] In his life he was—what all the world knows, and half of it will feel for years to come, unless his death prove a « moral lesson» to the surviving Sejani[2] of Europe. It may at least serve as some consolation to the nations, that their oppressors are not happy, and in some instances judge so justly of their own actions as to anticipate the sentence of mankind.—Let us hear no more of this man, and let Ireland remove the ashes of her Grattan from the sanctuary of Westminster. Shall the Patriot of Humanity repose by the Werther of Politics!!!

With regard to the objections which have been made on another score to the already published cantos of this poem, I shall content myself with two quotations from Voltaire:—

« La pudeur s'est enfuie des cœurs, et s'est refugiée sur les lèvres.»

« Plus les mœurs sont depravées, plus les expressions deviennent mesurées; on croit regagner en langage ce qu'on a perdu en vertu.»

This is the real fact, as applicable to the degraded and hypocritical mass which leavens the present English generation, and is the only answer they deserve. The hackneyed and lavished title of blasphemer—which

[1] I say by the *law* of the *land*—the laws of humanity judge more gently; but as the legitimates have always the *law* in their mouths, let them here make the most of it.

[2] From this number must be excepted Canning. Canning is a genius, almost an universal one: an orator, a wit, a poet, a statesman; and no man of talent can long pursue the path of his late predecessor, Lord C. If ever man saved his country, Canning *can*; but *will* he? I, for one, hope so.

with radical, liberal, jacobin, reformer, etc. are the changes which the hirelings are daily ringing in the ears of those who will listen—should be welcome to all who recollect on *whom* it was originally bestowed. Socrates and Jesus Christ were put to death publicly as *blasphemers*, and so have been and may be many who dare to oppose the most notorious abuses of the name of God and the mind of man. But persecution is not refutation, nor even triumph: the wretched infidel, as he is called, is probably happier in his prison than the proudest of his assailants. With his opinions I have nothing to do— they may be right or wrong— but he has suffered for them, and that very suffering for conscience-sake will make more proselytes to Deism than the example of heterodox[1] prelates to Christianity, suicide statesmen to oppression, or overpensioned homicides to the impious alliance which insults the world with the name of « Holy !» I have no wish to trample on the dishonoured or the dead; but it would be well if the adherents to the classes from whence those persons sprung should abate a little of the *cant* which is the crying sin of this double-dealing and false-speaking time of selfish spoilers, and—but enough for the present.

[1] When Lord Sandwich said « he did not know the difference between orthodoxy and heterodoxy,»—Warburton, the bishop, replied, « Orthodoxy, my lord, is *my doxy*, and heterodoxy is *another man's* doxy.»—A prelate of the present day has discovered, it seems, a *third* kind of doxy, which has not greatly exalted in the eyes of the elect that which Bentham calls « Church-of-Englandism.»

CANTO VI.

I.

« There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood»—you know the rest,
And most of us have found it, now and then;
At least we think so, though but few have guess'd
The moment, till too late to come again.
But no doubt every thing is for the best—
Of which the surest sign is in the end:
When things are at the worst, they sometimes mend.

II.

There is a tide in the affairs of women
« Which, taken at the flood, leads»—God knows where:
Those navigators must be able seamen
Whose charts lay down its currents to a hair;
Not all the reveries of Jacob Behmen
With its strange whirls and eddies can compare:—
Men, with their heads, reflect on this and that—
But women, with their hearts, or Heaven knows what!

III.

And yet a headlong, headstrong, downright she,
Young, beautiful, and daring—who would risk
A throne, the world, the universe, to be
Beloved in her own way, and rather whisk
The stars from out the sky, than not be free
As are the billows when the breeze is brisk—
Though such a she 's a devil (if that there be one),
Yet she would make full many a Manichean.

IV.

Thrones, worlds, *et cetera*, are so oft upset
By commonest ambition, that when passion
O'erthrows the same, we readily forget,
Or at the least forgive, the loving rash one.
If Anthony be well remember'd yet,
'T is not his conquests keep his name in fashion;
But Actium, lost for Cleopatra's eyes,
Outbalance all the Cæsar's victories.

V.

He died at fifty for a queen of forty;
I wish their years had been fifteen and twenty,
For then wealth, kingdoms, worlds, are but a sport—I
Remember when, though I had no great plenty
Of worlds to lose, yet still, to pay my court, I
Gave what I had—a heart: as the world went, I
Gave what was worth a world; for worlds could never
Restore me those pure feelings, gone for ever.

VI.

'T was the boy's « mite,» and, like the « widow's,» may
Perhaps be weigh'd hereafter, if not now;
But whether such things do, or do not, weigh,
All who have loved, or love, will still allow
Life has nought like it. God is love, they say,
And Love 's a god, or was before the brow
Of Earth was wrinkled by the sins and tears
Of—but chronology best knows the years.

VII.

We left our hero and third heroine in
A kind of state more awkward than uncommon,
For gentlemen must sometimes risk their skin
For that sad tempter, a forbidden woman:
Sultans too much abhor this sort of sin,
And don't agree at all with the wise Roman,
Heroic, stoic Cato, the sententious,
Who lent his lady to his friend Hortensius.

VIII.

I know Gulleyaz was extremely wrong;
I own it, I deplore it, I condemn it;
But I detest all fiction, even in song,
And so must tell the truth, howe'er you blame it.
Her reason being weak, her passions strong,
She thought that her lord's heart (even could she claim it)
Was scarce enough; for he had fifty-nine
Years, and a fifteen-hundredth concubine.

IX.

I am not, like Cassio, « an arithmetician,»
But by « the bookish theoric» it appears,
If 't is summ'd up with feminine precision,
That, adding to the account his Highness' years,
The fair Sultana err'd from inanition;
For, were the Sultan just to all his dears,
She could but claim the fifteenth hundred part
Of what should be monopoly—the heart.

X.

It is observed that ladies are litigious
Upon all legal objects of possession,
And not the least so when they are religious,
Which doubles what they think of the transgression.
With suits and prosecutions they besiege us,
As the tribunals show through many a session,
When they suspect that any one goes shares
In that to which the law makes them sole heirs.

XI.

Now, if this holds good in a Christian land,
The heathens also, though with lesser latitude,
Are apt to carry things with a high hand,
And take what kings call «an imposing attitude;»
And for their rights connubial make a stand,
When their liege husbands treat them with ingratitude;
And as four wives must have quadruple claims,
The Tigris hath its jealousies like Thames.

XII.

Gulleyaz was the fourth, and (as I said)
The favourite; but what 's favour amongst four?
Polygamy may well be held in dread,
Not only as a sin, but as a *bore*:—
Most wise men with *one* moderate woman wed,
Will scarcely find philosophy for more;
And all (except Mahometans) forbear
To make the nuptial couch a «Bed of Ware.»

XIII.

His highness, the sublimest of mankind,—
So styled according to the usual forms
Of every monarch, till they are consigned
To those sad hungry jacobins, the worms,
Who on the very loftiest kings have dined,—
His highness gazed upon Gulleyaz' charms,
Expecting all the welcome of a lover
(As «Highland welcome» all the wide world over).

XIV.

Now here we should distinguish; for howe'er
Kisses, sweet words, embraces, and all that,
May look like what is—neither here nor there:
They are put on as easily as a hat,
Or rather bonnet, which the fair sex wear,
Trimm'd either heads or hearts to decorate,
Which form an ornament, but no more part
Of heads, than their caresses of the heart.

XV.

A slight blush, a soft tremor, a calm kind
Of gentle feminine delight, and shown
More in the eyelids than the eyes, resign'd
Rather to hide what pleases most unknown,
Are the best tokens (to a modest mind)
Of love, when seated on his loveliest throne,
A sincere woman's breast,—for over *warm*
Or over *cold* annihilates the charm.

XVI.

For over warmth, if false, is worse than truth;
If true, 't is no great lease of its own fire;
For no one, save in very early youth,
Would like (I think) to trust all to desire,
Which is but a precarious bond, in sooth,
And apt to be transferr'd to the first buyer
At a sad discount: while your over chilly
Women, on t' other hand, seem somewhat silly.—

XVII.

That is, we cannot pardon their bad taste,
For so it seems to lovers swift or slow,
Who fain would have a mutual flame confess'd,
And see a sentimental passion glow,
Even were St Francis' paramour their guest,
In his Monastic Concubine of Snow,—
In short, the maxim for the amorous tribe is
Horatian, «Medio tu tutissimus ibis.»

XVIII.

The «tu» 's *too* much,—but let it stand—the verse
Requires it, that 's to say, the English rhyme,
And not the pink of old Hexameters;
But, after all, there 's neither tune nor time
In the last line, which cannot well be worse,
And was thrust in to close the octave's chime:
I own no prosody can ever rate it
As a rule, but *Truth* may, if you translate it.

XIX.

If fair Gulleyaz overdid her part,
I know not—it succeeded, and success
Is much in most things, not less in the heart
Than other articles of female dress.
Self-love in man too beats all female art;
They lie, we lie, all lie, but love no less:
And no one virtue yet, except starvation,
Could stop that worst of vices—propagation.

XX.

We leave this royal couple to repose;
A bed is not a throne, and they may sleep,
Whate'er their dreams be, if of joys or woes;
Yet disappointed joys are woes as deep
As any man's clay mixture undergoes.
Our least of sorrows are such as we weep;
'T is the vile daily drop on drop which wears
The soul out (like the stone) with petty cares.

XXI.

A scolding wife, a sullen son, a bill
To pay, unpaid, protested, or discounted
At a per-centage; a child cross, dog ill,
A favourite horse fallen lame just as he 's mounted;
A bad old woman making a worse will,
Which leaves you minus of the cash you counted
As certain;—these are paltry things, and yet
I 've rarely seen the man they did not fret.

XXII.

I 'm a philosopher; confound them all!
Bills, beasts, and men, and—no! *not* womankind!
With one good hearty curse I vent my gall,
And then my stoicism leaves nought behind
Which it can either pain or evil call,
And I can give my whole soul up to mind;
Though what *is* soul or mind, their birth or growth,
Is more than I know—the deuce take them both.

XXIII.

So now all things are d—n'd, one feels at ease,
As after reading Athanasius' curse,
Which doth your true believer so much please:
I doubt if any now could make it worse
O'er his worst enemy when at his knees,
'T is so sententious, positive, and terse,
And decorates the book of Common Prayer,
As doth a rainbow the just clearing air.

XXIV.

Gulleyaz and her lord were sleeping, or
At least one of them—Oh the heavy night!
When wicked wives who love some bachelor
Lie down in dudgeon to sigh for the light
Of the gray morning, and look vainly for
Its twinkle through the lattice dusky quite,
To toss, to tumble, doze, revive, and quake
Lest their too lawful bed-fellow should wake.

XXV.

These are beneath the canopy of heaven,
Also beneath the canopy of beds,
Four-posted and silk-curtain'd, which are given
For rich men and their brides to lay their heads
Upon, in sheets white as what bards call « driven
Snow.» Well! 't is all hap-hazard when one weds.
Gulleyaz was an empress, but had been
Perhaps as wretched if a *peasant's quean*.

XXVI.

Don Juan, in his feminine disguise,
With all the damsels in their long array,
Had bow'd themselves before the imperial eyes,
And, at the usual signal, ta'en their way
Back to their chambers, those long galleries
In the seraglio, where the ladies lay
Their delicate limbs; a thousand bosoms there
Beating for love, as the caged bird's for air.

XXVII.

I love the sex, and sometimes would reverse
The tyrant's wish « that mankind only had
One neck, which he with one fell stroke might pierce:»
My wish is quite as wide, but not so bad,
And much more tender on the whole than fierce;
It being (not *now*, but only while a lad)
That womankind had but one rosy mouth,
To kiss them all at once from North to South.

XXVIII.

Oh enviable Briareus! with thy hands
And heads, if thou hadst all things multiplied
In such proportion!—But my muse withstands
The giant thought of being a Titan's bride,
Or travelling in Patagonian lands;
So let us back to Lilliput, and guide
Our hero through the labyrinth of love
In which we left him several lines above.

XXIX.

He went forth with the lovely Odalisques,
At the given signal join'd to their array;
And though he certainly ran many risks,
Yet he could not at times keep, by the way
(Although the consequences of such frisks
Are worse than the worst damages men pay
In moral England, where the thing 's a tax),
From ogling all their charms from breasts to backs.

XXX.

Still he forgot not his disguise:—along
The galleries from room to room they walk'd,
A virgin-like and edifying throng,
By eunuchs flank'd; while at their head there stalk'd
A dame who kept up discipline among
The female ranks, so that none stirr'd or talk'd
Without her sanction on their she-parades:
Her title was « the Mother of the Maids.»

XXXI.

Whether she was a « mother,» I know not,
Or whether they were « maids» who call'd her mother;
But this is her seraglio title, got
I know not how, but good as any other;
So Cantemir can tell you, or De Tott:
Her office was, to keep aloof or smother
All bad propensities in fifteen hundred
Young women, and correct them when they blunder'd.

XXXII.

A goodly sinecure, no doubt! but made
More easy by the absence of all men
Except his Majesty, who, with her aid,
And guards, and bolts, and walls, and now and then
A slight example, just to cast a shade
Along the rest, contrived to keep this den
Of beauties cool as an Italian convent,
Where all the passions have, alas! but one vent.

XXXIII.

And what is that? Devotion, doubtless—how
Could you ask such a question?—but we will
Continue. As I said, this goodly row
Of ladies of all countries at the will
Of one good man, with stately march and slow,
Like water-lilies floating down a rill,
Or rather lake—for *rills* do *not* run *slowly*,—
Paced on most maiden-like and melancholy.

XXXIV.

But when they reach'd their own apartments, there,
Like birds, or boys, or bedlamites broke loose,
Waves at spring-tide, or women any where
When freed from bonds (which are of no great use
After all), or like Irish at a fair,
Their guards being gone, and, as it were, a truce
Established between them and bondage, they
Began to sing, dance, chatter, smile, and play.

XXXV.

Their talk of course ran most on the new comer,
Her shape, her air, her hair, her every thing:
Some thought her dress did not so much become her,
Or wonder'd at her ears without a ring;
Some said her years were getting nigh their summer,
Others contended they were but in spring;
Some thought her rather masculine in height,
While others wish'd that she had been so quite.

XXXVI.

But no one doubted, on the whole, that she
Was what her dress bespoke, a damsel fair,
And fresh, and « beautiful exceedingly,»
Who with the brightest Georgians might compare:
They wonder'd how Gulleyaz too could be
So silly as to buy slaves who might share
(If that his Highness wearied of his bride)
Her throne and power, and every thing beside.

XXXVII.

But what was strangest in this virgin crew,
Although her beauty was enough to vex,
After the first investigating view,
They all found out as few, or fewer, specks
In the fair form of their companion new,
Than is the custom of the gentle sex,
When they survey, with Christian eyes or Heathen,
In a new face « the ugliest creature breathing.»

XXXVIII.

And yet they had their little jealousies,
Like all the rest; but upon this occasion,
Whether there are such things as sympathies
Without our knowledge or our approbation,
Although they could not see through his disguise,
All felt a soft kind of concatenation,
Like magnetism, or devilism, or what
You please—we will not quarrel about that:

XXXIX.

But certain 't is they all felt for their new
Companion something newer still, as 't were
A sentimental friendship through and through,
Extremely pure, which made them all concur
In wishing her their sister, save a few
Who wish'd they had a brother just like her,
Whom, if they were at home in sweet Circassia,
They would prefer to Padisha or Pacha.

XL.

Of those who had most genius for this sort
Of sentimental friendship, there were three,
Lolah, Katinka, and Dudù;—in short
(To save description), fair as fair can be
Were they, according to the best report,
Though differing in stature and degree,
And clime and time, and country and complexion;
They all alike admired their new connexion.

XLI.

Lolah was dusk as India and as warm;
Katinka was a Georgian, white and red,
With great blue eyes, a lovely hand and arm,
And feet so small they scarce seem'd made to tread,
But rather skim the earth; while Dudu's form
Look'd more adapted to be put to bed,
Being somewhat large and languishing and lazy,
Yet of a beauty that would drive you crazy.

XLII.

A kind of sleepy Venus seem'd Dudù,
Yet very fit to, «murder sleep» in those
Who gazed upon her cheek's transcendant hue,
Her Attic forehead, and her Phidian nose:
Few angles were there in her form, 't is true,
Thinner she might have been and yet scarce lose;
Yet, after all, 't would puzzle to say where
It would not spoil some separate charm *to pare*.

XLIII.

She was not violently lively, but
Stole on your spirit like a May-day breaking;
Her eyes were not too sparkling, yet, half-shut,
They put beholders in a tender taking;
She look'd (this simile 's quite new) just cut
From marble, like Pygmalion's statue waking,
The Mortal and the Marble still at strife,
And timidly expanding into life.

XLIV.

Lolah demanded the new damsel's name—
«Juanna.»—Well, a pretty name enough.
Katinka ask'd her also whence she came—
«From Spain.»—«But where *is* Spain?»—«Don't ask such stuff,
Nor show your Georgian ignorance—for shame!»
Said Lolah, with an accent rather rough,
To poor Katinka: «Spain 's an island near
Morocco, betwixt Egypt and Tangier.»

XLV.

Dudù said nothing, but sat down beside
Juanna, playing with her veil or hair;
And, looking at her steadfastly, she sigh'd,
As if she pitied her for being there,
A pretty stranger, without friend or guide,
And all abash'd too at the general stare
Which welcomes hapless strangers in all places,
With kind remarks upon their mien and faces.

XLVI.

But here the Mother of the Maids drew near,
With «Ladies, it is time to go to rest.
I 'm puzzled what to do with you, my dear,»
She added to Juanna, their new guest:
«Your coming has been unexpected here,
And every couch is occupied; you had best
Partake of mine; but by to-morrow early
We will have all things settled for you fairly.»

XLVII.

Here Lolah interposed—«Mamma, you know
You don't sleep soundly, and I cannot bear
That any body should disturb you so;
I 'll take Juanna; we 're a slenderer pair
Than you would make the half of;—don't say no,
And I of your young charge will take due care.»
But here Katinka interfered and said,
«She also had compassion and a bed.»

XLVIII.

«Besides, I hate to sleep alone,» quoth she.
The matron frown'd: «Why so?»—«For fear of ghosts,»
Replied Katinka; «I am sure I see
A phantom upon each of the four posts;
And then I have the worst dreams that can be,
Of Guebres, Giaours, and Ginns, and Gouls in hosts.»
The dame replied, «Between your dreams and you,
I fear Juanna's dreams would be but few.

XLIX.

«You, Lolah, must continue still to lie
Alone, for reasons which don't matter; you
The same, Katinka, until by and bye;
And I shall place Juanna with Dudù,
Who 's quiet, inoffensive, silent, shy,
And will not toss and chatter the night through.
What say you, child?»—Dudù said nothing, as
Her talents were of the more silent class;

L.

But she rose up, and kiss'd the matron's brow
Between the eyes, and Lolah on both cheeks,
Katinka too; and with a gentle bow
(Curtsies are neither used by Turks nor Greeks),
She took Juanna by the hand to show
Their place of rest, and left to both their piques,
The others pouting at the matron's preference
Of Dudù, though they held their tongues from deference.

LI.

It was a spacious chamber (Oda is
The Turkish title), and ranged round the wall
Were couches, toilets—and much more than this
I might describe, as I have seen it all,
But it suffices—little was amiss;
'T was on the whole a nobly furnish'd hall,
With all things ladies want, save one or two,
And even those were nearer than they knew.

LII.

Dudù, as has been said, was a sweet creature,
Not very dashing, but extremely winning,
With the most regulated charms of feature,
Which painters cannot catch like faces sinning
Against proportion—the wild strokes of nature
Which they hit off at once in the beginning,
Full of expression, right or wrong, that strike,
And, pleasing or unpleasing, still are like.

LIII.

But she was a soft landscape of mild earth,
Where all was harmony and calm and quiet,
Luxuriant, budding; cheerful without mirth,
Which if not happiness, is much more nigh it
Than are your mighty passions and so forth,
Which some call «the sublime:» I wish they'd try it:
I've seen your stormy seas and stormy women,
And pity lovers rather more than seamen.

LIV.

But she was pensive more than melancholy,
And serious more than pensive, and serene,
It may be, more than either—not unholy
Her thoughts, at least till now, appear to have been.
The strangest thing was, beauteous, she was wholly
Unconscious, albeit turn'd of quick seventeen,
That she was fair, or dark, or short, or tall;
She never thought about herself at all.

LV.

And therefore was she kind and gentle as
The Age of Gold (when gold was yet unknown,
By which its nomenclature came to pass;
Thus most appropriately has been shown
«Lucus a *non* Lucendo,» *not* what *was*,
But what *was not;* a sort of style that 's grown
Extremely common in this age, whose metal
The devil may decompose but never settle:

LVI.

I think it may be of «Corinthian Brass,»
Which was a mixture of all metals, but
The brazen uppermost). Kind reader! pass
This long parenthesis: I could not shut
It sooner for the soul of me, and class
My faults even with your own! which meaneth, put
A kind construction upon them and me:
But *that* you won't—then don't—I am not less free.

LVII.

'T is time we should return to plain narration,
And thus my narrative proceeds:—Dudù,
With every kindness short of ostentation,
Show'd Juan, or Juanna, through and through
This labyrinth of females, and each station
Described—what 's strange—in words extremely few:
I have but one simile, and that 's a blunder,
For wordless woman, which is *silent* thunder.

LVIII.

And next she gave her (I say *her*, because
The gender still was epicene, at least
In outward show, which is a saving clause)
An outline of the customs of the East,
With all their chaste integrity of laws,
By which the more a haram is increased,
The stricter doubtless grow the vestal duties
Of any supernumerary beauties.

LIX.

And then she gave Juanna a chaste kiss:
Dudù was fond of kissing—which I'm sure
That nobody can ever take amiss,
Because 'tis pleasant, so that it be pure,
And between females means no more than this—
That they have nothing better near, or newer.
«Kiss» rhymes to «bliss» in fact as well as verse—
I wish it never led to something worse.

LX.

In perfect innocence she then unmade
Her toilet, which cost little, for she was
A child of Nature, carelessly array'd:
If fond of a chance ogle at her glass,
'T was like the fawn which, in the lake display'd,
Beholds her own shy, shadowy image pass,
When first she starts, and then returns to peep,
Admiring this new native of the deep.

LXI.

And one by one her articles of dress
Were laid aside; but not before she offer'd
Her aid to fair Juanna, whose excess
Of modesty declined the assistance proffer'd—
Which pass'd well off—as she could do no less:
Though by this politesse she rather suffer'd,
Pricking her fingers with those cursed pins,
Which surely were invented for our sins,—

LXII.

Making a woman like a porcupine,
Not to be rashly touch'd. But still more dread,
Oh ye! whose fate it is, as once 't was mine,
In early youth, to turn a lady's maid;—
I did my very boyish best to shine
In tricking her out for a masquerade:
The pins were placed sufficiently, but not
Stuck all exactly in the proper spot.

LXIII.

But these are foolish things to all the wise—
And I love Wisdom more than she loves me;
My tendency is to philosophize
On most things, from a tyrant to a tree;
But still the spouseless Virgin *Knowledge* flies.
What are we? and whence came we? what shall be
Our *ultimate* existence? what 's our present?
Are questions answerless, and yet incessant.

LXIV.

There was deep silence in the chamber: dim
And distant from each other burn'd the lights,
And Slumber hover'd o'er each lovely limb
Of the fair occupants: if there be sprites,
They should have walk'd there in their spriteliest trim,
By way of change from their sepulchral sites,
And shown themselves as ghosts of better taste,
Than haunting some old ruin or wild waste.

LXV.

Many and beautiful lay those around,
Like flowers of different hue and clime and root,
In some exotic garden sometimes found,
With cost and care and warmth induced to shoot.
One, with her auburn tresses lightly bound,
And fair brows gently drooping, as the fruit
Nods from the tree, was slumbering with soft breath
And lips apart, which show'd the pearls beneath.

LXVI.

One, with her flush'd cheek laid on her white arm,
And raven ringlets gather'd in dark crowd
Above her brow, lay dreaming soft and warm;
And, smiling through her dream, as through a cloud
The moon breaks, half unveil'd each further charm,
As, slightly stirring in her snowy shroud,
Her beauties seized the unconscious hour of night
All bashfully to struggle into light.

LXVII.

This is no bull, although it sounds so; for
'Twas night, but there were lamps, as hath been said.
A third's all-pallid aspect offer'd more
The traits of sleeping Sorrow, and betray'd
Through the heaved breast the dream of some far shore
Beloved and deplored; while slowly stray'd
(As night dew, on a cypress glittering, tinges
The black bough) tear-drops thro' her eyes' dark fringes.

LXVIII.

A fourth, as marble, statue-like and still,
Lay in a breathless, hush'd, and stony sleep;
White, cold, and pure, as looks a frozen rill,
Or the snow minaret on an Alpine steep,
Or Lot's wife done in salt,—or what you will;—
My similes are gather'd in a heap,
So pick and choose—perhaps you'll be content
With a carved lady on a monument.

LXIX.

And lo! a fifth appears;—and what is she?
A lady of «a certain age,» which means
Certainly aged—what her years might be
I know not, never counting past their teens;
But there she slept, not quite so fair to see
As ere that awful period intervenes,
Which lays both men and women on the shelf,
To meditate upon their sins and self.

LXX.

But all this time how slept, or dream'd, Dudù,
With strict inquiry I could ne'er discover,
And scorn to add a syllable untrue;
But ere the middle watch was hardly over,
Just when the fading lamps waned dim and blue,
And phantoms hover'd, or might seem to hover,
To those who like their company, about
The apartment, on a sudden she scream'd out:

LXXI.

And that so loudly, that upstarted all
The Oda, in a general commotion:
Matron and maids, and those whom you may call
Neither, came crowding like the waves of ocean,
One on the other, throughout the whole hall,
All trembling, wondering, without the least notion,
More than I have myself, of what could make
The calm Dudù so turbulently wake.

LXXII.

But wide awake she was, and round her bed,
With floating draperies and with flying hair,
With eager eyes, and light but hurried tread,
And bosoms, arms, and ancles glancing bare,
And bright as any meteor ever bred
By the North Pole,—they sought her cause of care,
For she seem'd agitated, flush'd, and frighten'd,
Her eye dilated and her colour heighten'd.

LXXIII.

But what is strange—and a strong proof how great
A blessing is sound sleep, Juanna lay
As fast as ever husband by his mate
In holy matrimony snores away.
Not all the clamour broke her happy state
Of slumber, ere they shook her,—so they say,
At least,—and then she too unclosed her eyes,
And yawn'd a good deal with discreet surprise.

LXXIV.

And now commenced a strict investigation,
Which, as all spoke at once, and more than once
Conjecturing, wondering, asking a narration,
Alike might puzzle either wit or dunce
To answer in a very clear oration.
Dudù had never pass'd for wanting sense,
But, being «no orator, as Brutus is,»
Could not at first expound what was amiss.

LXXV.

At length she said, that, in a slumber sound,
She dream'd a dream of walking in a wood—
A «wood obscure,» like that where Dante found
Himself in at the age when all grow good;
Life's half-way house, where dames with virtue crown'd,
Run much less risk of lovers turning rude;—
And that this wood was full of pleasant fruits,
And trees of goodly growth and spreading roots;

LXXVI.

And in the midst a golden apple grew,—
A most prodigious pippin—but it hung
Rather too high and distant; that she threw
Her glances on it, and then, longing, flung
Stones, and whatever she could pick up, to
Bring down the fruit, which still perversely clung
To its own bough, and dangled yet in sight,
But always at a most provoking height:—

LXXVII.

That on a sudden, when she least had hope,
It fell down of its own accord, before
Her feet; that her first movement was to stoop
And pick it up, and bite it to the core;
That just as her young lip began to ope
Upon the golden fruit the vision bore,
A bee flew out and stung her to the heart,
And so—she awoke with a great scream and start.

LXXVIII.

All this she told with some confusion and
Dismay, the usual consequence of dreams
Of the unpleasant kind, with none at hand
To expound their vain and visionary gleams.
I 've known some odd ones which seem'd really plann'd
Prophetically, or that which one deems
«A strange coincidence,» to use a phrase
By which such things are settled now-a-days.

LXXIX.

The damsels, who had thoughts of some great harm,
Began, as is the consequence of fear,
To scold a little at the false alarm
That broke for nothing on their sleeping ear.
The matron too was wroth to leave her warm
Bed for the dream she had been obliged to hear,
And chafed at poor Dudù, who only sigh'd,
And said that she was sorry she had cried.

LXXX.

«I 've heard of stories of a cock and bull;
But visions of an apple and a bee,
To take us from our natural rest, and pull
The whole Oda from their beds at half-past three,
Would make us think the moon is at its full.
You surely are unwell, child! we must see,
To-morrow, what his highness's physician
Will say to this hysteric of a vision.

LXXXI.

« And poor Juanna too! the child's first night
Within these walls, to be broke in upon
With such a clamour—I had thought it right
That the young stranger should not lie alone,
And as the quietest of all, she might
With you, Dudù, a good night's rest have known;
But now I must transfer her to the charge
Of Lolah—though her couch is not so large.»

LXXXII.

Lolah's eyes sparkled at the proposition;
But poor Dudù, with large drops in her own,
Resulting from the scolding or the vision,
Implored that present pardon might be shown
For this first fault, and that on no condition
(She added in a soft and piteous tone),
Juanna should be taken from her, and
Her future dreams should all be kept in hand.

LXXXIII.

She promised never more to have a dream,
At least to dream so loudly as just now;
She wonder'd at herself how she could scream—
'T was foolish, nervous, as she must allow,
A fond hallucination, and a theme
For laughter—but she felt her spirits low,
And begg'd they would excuse her; she 'd get over
This weakness in a few hours, and recover.

LXXXIV.

And here Juanna kindly interposed,
And said she felt herself extremely well
Where she then was, as her sound sleep disclosed
When all around rang like a tocsin-bell:
She did not find herself the least disposed
To quit her gentle partner, and to dwell
Apart from one who had no sin to show,
Save that of dreaming once « mal-à-propos.»

LXXXV.

As thus Juanna spoke, Dudù turn'd round,
And hid her face within Juanna's breast;
Her neck alone was seen, but that was found
The colour of a budding rose's crest.
I can't tell why she blush'd, nor can expound
The mystery of this rupture of their rest;
All that I know is, that the facts I state
Are true as truth has ever been of late.

LXXXVI.

And so good night to them,—or, if you will,
Good morrow—for the cock had crown, and light
Began to clothe each Asiatic hill,
And the mosque crescent struggled into sight
Of the long caravan, which in the chill
Of dewy dawn wound slowly round each height
That stretches to the stony belt which girds
Asia, where Kaff looks down upon the Kurds.

LXXXVII.

With the first ray, or rather gray of morn,
Gulbeyaz rose from restlessness; and pale
As Passion rises, with its bosom worn,
Array'd herself with mantle, gem, and veil:
The nightingale that sings with the deep thorn,
Which Fable places in her breast of wail,
Is lighter far of heart and voice than those
Whose headlong passions form their proper woes.

LXXXVIII.

And that 's the moral of this composition,
If people would but see its real drift;—
But *that* they will not do without suspicion,
Because all gentle readers have the gift
Of closing 'gainst the light their orbs of vision;
While gentle writers also love to lift
Their voices 'gainst each other, which is natural—
The numbers are too great for them to flatter all.

LXXXIX.

Rose the Sultana from a bed of splendour,—
Softer than the soft Sybarite's, who cried
Aloud because his feelings were too tender
To brook a ruffled rose-leaf by his side,—
So beautiful that art could little mend her,
Though pale with conflicts between love and pride:—
So agitated was she with her error,
She did not even look into the mirror.

XC.

Also arose about the self same time,
Perhaps a little later, her great lord,
Master of thirty kingdoms so sublime,
And of a wife by whom he was abhorr'd;
A thing of much less import in that clime—
At least to those of incomes which afford
The filling up their whole connubial cargo—
Than where two wives are under an embargo.

XCI.

He did not think much on the matter, nor
Indeed on any other: as a man,
He liked to have a handsome paramour
At hand, as one may like to have a fan,
And therefore of Circassians had good store,
As an amusement after the Divan;
Though an unusual fit of love, or duty,
Had made him lately bask in his bride's beauty.

XCII.

And now he rose: and after due ablutions,
Exacted by the customs of the East,
And prayers and other pious evolutions,
He drank six cups of coffee at the least,
And then withdrew to hear about the Russians,
Whose victories had recently increased,
In Catherine's reign, whom glory still adores
As greatest of all sovereigns and w——s.

XCIII.

But oh, thou grand legitimate Alexander!
Her son's son, let not this last phrase offend
Thine ear, if it should reach,—and now rhymes wander
Almost as far as Petersburgh, and lend
A dreadful impulse to each loud meander
Of murmuring Liberty's wide waves, which blend
Their roar even with the Baltic's,—so you be
Your father's son, 't is quite enough for me.

XCIV.

To call men love-begotten, or proclaim
Their mothers as the antipodes of Timon,
That hater of mankind, would be a shame,
A libel, or whate'er you please to rhyme on:
But people's ancestors are history's game;
And if one lady's slip could leave a crime on
All generations, I should like to know
What pedigree the best would have to show?

XCV.

Had Catherine and the Sultan understood
Their own true interests, which kings rarely know,
Until 't is taught by lessons rather rude,
There was a way to end their strife, although
Perhaps precarious, had they but thought good,
Without the aid of Prince or Plenipo:
She to dismiss her guards, and he his haram,
And for their other matters, meet and share 'em.

XCVI.

But as it was, his Highness had to hold
His daily council upon ways and means,
How to encounter with this martial scold,
This modern Amazon and Queen of queans;
And the perplexity could not be told
Of all the pillars of the state, which leans
Sometimes a little heavy on the backs
Of those who cannot lay on a new tax.

XCVII.

Meantime Gulbeyaz, when her king was gone,
Retired into her boudoir, a sweet place
For love or breakfast; private, pleasing, lone,
And rich with all contrivances which grace
Those gay recesses:—many a precious stone
Sparkled along its roof, and many a vase
Of porcelain held in the fetter'd flowers,
Those captive soothers of a captive's hours.

XCVIII.

Mother of pearl, and porphyry, and marble,
Vied with each other on this costly spot;
And singing birds without were heard to warble;
And the stain'd glass which lighted this fair grot
Varied each ray;—but all descriptions garble
The true effect, and so we had better not
Be too minute; an outline is the best,—
A lively reader's fancy does the rest.

XCIX.

And here she summon'd Baba, and required
Don Juan at his hands, and information
Of what had past since all the slaves retired,
And whether he had occupied their station;
If matters had been managed as desired,
And his disguise with due consideration
Kept up; and, above all, the where and how
He had pass'd the night, was what she wish'd to know.

C.

Baba, with some embarrassment, replied
To this long catechism of questions ask'd
More easily than answer'd,—that he had tried
His best to obey in what he had been task'd;
But there seem'd something that he wish'd to hide,
Which hesitation more betray'd than mask'd;—
He scratch'd his ear, the infallible resource
To which embarrass'd people have recourse.

CI.

Gulbeyaz was no model of true patience,
Nor much disposed to wait in word or deed;
She liked quick answers in all conversations;
And when she saw him stumbling like a steed
In his replies, she puzzled him for fresh ones;
And as his speech grew still more broken-knee'd,
Her cheek began to flush, her eyes to sparkle,
And her proud brow's blue veins to swell and darkle.

CII.

When Baba saw these symptoms, which he knew
To bode him no great good, he deprecated
Her anger, and beseech'd she 'd hear him through—
He could not help the thing which he related:
Then out it came at length, that to Dudù
Juan was given in charge, as hath been stated;
But not by Baba's fault, he said, and swore on
The holy camel's hump, besides the Koran.

CIII.

The chief dame of the Oda, upon whom
The discipline of the whole haram bore,
As soon as they re-enter'd their own room,
For Baba's function stopp'd short at the door,
Had settled all; nor could he then presume
(The aforesaid Baba) just then to do more,
Without exciting such suspicion as
Might make the matter still worse than it was.

CIV.

He hoped, indeed he thought he could be sure,
Juan had not betray'd himself; in fact
'T was certain that his conduct had been pure,
Because a foolish or imprudent act
Would not alone have made him insecure,
But ended in his being found out and *sack'd*,
And thrown into the sea.—Thus Baba spoke
Of all save Dudù's dream, which was no joke.

CV.

This he discreetly kept in the back ground,
And talk'd away—and might have talk'd till now,
For any further answer that he found,
So deep an anguish wrung Gulbeyaz' brow;
Her cheek turn'd ashes, ears rung, brain whirl'd round,
As if she had received a sudden blow,
And the heart's dew of pain sprang fast and chilly
O'er her fair front, like morning's on a lily.

CVI.

Although she was not of the fainting sort,
Baba thought she would faint, but there he err'd—
It was but a convulsion, which though short
Can never be described; we all have heard,
And some of us have felt thus «*all amort*,»
When things beyond the common have occurr'd;—
Gulbeyaz proved in that brief agony
What she could ne'er express—then how should I?

CVII.

She stood a moment, as a Pythoness
Stands on her tripod, agonized, and full
Of inspiration gather'd from distress,
When all the heart-strings like wild horses pull
The heart asunder;—then, as more or less
Their speed abated or their strength grew dull,
She sunk down on her seat by slow degrees,
And bow'd her throbbing head o'er trembling knees.

CVIII.

Her face declined and was unseen; her hair
Fell in long tresses like the weeping willow,
Sweeping the marble underneath her chair,
Or rather sofa (for it was all pillow,—
A low, soft Ottoman), and black despair
Stirr'd up and down her bosom like a billow,
Which rushes to some shore whose shingles check
Its farther course, but must receive its wreck.

CIX.

Her head hung down, and her long hair in stooping
Conceal'd her features better than a veil;
And one hand o'er the Ottoman lay drooping,
White, waxen, and as alabaster pale:
Would that I were a painter! to be grouping
All that a poet drags into detail!
Oh that my words were colours! but their tints
May serve perhaps as outlines or slight hints.

CX.

Baba, who knew by experience when to talk
And when to hold his tongue, now held it till
This passion might blow o'er, nor dared to balk
Gulbeyaz' taciturn or speaking will.
At length she rose up, and began to walk
Slowly along the room, but silent still,
And her brow clear'd, but not her troubled eye—
The wind was down, but still the sea ran high.

CXI.

She stopp'd, and raised her head to speak—but paused,
And then moved on again with rapid pace;
Then slacken'd it, which is the march most caused
By deep emotion:—you may sometimes trace
A feeling in each footstep, as disclosed
By Sallust in his Catiline, who, chased
By all the demons of all passions, show'd
Their work even by the way in which he trode.

CXII.

Gulbeyaz stopp'd and beckon'd Baba:—«slave!
Bring the two slaves!» she said in a low tone,
But one which Baba did not like to brave,
And yet he shudder'd, and seem'd rather prone
To prove reluctant, and begg'd leave to crave
(Though he well knew the meaning) to be shown
What slaves her highness wish'd to indicate,
For fear of any error like the late.

CXIII.

«The Georgian and her paramour,» replied
The imperial bride—and added, «Let the boat
Be ready by the secret portal's side:
You know the rest.» The words stuck in her throat,
Despite her injured love and fiery pride;
And of this Baba willingly took note,
And begg'd by every hair of Mahomet's beard,
She would revoke the order he had heard.

CXIV.

«To hear is to obey,» he said; «but still,
Sultana, think upon the consequence:
It is not that I shall not all fulfil
Your orders, even in their severest sense;
But such precipitation may end ill,
Even at your own imperative expense:
I do not mean destruction and exposure
In case of any premature disclosure;

CXV.

«But your own feelings.—Even should all the rest
Be hidden by the rolling waves, which hide
Already many a once love-beaten breast
Deep in the caverns of the deadly tide—
You love this boyish, new seraglio guest,
And—if this violent remedy be tried—
Excuse my freedom, when I here assure you,
That killing him is not the way to cure you.»

CXVI.

«What dost thou know of love or feeling?—wretch!
Begone!» she cried, with kindling eyes, «and do
My bidding!» Baba vanish'd; for to stretch
His own remonstrance further, he well knew,
Might end in acting as his own «Jack Ketch;»
And, though he wish'd extremely to get through
This awkward business without harm to others,
He still preferr'd his own neck to another's.

CXVII.

Away he went then upon his commission,
Growling and grumbling in good Turkish phrase
Against all women, of whate'er condition,
Especially Sultanas and their ways;
Their obstinacy, pride, and indecision,
Their never knowing their own mind two days,
The trouble that they gave, their immorality,
Which made him daily bless his own neutrality.

CXVIII.

And then he call'd his brethren to his aid,
And sent one on a summons to the pair,
That they must instantly be well array'd,
And, above all, be comb'd even to a hair,
And brought before the empress, who had made
Inquiries after them with kindest care:
At which Dudù look'd strange, and Juan silly;
But go they must at once, and will I—nill I.

CXIX.

And here I leave them at their preparation,
For the imperial presence, wherein whether
Gulbeyaz show'd them both commiseration,
Or got rid of the parties altogether—
Like other angry ladies of her nation,—
Are things the turning of a hair or feather
May settle; but far be't from me to anticipate
In what way feminine caprice may dissipate.

CXX.

I leave them for the present, with good wishes,
Though doubts of their well doing, to arrange
Another part of history; for the dishes
Of this our banquet we must sometimes change:
And, trusting Juan may escape the fishes,
Although his situation now seems strange
And scarce secure, as such digressions *are* fair,
The Muse will take a little touch at warfare.

CANTO VII.

I.

Oh love! Oh glory! what are ye? who fly
Around us ever, rarely to alight:
There's not a meteor in the Polar sky
Of such transcendant and more fleeting flight.
Chill, and chain'd to cold earth, we lift on high
Our eyes in search of either lovely light;
A thousand and a thousand colours they
Assume, then leave us on our freezing way.

II.

And such as they are, such my present tale is,
A non-descript and ever-varying rhyme,
A versified Aurora Borealis,
Which flashes o'er a waste and icy clime.
When we know what all are, we must bewail us,
But ne'er the less I hope it is no crime
To laugh at *all* things: for I wish to know
What, after *all*, are *all* things—but a *show*?

III.

They accuse me—*me*—the present writer of
The present poem, of—I know not what,—
A tendency to under-rate and scoff
At human power and virtue, and all that;
And this they say in language rather rough.
Good God! I wonder what they would be at!
I say no more than has been said in Dante's
Verse, and by Solomon, and by Cervantes;

IV.

By Swift, by Machiavel, by Rochefoucault,
By Fenelon, by Luther, and by Plato;
By Tillotson, and Wesley, and Rousseau,
Who knew this life was not worth a potato.
'Tis not their fault, nor mine, if this be so—
For my part, I pretend not to be Cato,
Nor even Diogenes.—We live and die,
But which is best, you know no more than I.

V.

Socrates said, our only knowledge was
«To know that nothing could be known;» a pleasant
Science enough, which levels to an ass
Each man of wisdom, future, past, or present.
Newton (that proverb of the mind), alas!
Declared, with all his grand discoveries recent,
That he himself felt only «like a youth
Picking up shells by the great ocean—truth.»

VI.

Ecclesiastes said, that all is vanity—
Most modern preachers say the same, or show it
By their examples of true Christianity;
In short, all know, or very soon may know it.
And in this scene of all-confess'd inanity,
By saint, by sage, by preacher, and by poet,
Must I restrain me, through the fear of strife,
From holding up the nothingness of life?

VII.

Dogs, or men! (for I flatter you in saying
That ye are dogs—your betters far) ye may
Read, or read not, what I am now essaying
To show ye what ye are in every way.
As little as the moon stops for the baying
Of wolves, will the bright Muse withdraw one ray
From out her skies;—then howl your idle wrath!
While she still silvers o'er your gloomy path.

VIII.

«Fierce loves and faithless wars»—I am not sure
If this be the right reading—'t is no matter;
The fact 's about the same; I am secure;—
I sing them both, and am about to batter
A town which did a famous siege endure,
And was beleaguer'd both by land and water
By Suvaroff, or anglicè Suwarrow,
Who loved blood as an alderman loves marrow.

IX.

The fortress is call'd Ismail, and is placed
Upon the Danube's left branch and left bank,
With buildings in the oriental taste,
But still a fortress of the foremost rank,
Or was, at least, unless 't is since defaced,
Which with your conquerors is a common prank:
It stands some eighty versts from the high sea,
And measures round of toises thousands three.

X.

Within the extent of this fortification
A borough is comprised, along the height
Upon the left, which from its loftier station,
Commands the city, and upon its site
A Greek had raised around this elevation
A quantity of palisades *upright*,
So placed as to *impede* the fire of those
Who held the place, and to *assist* the foe's.

XI.

This circumstance may serve to give a notion
Of the high talents of this new Vauban:
But the town ditch below was deep as ocean,
The rampart higher than you 'd wish to hang:
But then there was a great want of precaution
(Prithee, excuse this engineering slang),
Nor work advanced, nor cover'd way was there,
To hint at least «Here is no thoroughfare.»

XII.

But a stone bastion, with a narrow gorge,
And walls as thick as most sculls born as yet;
Two batteries, cap-à-pée, as our Saint George,
Case-mated one, and t' other «a barbette,»
Of Danube's bank took formidable charge;
While two-and-twenty cannon, duly set,
Rose o'er the town's right side, in bristling tier,
Forty feet high, upon a cavalier.

XIII.

But from the river the town 's open quite,
Because the Turks could never be persuaded
A Russian vessel e'er would heave in sight;
And such their creed was, till they were invaded,
When it grew rather late to set things right.
But as the Danube could not well be waded,
They look'd upon the Muscovite flotilla,
And only shouted, «Alla!» and «Bis Millah!»

XIV.

The Russians now were ready to attack;
But oh, ye goddesses of war and glory!
How shall I spell the name of each Cossack
Who were immortal, could one tell their story?
Alas! what to their memory can lack?
Achilles self was not more grim and gory
Than thousands of this new and polish'd nation,
Whose names want nothing but—pronunciation.

XV.

Still I 'll record a few, if but to increase
Our euphony—there was Strongenoff, and Strokonoff,
Meknop, Serge Lwdw, Arseniew of modern Greece,
And Tschitsshakoff, and Roguenoff, and Chokenoff,
And others of twelve consonants a piece:
And more might be found out, if I could poke enough
Into gazettes; but fame (capricious strumpet!)
It seems has got an ear as well as trumpet.

XVI.

And cannot tune those discords of narration,
Which may be names at Moscow, into rhyme.
Yet there were several worth commemoration,
As e'er was virgin of a nuptial chime;
Soft words too, fitted for the peroration
Of Londonderry, drawling against time,
Ending in «ischskin,» «ouskin,» «iffskchy,» «ouski,»
Of whom we can insert but Rousamouski,

XVII.

Scherematoff and Chrematoff, Koklophti,
Koclobski, Kourakin, and Mouskin Pouskin,
All proper men of weapons, as e'er scoff'd high
Against a foe, or ran a sabre through skin:
Little cared they for Mahomet or Mufti,
Unless to make their kettle-drums a new skin
Out of their hides, if parchment had grown dear,
And no more handy substitute been near.

XVIII.

Then there were foreigners of much renown,
Of various nations, and all volunteers;
Not fighting for their country or its crown,
But wishing to be one day brigadiers;
Also to have the sacking of a town—
A pleasant thing to young men at their years.
'Mongst them were several Englishmen of pith,
Sixteen call'd Thomson, and nineteen named Smith.

XIX.

Jack Thomson and Bill Thomson;—all the rest
Had been call'd «*Jemmy*,» after the great bard;
I don't know whether they had arms or crest,
But such a godfather 's as good a card.
Three of the Smiths were Peters; but the best
Amongst them all, hard blows to inflict or ward,
Was *he*, since so renown'd «in country quarters
At Halifax;» but now he served the Tartars.

XX.

The rests were Jacks and Gills, and Wills and Bills;
But when I 've added that the elder Jack Smith
Was born in Cumberland among the hills,
And that his father was an honest blacksmith,
I 've said all *I* know of a name that fills
Three lines of the dispatch in taking «Schmacksmith,»
A village of Moldavia's waste, wherein
He fell, immortal in a bulletin.

XXI.

I wonder (although Mars no doubt 's a god I
Praise) if a man's name in a *bulletin*
May make up for a *bullet in* his body?
I hope this little question is no sin,
Because, though I am but a simple noddy,
I think one Shakspeare puts the same thought in
The mouth of some one in his plays so doating,
Which many people pass for wits by quoting.

XXII.

Then there were Frenchmen, gallant, young, and gay:
But I 'm too great a patriot to record
Their Gallic names upon a glorious day;
I 'd rather tell ten lies than say a word
Of truth;—such truths are treason: they betray
Their country, and, as traitors are abhorr'd,
Who name the French and English, save to show
How peace should make John Bull the Frenchman's foe?

XXIII.

The Russians, having built two batteries on
An isle near Ismail, had two ends in view;
The first was to bombard it, and knock down
The public buildings, and the private too,
No matter what poor souls might be undone.
The city's shape suggested this, 't is true;
Form'd like an amphitheatre, each dwelling
Presented a fine mark to throw a shell in.

XXIV.

The second object was to profit by
The moment of the general consternation,
To attack the Turk's flotilla, which lay nigh,
Extremely tranquil, anchor'd at its station:
But a third motive was as probably
To frighten them into capitulation;
A phantasy which sometimes seizes warriors,
Unless they are game as bull-dogs and fox-terriers.

XXV.

A habit rather blameable, which is
That of despising those we combat with,
Common in many cases, was in this
The cause of killing Tchitchitzkoff and Smith;
One of the valourous «Smiths» whom we shall miss
Out of those nineteen who late rhymed to «pith;»
But 't is a name so spread o'er «Sir» and «Madam,»
That one would think the FIRST who bore it «ADAM.»

XXVI.

The Russian batteries were incomplete,
Because they were constructed in a hurry.
Thus, the same cause which makes a verse want feet,
And throws a cloud o'er Longman and John Murray,
When the sale of new books is not so fleet
As they who print them think is necessary,
May likewise put off for a time what story
Sometimes calls «murder,» and at others «glory.»

XXVII.

Whether it was their engineers' stupidity,
Their haste, or waste, I neither know nor care,
Or some contractor's personal cupidity,
Saving his soul by cheating in the ware
Of homicide; but there was no solidity
In the new batteries erected there;
They either miss'd, or they were never miss'd,
And added greatly to the missing list.

XXVIII.

A sad miscalculation about distance
Made all their naval matters incorrect;
Three fire-ships lost their amiable existence
Before they reach'd a spot to take effect:
The match was lit too soon, and no assistance
Could remedy this lubberly defect;
They blew up in the middle of the river,
While, though 't was dawn, the Turks slept fast as ever.

XXIX.

At seven they rose, however, and survey'd
The Russ flotilla getting under way;
'T was nine, when still advancing undismay'd,
Within a cable's length their vessels lay
Off Ismail, and commenced a cannonade,
Which was return'd with interest, I may say,
And by a fire of musquetry and grape,
And shells and shot of every size and shape.

XXX.

For six hours bore they without intermission
The Turkish fire; and, aided by their own
Land batteries, work'd their guns with great precision:
At length they found mere cannonade alone
By no means would produce the town's submission,
And made a signal to retreat at one.
One bark blew up; a second, near the works
Running aground, was taken by the Turks.

XXXI.

The Moslem too had lost both ships and men;
But when they saw the enemy retire,
Their Delhis mann'd some boats, and sail'd again,
And gall'd the Russians with a heavy fire,
And tried to make a landing on the main.
But here the effect fell short of their desire:
Count Damas drove them back into the water
Pell mell, and with a whole gazette of slaughter.

XXXII.

« If» (says the historian here) « I could report
All that the Russians did upon this day,
I think that several volumes would fall short,
And I should still have many things to say;»
And so he says no more—but pays his court
To some distinguish'd strangers in that fray,
The Prince de Ligne, and Langeron, and Damas,
Names great as any that the roll of fame has.

XXXIII.

This being the case, may show us what fame *is*:
For out of these three « *preux chevaliers,*» how
Many of common readers give a guess
That such existed? (and they may live now
For aught we know). Renown 's all hit or miss;
There 's fortune even in fame, we must allow.
'T is true the Memoirs of the Prince de Ligne
Have half withdrawn from *him* oblivion's screen.

XXXIV.

But here are men who fought in gallant actions
As gallantly as ever heroes fought,
But buried in the heap of such transactions—
Their names are rarely found nor often sought:
Thus even good fame may suffer sad contractions,
And is extinguished sooner than she ought:
Of all our modern battles, I will bet
You can 't repeat nine names from each gazette.

XXXV.

In short, this last attack, though rich in glory,
Show'd that *somewhere, somehow*, there was a fault;
And Admiral Ribas (known in Russian story)
Most strongly recommended an assault;
In which he was opposed by young and hoary,
Which made a long debate:—but I must halt;
For if I wrote down every warrior's speech,
I doubt few readers e'er would mount the breach.

XXXVI.

There was a man, if that he was a man,—
Not that his manhood could be call'd in question,
For, had he not been Hercules, his span
Had been as short in youth as indigestion
Made his last illness, when, all worn and wan,
He died beneath a tree, as much unbless'd on
The soil of the green province he had wasted,
As e'er was locust on the land it blasted;—

XXXVII.

This was Potemkin—a great thing in days
When homicide and harlotry made great;
If stars and titles could entail long praise,
His glory might half equal his estate.
This fellow, being six foot high, could raise
A kind of phantasy proportionate
In the then sovereign of the Russian people,
Who measured men as you would do a steeple.

XXXVIII.

While things were in abeyance, Ribas sent
A courier to the prince, and he succeeded
In ordering matters after his own bent.
I cannot tell the way in which he pleaded,
But shortly he had cause to be content.
In the mean time the batteries proceeded,
And fourscore cannon on the Danube's border
Were briskly fired and answer'd in due order.

XXXIX.

But on the thirteenth, when already part
Of the troops were embark'd, the siege to raise,
A courier on the spur inspired new heart
Into all panters for newspaper praise,
As well as dilettanti in war's art,
By his dispatches couch'd in pithy praise,
Announcing the appointment of that lover of
Battles to the command, Field-Marshal Souvaroff.

XL.

The letter of the prince to the same marshal
Was worthy of a Spartan, had the cause
Been one to which a good heart could be partial—
Defence of freedom, country, or of laws;
But as it was mere lust of power to o'er-arch all
With its proud brow, it merits slight applause,
Save for its style, which said, all in a trice,
« You will take Ismail, at whatever price.»

XLI.

« Let there be light! said God, and there was light!»
« Let there be blood!» says man, and there 's a sea!
The fiat of this spoil'd child of the night
(For day ne'er saw his merits) could decree
More evil in an hour, than thirty bright
Summers could renovate, though they should be
Lovely as those which ripen'd Eden's fruit—
For war cuts up not only branch but root.

XLII.

Our friends the Turks, who with loud « Allas» now
Began to signalize the Russ retreat,
Were damnably mistaken; few are slow
In thinking that their enemy is beat
(Or *beaten*, if *you* insist on grammar, though
I never think about it in a heat);
But here I say the Turks were much mistaken,
Who, hating hogs, yet wish'd to save their bacon.

XLIII.

For, on the sixteenth, at full gallop, drew
In sight two horsemen, who were deem'd Cossacks
For some time, till they came in nearer view.
They had but little baggage at their backs,
For there were but *three* shirts between the two;
But on they rode upon two Ukraine hacks,
Till, in approaching, were at length descried
In this plain pair, Suwarrow and his guide.

XLIV.

« Great joy to London now !» says some great fool,
When London had a grand illumination,
Which to that bottle-conjuror, John Bull,
Is of all dreams the first hallucination;
So that the streets of colour'd lamps are full,
That sage (*said* John) surrenders at discretion
His purse, his soul, his sense, and even his nonsense,
To gratify, like a huge moth, this *one* sense.

XLV.

'T is strange that he should further « damn his eyes,»
For they are damn'd: that once all famous oath
Is to the devil now no further prize,
Since John has lately lost the use of both.
Debt he calls wealth, and taxes, paradise;
And famine, with her gaunt and bony growth,
Which stare him in the face, he won't examine,
Or swears that Ceres hath begotten Famine.

XLVI.

But to the tale. Great joy unto the camp!
To Russian, Tartar, English, French, Cossack,
O'er whom Suwarrow shone like a gas-lamp,
Presaging a most luminous attack;
Or, like a wisp along the marsh so damp,
Which leads beholders on a boggy walk,
He flitted to and fro, a dancing light,
Which all who saw it follow'd, wrong or right.

XLVII.

But certes matters took a different face;
There was enthusiasm and much applause,
The fleet and camp saluted with great grace,
And all presaged good fortune to their cause.
Within a cannon-shot length of the place
They drew, constructed ladders, repair'd flaws
In former works, made new, prepared fascines,
And all kinds of benevolent machines.

XLVIII.

'T is thus the spirit of a single mind
Makes that of multitudes take one direction,
As roll the waters to the breathing wind,
Or roams the herd beneath the bull's protection;
Or as a little dog will lead the blind,
Or a bell-wether form the flock's connexion
By tinkling sounds, when they go forth to victual:
Such is the sway of your great men o'er little.

XLIX.

The whole camp rung with joy; you would have thought
That they were going to a marriage-feast
(This metaphor, I think, holds good as aught,
Since there is discord after both at least).
There was not now a luggage-boy but sought
Danger and spoil with ardour much increased;
And why? because a little, odd, old man,
Stripp'd to his shirt, was come to lead the van.

L.

But so it was; and every preparation
Was made with all alacrity: the first
Detachment of three columns took its station,
And waited but the signal's voice to burst
Upon the foe: the second's ordination
Was also in three columns, with a thirst
For glory gaping o'er a sea of slaughter:
The third, in columns two, attack'd by water.

LI.

New batteries were erected; and was held
A general council, in which unanimity,
That stranger to most councils, here prevail'd,
As sometimes happens in a great extremity;
And, every difficulty being dispell'd,
Glory began to dawn with due sublimity,
While Souvaroff, determined to obtain it,
Was teaching his recruits to use the bayonet.

LII.

It is an actual fact, that he, commander-
In-chief, in proper person deign'd to drill
The awkward squad, and could afford to squander
His time, a corporal's duty to fulfil;
Just as you 'd break a sucking salamander
To swallow flame, and never take it ill:
He show'd them how to mount a ladder (which
Was not like Jacob's) or to cross a ditch.

LIII.

Also he dress'd up, for the nonce, fascines
Like men, with turbans, scimitars, and dirks,
And made them charge with bayonet these machines,
By way of lesson against actual Turks;
And, when well practised in these mimic scenes,
He judged them proper to assail the works;
At which your wise men sneer'd, in phrases witty:—
He made no answer; but he took the city.

LIV.

Most things were in this posture on the eve
Of the assault, and all the camp was in
A stern repose; which you would scarce conceive;
Yet men, resolved to dash through thick and thin,
Are very silent when they once believe
That all is settled:—there was little din,
For some were thinking of their home and friends,
And others of themselves and latter ends.

LV.

Suwarrow chiefly was on the alert,
Surveying, drilling, ordering, jesting, pondering:
For the man was, we safely may assert,
A thing to wonder at beyond most wondering;
Hero, buffoon, half-demon, and half-dirt,
Praying, instructing, desolating, plundering;
Now Mars, now Momus; and, when bent to storm
A fortress, harlequin in uniform.

LVI.

The day before the assault, while upon drill—
For this great conqueror play'd the corporal—
Some Cossacks, hovering like hawks round a hill,
Had met a party towards the twilight's fall,
One of whom spoke their tongue, or well or ill—
'T was much that he was understood at all;
But whether from his voice, or speech, or manner,
They found that he had fought beneath their banner.

LVII.

Whereon, immediately, at his request,
They brought him and his comrades to head-quarters:
Their dress was Moslem, but you might have guess'd
That these were merely masquerading Tartars,
And that beneath each Turkish-fashion'd vest
Lurk'd Christianity; who sometimes barters
Her inward grace for outward show, and makes
It difficult to shun some strange mistakes.

LVIII.

Suwarrow, who was standing in his shirt
Before a company of Calmucks, drilling,
Exclaiming, fooling, swearing at the inert,
And lecturing on the noble art of killing,—
For, deeming human clay but common dirt,
This great philosopher was thus instilling
His maxims, which, to martial comprehension,
Proved death in battle equal to a pension;—

LIX.

Suwarrow, when he saw this company
Of Cossacks and their prey, turn'd round and cast
Upon them his slow brow and piercing eye:—
"Whence come ye?"—"From Constantinople last,
Captives just now escaped," was the reply.
"What are ye?"—"What you see us." Briefly past
This dialogue; for he who answer'd knew
To whom he spoke, and made his words but few.

LX.

"Your names?"—"Mine 's Johnson, and my comrade 's Juan;
The other two are women, and the third
Is neither man nor woman." The chief threw on
The party a slight glance, then said: "I have heard
Your name before, the second is a new one;
To bring the other three here was absurd;
But let that pass;—I think I have heard your name
In the Nikolaiew regiment?"—"The same."—

LXI.

"You served at Widin?"—"Yes."—"You led the attack?"
"I did."—"What next?"—"I really hardly know."
"You were the first i' the breach?"—"I was not slack,
At least, to follow those who might be so."—
"What follow'd?"—"A shot laid me on my back,
And I became a prisoner to the foe."—
"You shall have vengeance, for the town surrounded
Is twice as strong as that where you were wounded.

LXII.

"Where will you serve?"—"Where'er you please."—"I know
You like to be the hope of the forlorn,
And doubtless would be foremost on the foe
After the hardships you 've already borne.
And this young fellow? say what can he do?—
He with the beardless chin and garments torn."—
"Why, general, if he hath no greater fault
In war than love, he had better lead the assault."—

LXIII.

"He shall, if that he dare." Here Juan bow'd
Low as the compliment deserved. Suwarrow
Continued: "Your old regiment 's allow'd,
By special providence, to lead to-morrow,
Or it may be to-night, the assault: I have vow'd
To several saints, that shortly plough or harrow
Shall pass o'er what was Ismail, and its tusk
Be unimpeded by the proudest Mosque.

LXIV.

"So now, my lads, for glory!"—Here he turn'd,
And drill'd away in the most classic Russian,
Until each high, heroic bosom burn'd
For cash and conquest, as if from a cushion
A preacher had held forth (who nobly spurn'd
All earthly goods save tithes) and bade them push on
To slay the Pagans who resisted, battering
The armies of the Christian Empress Catherine.

LXV.

Johnson, who knew by this long colloquy
Himself a favourite, ventured to address
Suwarrow, though engaged with accents high
In his resumed amusement. "I confess
My debt in being thus allow'd to die
Among the foremost; but if you 'd express
Explicitly our several posts, my friend
And self would know what duty to attend."—

LXVI.

"Right! I was busy, and forgot. Why, you
Will join your former regiment, which should be
Now under arms. Ho! Katskoff, take him to—
(Here he call'd up a Polish orderly)—
His post, I mean the regiment Nikolaiew.
The stranger stripling may remain with me;
He 's a fine boy. The women may be sent
To the other baggage, or to the sick tent."

LXVII.

But here a sort of scene began to ensue:
The ladies,—who by no means had been bred
To be disposed of in a way so new,
Although their haram education led
Doubtless to that of doctrines the most true,
Passive obedience,—now raised up the head,
With flashing eyes and starting tears, and flung
Their arms, as hens their wings about their young,

LXVIII.

O'er the promoted couple of brave men
Who were thus honour'd by the greatest chief
That ever peopled hell with heroes slain,
Or plunged a province or a realm in grief.
Oh, foolish mortals! always taught in vain!
Oh glorious laurel! since for one sole leaf
Of thine imaginary deathless tree,
Of blood and tears must flow the unebbing sea!

LXIX.

Suwarrow, who had small regard for tears,
And not much sympathy for blood, survey'd
The women with their hair about their ears,
And natural agonies, with a slight shade
Of feeling: for, however habit sears
Men's hearts against whole millions, when their trade
Is butchery, sometimes a single sorrow
Will touch even heroes—and such was Suwarrow.

LXX.

He said—and in the kindest Calmuck tone—
"Why, Johnson, what the devil do you mean
By bringing women here? They shall be shown
All the attention possible, and seen
In safety to the waggons, where alone
In fact they can be safe. You should have been
Aware this kind of baggage never thrives:
Save wed a year, I hate recruits with wives."

LXXI.

"May it please your excellency," thus replied
Our British friend, "these are the wives of others,
And not our own. I am too qualified
By service with my military brothers,
To break the rules by bringing one's own bride
Into a camp; I know that nought so bothers
The hearts of the heroic on a charge,
As leaving a small family at large.

LXXII.

« But these are but two Turkish ladies, who
With their attendant aided our escape,
And afterwards accompanied us through
A thousand perils in this dubious shape.
To me this kind of life is not so new;
To them, poor things! it is an awkward step;
I therefore, if you wish me to fight freely,
Request that they may both be used genteelly.»

LXXIII.

Meantime, these two poor girls, with swimming eyes,
Look'd on as if in doubt if they could trust
Their own protectors;—nor was their surprise
Less than their grief (and truly not less just)
To see an old man, rather wild than wise
In aspect, plainly clad, besmear'd with dust,
Stripp'd to his waistcoat, and *that not* too clean,
More fear'd than all the Sultans ever seen.

LXXIV.

For every thing seem'd resting on his nod,
As they could read in all eyes. Now, to them,
Who were accustom'd, as a sort of god,
To see the Sultan, rich in many a gem,
Like an imperial peacock stalk abroad
(That royal bird, whose tail 's a diadem),
With all the pomp of power, it was a doubt
How power could condescend to do without.

LXXV.

John Johnson, seeing their extreme dismay,
Though little versed in feelings oriental,
Suggested some slight comfort in his way.
Don Juan, who was much more sentimental,
Swore they should see him by the dawn of day,
Or that the Russian army should repent all:
And, strange to say, they found some consolation
In this—for females like exaggeration.

LXXVI.

And then, with tears, and sighs, and some slight kisses,
They parted for the present—these to await,
According to the artillery's hits or misses,
What sages call Chance, Providence, or Fate—
(Uncertainty is one of many blisses,
A mortgage on Humanity's estate)—
While their beloved friends began to arm,
To burn a town which never did them harm.

LXXVII.

Suwarrow, who but saw things in the gross—
Being much too gross to see them in detail;
Who calculated life as so much dross,
And as the wind a widow'd nation's wail,
And cared as little for his army's loss
(So that their efforts should at length prevail)
As wife and friends did for the boils of Job;—
What was 't to him to hear two women sob?

LXXVIII.

Nothing.—The work of glory still went on
In preparations for a cannonade
As terrible as that of Ilion,
If Homer had found mortars ready made;
But now, instead of slaying Priam's son,
We only can but talk of escalade,
Bombs, drums, guns, bastions, batteries, bayonets, bullets,
Hard words which stick in the soft Muses' gullets.

LXXIX.

Oh, thou eternal Homer! who couldst charm
All ears, though long,—all ages, though so short,
By merely wielding with poetic arm
Arms to which men will never more resort,
Unless gunpowder should be found to harm
Much less than is the hope of every court,
Which now is leagued young Freedom to annoy;—
But they will not find Liberty a Troy:

LXXX.

Oh, thou eternal Homer! I have now
To paint a siege, wherein more men were slain,
With deadlier engines and a speedier blow,
Than in thy Greek gazette of that campaign;
And yet, like all men else, I must allow,
To vie with thee would be about as vain
As for a brook to cope with Ocean's flood;
But still we moderns equal you in blood—

LXXXI.

If not in poetry, at least in fact;
And fact is truth, the grand desideratum!
Of which, howe'er the Muse describes each act,
There should be ne'ertheless a slight substratum.
But now the town is going to be attack'd;
Great deeds are doing—how shall I relate 'em?
Souls of immortal generals! Phœbus watches
To colour up his rays from your dicspatches.

LXXXII.

Oh, ye great bulletins of Bonaparte!
Oh, ye less grand long lists of kill'd and wounded!
Shade of Leonidas, who fought so hearty,
When my poor Greece was once, as now, surrounded!
Oh, Cæsar's Commentaries! now impart ye,
Shadows of glory! (lest I be confounded)
A portion of your fading twilight hues,
So beautiful, so fleeting, to the Muse.

LXXXIII.

When I call « fading» martial immortality,
I mean, that every age and every year,
And almost every day, in sad reality,
Some sucking hero is compell'd to rear,
Who, when we come to sum up the totality
Of deeds to human happiness most dear,
Turns out to be a butcher in great business,
Afflicting young folks with a sort of dizziness.

LXXXIV.

Medals, ranks, ribbons, lace, embroidery, scarlet,
Are things immortal to immortal man,
As purple to the Babylonian harlot:
An uniform to boys is like a fan
To women; there is scarce a crimson varlet
But deems himself the first in glory's van.
But glory 's glory; and if you would find
What that is—ask the pig who sees the wind!

LXXXV.

At least *he feels it*, and some say he *sees*,
Because he runs before it like a pig;
Or, if that simple sentence should displease,
Say that he scuds before it like a brig,
A schooner, or—but it is time to ease
This Canto, ere my Muse perceives fatigue.
The next shall ring a peal to shake all people,
Like a bob-major from a village-steeple.

LXXXVI.

Hark! through the silence of the cold, dull night,
The hum of armies gathering rank on rank!
Lo! dusky masses steal in dubious sight
Along the leaguer'd wall and bristling bank
Of the arm'd river, while with straggling light
The stars peep through the vapours dim and dank,
Which curl in curious wreaths—How soon the smoke
Of hell shall pall them in a deeper cloak!

LXXXVII.

Here pause we for the present—as even then
That awful pause, dividing life from death,
Struck for an instant on the hearts of men,
Thousands of whom were drawing their last breath!
A moment—and all will be life again!
The march! the charge! the shouts of either faith!
Hurra! and Allah! and—one moment more—
The death-cry drowning in the battle's roar.

CANTO VIII.

I.

Oh blood and thunder! and oh blood and wounds!
These are but vulgar oaths, as you may deem,
Too gentle reader! and most shocking sounds:
And so they are; yet thus is Glory's dream
Unriddled, and as my true Muse expounds
At present such things, since they are her theme,
So be they her inspirers! Call them Mars,
Bellona, what you will—they mean but wars.

II.

All was prepared—the fire, the sword, the men
To wield them in their terrible array.
The army, like a lion from his den,
March'd forth with nerve and sinews bent to slay—
A human Hydra, issuing from its fen
To breathe destruction on its winding way,
Whose heads were heroes which, cut off in vain,
Immediately in others grew again.

III.

History can only take things in the gross;
But could we know them in detail, perchance
In balancing the profit and the loss,
War's merit it by no means might enhance,
To waste so much gold for a little dross,
As hath been done, mere conquest to advance.
The drying up a single tear has more
Of honest fame, than shedding seas of gore.

IV.

And why? because it brings self-approbation;
Whereas the other, after all its glare,
Shouts, bridges, arches, pensions from a nation—
Which (it may be) has not much left to spare—
A higher title, or a loftier station,
Though they may make corruption gape or stare,
Yet, in the end, except in freedom's battles,
Are nothing but a child of murder's rattles.

V.

And such they are—and such they will be found.
Not so Leonidas and Washington,
Whose every battle-field is holy ground,
Which breathes of nations saved, not worlds undone.
How sweetly on the ear such echoes sound!
While the mere victor's may appal or stun
The servile and the vain, such names will be
A watch-word till the future shall be free.

VI.

The night was dark, and the thick mist allow'd
Nought to be seen save the artillery's flame,
Which arch'd the horizon like a fiery cloud,
And in the Danube's waters shone the same,
A mirror'd hell! The volleying roar, and loud
Long booming of each peal on peal, o'ercame
The ear far more than thunder; for Heaven's flashes
Spare, or smite rarely—Man's make millions ashes!

VII.

The column order'd on the assault, scarce pass'd
Beyond the Russian batteries a few toises,
When up the bristling Moslem rose at last,
Answering the Christian thunders with like voices;
Then one vast fire, air, earth, and stream embraced,
Which rock'd as 't were beneath the mighty noises;
While the whole rampart blazed like Etnà, when
The restless Titan hiccups in his den.

VIII.

And one enormous shout of «Allah!» rose
In the same moment, loud as even the roar
Of war's most mortal engines, to their foes
Hurling defiance: city, stream, and shore
Resounded «Allah!» and the clouds which close
With thick'ning canopy the conflict o'er,
Vibrate to the Eternal Name. Hark! through
All sounds it pierceth, «Allah! Allah! Hu!»[1]

IX.

The columns were in movement, one and all;
But, of the portion which attack'd by water,
Thicker than leaves the lives began to fall,
Though led by Arseniew, that great son of slaughter,
As brave as ever faced both bomb and ball.
«Carnage» (so Wordsworth tells you) is God's daughter:[2]
If *he* speak truth, she is Christ's sister, and
Just now behaved as in the Holy Land.

X.

The Prince de Ligne was wounded in the knee;
Count Chapeau-Bras too had a ball between
His cap and head, which proves the head to be
Aristocratic as was ever seen,
Because it then received no injury
More than the cap; in fact the ball could mean
No harm unto a right legitimate head:
«Ashes to ashes»—why not, lead to lead?

XI.

Also the General Markow, Brigadier,
Insisting on removal of *the prince*
Amidst some groaning thousands dying near,—
All common fellows, who might writhe and wince,
And shriek for water into a deaf ear,—
The General Markow, who could thus evince
His sympathy for rank, by the same token,
To teach him greater, had his own leg broken.

XII.

Three hundred cannon threw up their emetic,
And thirty thousand muskets flung their pills
Like hail, to make a bloody diuretic.
Mortality! thou hast thy monthly bills;
Thy plagues, thy famines, thy physicians, yet tick,
Like the death-watch, within our ears the ills
Past, present, and to come;—but all may yield
To the true portrait of one battle-field.

XIII.

There the still varying pangs, which multiply
Until their very number makes men hard
By the infinities of agony,
Which meet the gaze, whate'er it may regard—
The groan, the roll in dust, the all-white eye
Turn'd back within its socket,—these reward
Your rank and file by thousands, while the rest
May win perhaps a ribbon at the breast!

XIV.

Yet I love glory;—glory 's a great thing;
Think what it is to be in your old age
Maintain'd at the expense of your good king:
A moderate pension shakes full many a sage,
And heroes are but made for bards to sing,
Which is still better; thus in verse to wage
Your wars eternally, besides enjoying
Half-pay for life, make mankind worth destroying.

XV.

The troops already disembark'd push'd on
To take a battery on the right; the others,
Who landed lower down, their landing done,
Had set to work as briskly as their brothers:
Being grenadiers, they mounted, one by one,
Cheerful as children climb the breasts of mothers,—
O'er the entrenchment and the palisade,
Quite orderly, as if upon parade.

XVI.

And this was admirable; for so hot
The fire was, that were red Vesuvius loaded,
Besides its lava, with all sorts of shot
And shells or bells, it could not more have goaded.
Of officers a third fell on the spot,
A thing which victory by no means boded
To gentlemen engaged in the assault:
Hounds, when the huntsman tumbles, are at fault.

XVII.

But here I leave the general concern,
To track our hero on his path of fame:
He must his laurels separately earn;
For fifty thousand heroes, name by name,
Though all deserving equally to turn
A couplet, or an elegy to claim,
Would form a lengthy lexicon of glory,
And, what is worse still, a much longer story:

XVIII.

And therefore we must give the greater number
To the gazette—which doubtless fairly dealt
By the deceased, who lie in famous slumber
In ditches, fields, or wheresoe'er they felt
Their clay for the last time their souls encumber;—
Thrice happy he whose name has been well spelt
In the dispatch: I knew a man whose loss
Was printed *Grove*, although his name was Grose.[3]

XIX.

Juan and Johnson joined a certain corps,
And fought away with might and main, not knowing
The way which they had never trod before,
And still less guessing where they might be going;
But on they march'd, dead bodies trampling o'er,
Firing, and thrusting, slashing, sweating, glowing,
But fighting thoughtlessly enough to win,
To their *two* selves, *one* whole bright bulletin.

XX.

Thus on they wallow'd in the bloody mire
Of dead and dying thousands,—sometimes gaining
A yard or two of ground, which brought them nigher
To some odd angle for which all were straining;
At other times, repulsed by the close fire,
Which really pour'd as if all hell were raining,
Instead of heaven, they stumbled backwards o'er
A wounded comrade, sprawling in his gore.

XXI.

Though 't was Don Juan's first of fields, and though
The nightly muster and the silent march
In the chill dark, when courage does not glow
So much as under a triumphal arch,
Perhaps might make him shiver, yawn, or throw
A glance on the dull clouds (as thick as starch,
Which stiffen'd heaven) as if he wish'd for day;—
Yet for all this he did not run away.

XXII.

Indeed he could not. But what if he had?
There *have been* and *are* heroes who begun
With something not much better, or as bad:
Frederick the Great from Molwitz deign'd to run,
For the first and last time; for, like a pad,
Or hawk, or bride, most mortals, after one
Warm bout, are broken into their new tricks,
And fight like fiends for pay or politics.

XXIII.

He was what Erin calls, in her sublime
Old Erse or Irish, or it may be *Punic;*
(The antiquarians who can settle time,
Which settles all things, Roman, Greek, or Runic,
Swear that Pat's language sprung from the same clime
With Hannibal, and wears the Tyrian tunic
Of Dido's alphabet; and this is rational
As any other notion, and not national);—[4]

XXIV.

But Juan was quite «a broth of a boy,»
A thing of impulse and a child of song;
Now swimming in the sentiment of joy,
Or the *sensation* (if that phrase seem wrong),
And afterwards, if he must needs destroy,
In such good company as always throng
To battles, sieges, and that kind of pleasure,
No less delighted to employ his leisure;

XXV.

But always without malice. If he warr'd
Or loved, it was with what we call «the best
Intentions,» which form all mankind's *trump-card*,
To be produced when brought up to the test.
The statesman, here, harlot, lawyer—ward
Off each attack, when people are in quest
Of their designs, by saying they *meant well;*
'T is pity «that such meanings should pave hell.»[5]

XXVI.

I almost lately have begun to doubt
Whether hell's pavement—if it be *so paved*—
Must not have latterly been quite worn out,
Not by the numbers good intent hath saved,
But by the mass who go below without
Those ancient good intentions, which once shaved
And smooth'd the brimstone of that street of hell
Which bears the greatest likeness to Pall Mall.

XXVII.

Juan, by some strange chance, which oft divides
Warrior from warrior in their grim career,
Like chastest wives from constant husbands' sides,
Just at the close of the first bridal year,
By one of those odd turns of fortune's tides,
Was on a sudden rather puzzled here,
When, after a good deal of heavy firing,
He found himself alone, and friends retiring.

XXVIII.

I don't know how the thing occurr'd—it might
Be that the greater part were killed or wounded,
And that the rest had faced unto the right
About; a circumstance which has confounded
Cæsar himself, who, in the very sight
Of his whole army, which so much abounded
In courage, was obliged to snatch a shield
And rally back his Romans to the field.

XXIX.

Juan, who had no shield to snatch, and was
No Cæsar, but a fine young lad, who fought
He knew not why, arriving at this pass,
Stopp'd for a minute, as perhaps he ought
For a much longer time; then, like an ass—
(Start not, kind reader; since great Homer thought
This simile enough for Ajax, Juan
Perhaps may find it better than a new one)—

XXX.

Then, like an ass, he went upon his way,
And, what was stranger, never look'd behind;
But seeing, flashing forward, like the day
Over the hills, a fire enough to blind
Those who dislike to look upon a fray,
He stumbled on, to try if he could find
A path to add his own slight arm and forces
To corps, the greater part of which were corses.

XXXI.

Perceiving then no more the commandant
Of his own corps, nor even the corps, which had
Quite disappear'd—the gods know how! (I can't
Account for every thing which may look bad
In history; but we at least may grant
It was not marvellous that a mere lad,
In search of glory, should look on before,
Nor care a pinch of snuff about his corps):—

XXXII.

Perceiving nor commander nor commanded,
And left at large, like a young heir, to make
His way to—where he knew not—single handed;
As travellers follow over bog and brake
An «ignis fatuus,» or as sailors stranded
Unto the nearest hut themselves betake,
So Juan, following honour and his nose,
Rush'd where the thickest fire announced most foes.

XXXIII.

He knew not where he was, nor greatly cared,
For he was dizzy, busy, and his veins
Fill'd as with lightning—for his spirit shared
The hour, as is the case with lively brains;
And, where the hottest fire was seen and heard,
And the loud cannon peal'd his hoarsest strains,
He rush'd, while earth and air were sadly shaken
By thy humane discovery, friar Bacon! [6]

XXXIV.

And, as he rush'd along, it came to pass he
Fell in with what was late the second column,
Under the orders of the general Lascy,
But now reduced, as is a bulky volume,
Into an elegant extract (much less massy)
Of heroism, and took his place with solemn
Air, 'midst the rest, who kept their valiant faces,
And levell'd weapons, still against the glacis.

XXXV.

Just at this crisis up came Johnson too,
Who had «retreated,» as the phrase is when
Men run away much rather than go through
Destruction's jaws into the devil's den;
But Johnson was a clever fellow, who
Knew when and how «to cut and come again,»
And never ran away, except when running
Was nothing but a valorous kind of cunning.

XXXVI.

And so, when all his corps were dead or dying,
Except Don Juan—a mere novice, whose
More virgin valour never dream'd of flying,
From ignorance of danger, which indues
Its votaries, like innocence relying
On its own strength, with careless nerves and thews,—
Johnson retired a little, just to rally
Those who catch cold in «shadows of death's valley.»

XXXVII.

And there, a little shelter'd from the shot,
Which rain'd from bastion, battery, parapet,
Rampart, wall, casement, house—for there was not
In this extensive city, sore beset
By Christian soldiery, a single spot
Which did not combat like the devil, as yet
He found a number of chasseurs, all scatter'd
By the resistance of the chase they batter'd.

XXXVIII.

And these he call'd on; and, what 's strange, they came
Unto his call, unlike «the spirits from
The vasty deep,» to whom you may exclaim,
Says Hotspur, long ere they will leave their home.
Their reasons were uncertainty, or shame
At shrinking from a bullet or a bomb,
And that odd impulse, which, in wars or creeds,
Makes men, like cattle, follow him who leads.

XXXIX.

By Jove! he was a noble fellow, Johnson,
And though his name, than Ajax or Achilles,
Sounds less harmonious, underneath the sun soon
We shall not see his likeness: he could kill his
Man quite as quietly as blows the monsoon
Her steady breath (which some months the same *still* is);
Seldom he varied feature, hue, or muscle,
And could be very busy without bustle.

XL.

And therefore, when he ran away, he did so
Upon reflection, knowing that behind
He would find others who would fain be rid so
Of idle apprehensions, which, like wind,
Trouble heroic stomachs. Though their lids so
Oft are soon closed, all heroes are not blind,
But when they light upon immediate death,
Retire a little, merely to take breath.

XLI.

But Johnson only ran off, to return
With many other warriors, as we said,
Unto that rather somewhat misty bourn,
Which Hamlet tells us is a pass of dread.
To Jack howe'er this gave but slight concern:
His soul (like galvanism upon the dead)
Acted upon the living as on wire,
And led them back into the heaviest fire.

XLII.

Egad! they found the second time what they
The first time thought quite terrible enough
To fly from, malgré all which people say
Of glory, and all that immortal stuff
Which fills a regiment (besides their pay,
That daily shilling which makes warriors tough)—
They found on their return the self-same welcome,
Which made some *think*, and others *know*, a *hell* come.

XLIII.

They fell as thick as harvests beneath hail,
Grass before scythes, or corn below the sickle,
Proving that trite old truth, that life 's as frail
As any other boon for which men stickle.
The Turkish batteries thrash'd them like a flail,
Or a good boxer, into a sad pickle
Putting the very bravest, who were knock'd
Upon the head before their guns were cock'd.

XLIV.

The Turks behind the traverses and flanks
Of the next bastion, fired away like devils,
And swept, as gales sweep foam away, whole ranks:
However, Heaven knows how, the fate who levels
Towns, nations, worlds, in her revolving pranks,
So order'd it, amidst these sulphury revels,
That Johnson and some few who had not scamper'd,
Reach'd the interior talus of the rampart.

XLV.

First one or two, then five, six, and a dozen
Came mounting quickly up, for it was now
All neck or nothing, as, like pitch or rosin,
Flame was shower'd forth above as well 's below,
So that you scarce could say who best had chosen,—
The gentlemen that were the first to show
Their martial faces on the parapet,
Or those who thought it brave to wait as yet.

XLVI.

But those who scaled found out that their advance
Was favour'd by an accident or blunder:
The Greek or Turkish Cohorn's ignorance
Had palisadoed in a way you'd wonder
To see in forts of Netherlands or France—
(Though these to our Gibraltar must knock under)—
Right in the middle of the parapet,
Just named, these palisades were primly set:

XLVII.

So that on either side some nine or ten
Paces were left, whereon you could contrive
To march; a great convenience to our men,
At least to all those who were left alive,
Who thus could form a line and fight again;
And that which further aided them to strive
Was, that they could kick down the palisades,
Which scarcely rose much higher than grass blades.

XLVIII.

Among the first,—I will not say the *first*,
For such precedence upon such occasions
Will oftentimes make deadly quarrels burst
Out between friends as well as allied nations;
The Briton must be bold who really durst
Put to such trial John Bull's partial patience,
As say that Wellington at Waterloo
Was beaten,—though the Prussians say so too;—

XLIX.

And that if Blucher, Bulow, Gneisenau,
And God knows who besides in «au» and «ou,»
Had not come up in time to cast an awe
Into the hearts of those who fought till now
As tigers combat with an empty craw,
The Duke of Wellington had ceased to show
His orders, also to receive his pensions,
Which are the heaviest that our history mentions.

L.

But never mind;—«God save the king!» and kings!
For if *he* don't, I doubt if *men* will longer.—
I think I hear a little bird, who sings
The people by and bye will be the stronger:
The veriest jade will wince whose harness wrings
So much into the raw as quite to wrong her
Beyond the rules of posting,—and the mob
At last fall sick of imitating Job.

LI.

At first it grumbles, then it swears, and then,
Like David, flings smooth pebbles 'gainst a giant;
At last it takes to weapons, such as men
Snatch when despair makes human hearts less pliant.
Then «comes the tug of war;»—'t will come again,
I rather doubt; and I would fain say «fie on't,»
If I had not perceived that revolution
Alone can save the earth from hell's pollution.

LII.

But to continue:—I say not *the* first,
But of the first, our little friend Don Juan
Walk'd o'er the walls of Ismail, as if nursed
Amidst such scenes—though this was quite a new one
To him, and I should hope to *most*. The thirst
Of glory, which so pierces through and through one,
Pervaded him—although a generous creature,
As warm in heart as feminine in feature.

LIII.

And here he was—who upon woman's breast,
Even from a child, felt like a child; howe'er
The man in all the rest might be confess'd;
To him it was Elysium to be there;
And he could even withstand that awkward test
Which Rousseau points out to the dubious fair,
«Observe your lover when he *leaves* your arms;»
But Juan never left them, while they had charms,

LIV.

Unless compell'd by fate, or wave, or wind,
Or near relations, who are much the same.
But *here* he was!—where each tie that can bind
Humanity must yield to steel and flame:
And *he*, whose very body was all mind,—
Flung here by fate or circumstance, which tame
The loftiest,—hurried by the time and place,—
Dash'd on like a spurr'd blood-horse in a race.

LV.

So was his blood stirr'd while he found resistance,
As is the hunter's at the five-bar gate,
Or double post and rail, where the existence
Of Britain's youth depends upon their weight,
The lightest being the safest: at a distance
He hated cruelty, as all men hate
Blood, until heated—and even there his own
At times would curdle o'er some heavy groan.

LVI.

The General Lascy, who had been hard press'd,
Seeing arrive an aid so opportune
As were some hundred youngsters all abreast,
Who came as if just dropp'd down from the moon,
To Juan, who was nearest him, address'd
His thanks, and hopes to take the city soon,
Not reckoning him to be a « base Bezonian»
(As Pistol calls it), but a young Livonian.

LVII.

Juan, to whom he spoke in German, knew
As much of German as of Sanscrit, and
In answer made an inclination to
The general who held him in command;
For, seeing one with ribbons, black and blue,
Stars, medals, and a bloody sword in hand,
Addressing him in tones which seem'd to thank,
He recognized an officer of rank.

LVIII.

Short speeches pass between two men who speak
No common language; and besides, in time
Of war and taking towns, when many a shriek
Rings o'er the dialogue, and many a crime
Is perpetrated ere a word can break
Upon the ear, and sounds of horror chime
In, like church bells, with sigh, howl, groan, yell, prayer,
There cannot be much conversation there.

LIX.

And therefore all we have related in
Two long octaves, pass'd in a little minute;
But in the same small minute, every sin
Contrived to get itself comprised within it.
The very cannon, deafen'd by the din,
Grew dumb, for you might almost hear a linnet,
As soon as thunder, 'midst the general noise
Of human nature's agonizing voice!

LX.

The town was enter'd. Oh eternity!—
« God made the country, and man made the town,»
So Cowper says—and I begin to be
Of his opinion, when I see cast down
Rome, Babylon, Tyre, Carthage, Nineveh—
All walls men know, and many never known;
And, pondering on the present and the past,
To deem the woods shall be our home at last.

LXI.

Of all men, saving Sylla the man-slayer,
Who passes for in life and death most lucky,
Of the great names which in our faces stare,
The General Boon, back-woodsman of Kentucky,
Was happiest amongst mortals any where;
For killing nothing but a bear or buck, he
Enjoy'd the lonely, vigorous, harmless days
Of his old age in wilds of deepest maze.

LXII.

Crime came not near him—she is not the child
Of solitude; health shrank not from him—for
Her home is in the rarely-trodden wild,
Where if men seek her not, and death be more
Their choice than life, forgive them, as beguiled
By habit to what their own hearts abhor—
In cities caged. The present case in point I
Cite is, that Boon lived hunting up to ninety;

LXIII.

And, what's still stranger, left behind a name—
For which men vainly decimate the throng,—
Not only famous, but of that *good* fame
Without which glory 's but a tavern song—
Simple, serene, the antipodes of shame,
Which hate nor envy e'er could tinge with wrong;
An active hermit, even in age the child
Of nature, or the Man of Ross run wild.

LXIV.

'T is true he shrank from men, even of his nation,
When they built up unto his darling trees,—
He moved some hundred miles off, for a station
Where there were fewer houses and more ease—
The inconvenience of civilization
Is, that you neither can be pleased nor please;—
But, where he met the individual man,
He show'd himself as kind as mortal can.

LXV.

He was not all alone: around him grew
A sylvan tribe of children of the chase,
Whose young, unwaken'd world was ever new,
Nor sword nor sorrow yet had left a trace
On her unwrinkled brow, nor could you view
A frown on nature's or on human face;—
The free-born forest found and kept them free,
And fresh as is a torrent or a tree.

LXVI.

And tall and strong and swift of foot were they,
Beyond the dwarfing city's pale abortions,
Because their thoughts had never been the prey
Of care or gain: the green woods were their portions;
No sinking spirits told them they grew grey;
No fashion made them apes of her distortions;
Simple they were, not savage; and their rifles,
Though very true, were not yet used for trifles.

LXVII.

Motion was in their days, rest in their slumbers,
And cheerfulness the handmaid of their toil;
Nor yet too many nor too few their numbers;
Corruption could not make their hearts her soil:
The lust which stings, the splendour which encumbers,
With the free foresters divide no spoil;
Serene, not sullen, were the solitudes
Of this unsighing people of the woods.

LXVIII.

So much for nature:—by way of variety,
Now back to thy great joys, civilization!
And the sweet consequence of large society,—
War, pestilence, the despot's desolation,
The kingly scourge, the lust of notoriety,
The millions slain by soldiers for their ration,
The scenes like Catharine's boudoir at three score,
With Ismail's storm to soften it the more.

LXIX.

The town was enter'd: first one column made
Its sanguinary way good—then another;
The reeking bayonet and the flashing blade
Clash'd 'gainst the scimitar, and babe and mother
With distant shrieks were heard heaven to upbraid;—
Still closer sulphury clouds began to smother
The breath of morn and man, where, foot by foot,
The madden'd Turks their city still dispute.

LXX.

Koutousow, he who afterwards beat back
(With some assistance from the frost and snow)
Napoleon on his bold and bloody track,
It happen'd was himself beat back just now.
He was a jolly fellow, and could crack
His jest alike in face of friend or foe,
Though life, and death, and victory were at stake—
But here it seem'd his jokes had ceased to take:

LXXI.

For, having thrown himself into a ditch,
Follow'd in haste by various grenadiers,
Whose blood the puddle greatly did enrich,
He climb'd to where the parapet appears;
But there his project reach'd its utmost pitch—
('Mongst other deaths the General Ribaupierre's
Was much regretted)—for the Moslem men
Threw them all down into the ditch again:

LXXII.

And, had it not been for some stray troops, landing
They knew not where,—being carried by the stream
To some spot, where they lost their understanding,
And wander'd up and down as in a dream,
Until they reach'd, as day-break was expanding,
That which a portal to their eyes did seem,—
The great and gay Koutousow might have lain
Where three parts of his column yet remain.

LXXIII.

And, scrambling round the rampart, these same troops,
After the taking of the «cavalier,»
Just as Koutousow's most «forlorn» of «hopes»
Took, like cameleons, some slight tinge of fear,
Open'd the gate call'd «Kilia» to the groups
Of baffled heroes who stood shyly near,
Sliding knee-deep in lately-frozen mud,
Now thaw'd into a marsh of human blood.

LXXIV.

The Kozaks, or if so you please, Cossacks—
(I don't much pique myself upon orthography,
So that I do not grossly err in facts,
Statistics, tactics, politics, and geography)—
Having been used to serve on horses' backs,
And no great dilettanti in topography
Of fortresses, but fighting where it pleases
Their chiefs to order,—were all cut to pieces.

LXXV.

Their column, though the Turkish batteries thunder'd
Upon them, ne'ertheless had reach'd the rampart,
And naturally thought they could have plunder'd
The city, without being further hamper'd;
But, as it happens to brave men, they blunder'd—
The Turks at first pretended to have scamper'd
Only to draw them 't wixt two bastion corners,
From whence they sallied on those Christian scorners.

LXXVI.

Then being taken by the tail—a taking
Fatal to bishops as to soldiers—these
Cossacks were all cut off as day was breaking,
And found their lives were let at a short lease—
But perish'd without shivering or shaking,
Leaving as ladders their heap'd carcasses,
O'er which Lieutenant-Colonel Yesouskoi
March'd with the brave battalion of Polouzki:—

LXXVII.

This valiant man kill'd all the Turks he met,
But could not eat them, being in his turn
Slain by some Mussulmans, who would not yet,
Without resistance, see their city burn.
The walls were won, but 't was an even bet
Which of the armies would have cause to mourn:
'T was blow for blow, disputing inch by inch,
For one would not retreat, nor t' other flinch.

LXXVIII.

Another column also suffer'd much:
And here we may remark with the historian,
You should but give few cartridges to such
Troops as are meant to march with greatest glory on:
When matters must be carried by the touch
Of the bright bayonet, and they all should hurry on,
They sometimes, with a hankering for existence,
Keep merely firing at a foolish distance.

LXXIX.

A junction of the General Meknop's men
(Without the General, who had fallen some time
Before, being badly seconded just then)
Was made at length, with those who dared, to climb
The death-disgorging rampart once again;
And, though the Turk's resistance was sublime,
They took the bastion, which the Seraskier
Defended at a price extremely dear.

LXXX.

Juan and Johnson, and some volunteers,
Among the foremost, offer'd him good quarter,
A word which little suits with Seraskiers,
Or at least suited not this valiant Tartar.—
He died, deserving well his country's tears,
A savage sort of military martyr.
An English naval officer, who wish'd
To make him prisoner, was also dish'd:

LXXXI.

For all the answer to his proposition
Was from a pistol-shot that laid him dead;
On which the rest, without more intermission,
Began to lay about with steel and lead,—
The pious metals most in requisition
On such occasions: not a single head
Was spared,—three thousand Moslems perish'd here,
And sixteen bayonets pierced the Seraskier.

LXXXII.

The city 's taken—only part by part—
And death is drunk with gore: there 's not a street
Where fights not to the last some desperate heart
For those for whom it soon shall cease to beat.
Here War forgot his own destructive art
In more destroying nature; and the heat
Of carnage, like the Nile's sun-sodden slime,
Engender'd monstrous shapes of every crime.

LXXXIII.

A Russian officer, in martial tread
Over a heap of bodies, felt his heel
Seized fast, as if 't were by the serpent's head,
Whose fangs Eve taught her human seed to feel.
In vain he kick'd, and swore, and writhed, and bled,
And howl'd for help as wolves do for a meal—
The teeth still kept their gratifying hold,
As do the subtle snakes described of old.

LXXXIV.

A dying Moslem, who had felt the foot
Of a foe o'er him, snatch'd at it, and bit
The very tendon which is most acute—
(That which some ancient muse or modern wit
Named after thee, Achilles) and quite through 't
He made the teeth meet, nor relinquish'd it
Even with his life—for (but they lie) 't is said
To the live leg still clung the sever'd head.

LXXXV.

However this may be, 't is pretty sure
The Russian officer for life was lamed,
For the Turk's teeth stuck faster than a skewer,
And left him 'midst the invalid and maim'd:
The regimental surgeon could not cure
His patient, and perhaps was to be blamed
More than the head of the inveterate foe,
Which was cut off, and scarce even then let go.

LXXXVI.

But then the fact 's a fact—and 't is the part
Of a true poet to escape from fiction
Whene'er he can; for there is little art
In leaving verse more free from the restriction
Of truth than prose, unless to suit the mart
For what is sometimes call'd poetic diction,
And that outrageous appetite for lies
Which Satan angles with for souls like flies.

LXXXVII.

The city 's taken, but not render'd!—No!
There 's not a Moslem that hath yielded sword:
The blood may gush out, as the Danube's flow
Rolls by the city wall; but deed nor word
Acknowledge aught of dread of death or foe:
In vain the yell of victory is roar'd
By the advancing Muscovite—the groan
Of the last foe is echoed by his own.

LXXXVIII.

The bayonet pierces and the sabre cleaves,
And human lives are lavish'd every where,
As the year closing whirls the scarlet leaves
When the stripp'd forest bows to the bleak air,
And groans; and thus the peopled city grieves,
Shorn of its best and loveliest, and left bare;
But still it falls with vast and awful splinters,
As oaks blown down with all their thousand winters.

LXXXIX.

It is an awful topic—but 't is not
My cue for any time to be terrific:
For checquer'd as is seen our human lot
With good, and bad, and worse, alike prolific
Of melancholy merriment, to quote
Too much of one sort would be soporific;—
Without, or with, offence to friends or foes,
I sketch your world exactly as it goes.

XC.

And one good action in the midst of crimes
Is «quite refreshing»—in the affected phrase
Of these ambrosial, Pharisaic times,
With all their pretty milk-and-water ways,—
And may serve therefore to bedew these rhymes,
A little scorch'd at present with the blaze
Of conquest and its consequences, which
Make epic poesy so rare and rich.

XCI.

Upon a taken bastion, where there lay
Thousands of slaughter'd men, a yet warm group
Of murder'd women, who had found their way
To this vain refuge, made the good heart droop
And shudder;—while, as beautiful as May,
A female child of ten years tried to stoop
And hide her little palpitating breast
Amidst the bodies lull'd in bloody rest.

XCII.

Two villanous Cossacks pursued the child
With flashing eyes and weapons: match'd with them,
The rudest brute that roams Siberia's wild
Has feelings pure and polish'd as a gem,—
The bear is civilized, the wolf is mild:
And whom for this at last must we condemn?
Their natures, or their sovereigns who employ
All arts to teach their subjects to destroy?

XCIII.

Their sabres glitter'd o'er her little head,
Whence her fair hair rose twining with affright,
Her hidden face was plunged amidst the dead:
When Juan caught a glimpse of this sad sight,
I shall not say exactly what he *said*,
Because it might not solace «ears polite;»
But what he *did*, was to lay on their backs,—
The readiest way of reasoning with Cossacks.

XCIV.

One's hip he slash'd, and split the other's shoulder,
And drove them with their brutal yells to seek
If there might be chirurgeons who could solder
The wounds they richly merited, and shriek
Their baffled rage and pain; while waxing colder
As he turn'd o'er each pale and gory cheek,
Don Juan raised his little captive from
The heap a moment more had made her tomb.

XCV.

And she was chill as they, and on her face
A slender streak of blood announced how near
Her fate had been to that of all her race;
For the same blow which laid her mother here
Had scarr'd her brow, and left its crimson trace
As the last link with all she had held dear;
But else unhurt, she open'd her large eyes,
And gazed on Juan with a wild surprize.

XCVI.

Just at this instant, while their eyes were fix'd
Upon each other, with dilated glance,
In Juan's look, pain, pleasure, hope, fear, mix'd
With joy to save, and dread of some mischance
Unto his protégée; while hers, transfix'd
With infant terrors, glared as from a trance,
A pure, transparent, pale, yet radiant face,
Like to a lighted alabaster vase;—

XCVII.

Up came John Johnson—(I will not say «*Jack*,»
For that were vulgar, cold, and common-place
On great occasions, such as an attack
On cities, as hath been the present case)—
Up Johnson came, with hundreds at his back,
Exclaiming:—«Juan! Juan! On, boy! brace
Your arm, and I 'll bet Moscow to a dollar,
That you and I will win Saint George's collar.[8]

XCVIII.

«The Seraskier is knock'd upon the head,
But the stone bastion still remains, wherein
The old pacha sits among some hundreds dead,
Smoking his pipe quite calmly 'midst the din
Of our artillery and his own: 't is said
Our kill'd, already piled up to the chin,
Lie round the battery; but still it batters,
And grape in volleys, like a vineyard, scatters.

XCIX.

«Then up with me!»—But Juan answer'd, «Look
Upon this child—I saved her—must not leave
Her life to chance; but point me out some nook
Of safety, where she less may shrink and grieve,
And I am with you.»—Whereon Johnson took
A glance around—and shrugg'd—and twitch'd his sleeve
And black silk neckcloth—and replied, «You 're right;
Poor thing! what 's to be done? I 'm puzzled quite.»

C.

Said Juan—«Whatsoever is to be
Done, I 'll not quit her till she seems secure
Of present life a good deal more than we.»—
Quoth Johnson—«*Neither* will I quite ensure;
But at the least *you* may die gloriously.»—
Juan replied—«At least I will endure
Whate'er is to be borne—but not resign
This child, who is parentless, and therefore mine.»

CI.

Johnson said—«Juan, we 've no time to lose;
The child 's a pretty child—a very pretty—
I never saw such eyes—but hark! now choose
Between your fame and feelings, pride and pity:
Hark! how the roar increases!—no excuse
Will serve when there is plunder in a city;—
I should be loth to march without you, but,
By God! we 'll be too late for the first cut.»

CII.

But Juan was immoveable; until
Johnson, who really loved him in his way,
Pick'd out amongst his followers with some skill
Such as he thought the least given up to prey:
And swearing if the infant came to ill
That they should all be shot on the next day,
But if she were deliver'd safe and sound,
They should at least have fifty roubles round,

CIII.

And all allowances besides of plunder
In fair proportion with their comrades;—then
Juan consented to march on through thunder,
Which thinn'd at every step their ranks of men:
And yet the rest rush'd eagerly—no wonder,
For they were heated by the hope of gain,
A thing which happens every where each day—
No hero trusteth wholly to half-pay.

CIV.

And such is victory, and such is man!
At least nine-tenths of what we call so;—God
May have another name for half we scan
As human beings, or his ways are odd.
But to our subject: a brave Tartar Khan,—
Or «*Sultan*,» as the author (to whose nod
In prose I bend my humble verse) doth call
This chieftain—somehow would not yield at all:

CV.

But, flank'd by *five* brave sons (such is polygamy,
That she spawns warriors by the score, where none
Are prosecuted for that false crime bigamy)
He never would believe the city won
While courage clung but to a single twig.—Am I
Describing Priam's, Peleus', or Jove's son?
Neither,—but a good, plain, old, temperate man,
Who fought with his five children in the van.

CVI.

To *take* him was the point. The truly brave,
When they behold the brave oppress'd with odds,
Are touch'd with a desire to shield and save;—
A mixture of wild beasts and demi-gods
Are they—now furious as the sweeping wave,
Now moved with pity: even as sometimes nods
The rugged tree unto the summer wind,
Compassion breathes along the savage mind.

CVII.

But he would *not* be *taken*, and replied
To all the propositions of surrender
By mowing Christians down on every side,
As obstinate as Swedish Charles at Bender.
His five brave boys no less the foe defied;
Whereon the Russian pathos grew less tender,
As being a virtue, like terrestrial patience,
Apt to wear out on trifling provocations.

CVIII.

And spite of Johnson and of Juan, who
Expended all their eastern phraseology
In begging him, for God's sake, just to show
So much less fight as might form an apology
For *them* in saving such a desperate foe—
He hew'd away, like doctors of theology
When they dispute with sceptics; and with curses
Struck at his friends, as babies beat their nurses.

CIX.

Nay, he had wounded, though but slightly, both
Juan and Johnson, whereupon they fell—
The first with sighs, the second with an oath—
Upon his angry sultanship, pell-mell,
And all around were grown exceeding wroth
At such a pertinacious infidel,
And pour'd upon him and his sons like rain,
Which they resisted like a sandy plain

CX.

That drinks and still is dry. At last they perish'd:—
His second son was levell'd by a shot;
His third was sabred; and the fourth, most cherish'd
Of all the five, on bayonets met his lot;
The fifth, who, by a Christian mother nourish'd
Had been neglected, ill-used, and what not,
Because deform'd, yet died all game and bottom,
To save a sire who blush'd that he begot him.

CXI.

The eldest was a true and tameless Tartar,
As great a scorner of the Nazarene
As ever Mahomet pick'd out for a martyr,
Who only saw the black-eyed girls in green,
Who make the beds of those who won't take quarter
On earth, in Paradise; and, when once seen,
Those Houris, like all other pretty creatures,
Do just whate'er they please, by dint of features.

CXII.

And what they pleased to do with the young Khan
In heaven, I know not, nor pretend to guess;
But doubtless they prefer a fine young man
To tough old heroes, and can do no less;
And that 's the cause, no doubt, why, if we scan
A field of battle's ghastly wilderness,
For one rough, weather-beaten, veteran body,
You 'll find ten thousand handsome coxcombs bloody.

CXIII.

Your Houris also have a natural pleasure
In lopping of your lately married men
Before the bridal hours have danced their measure,
And the sad, second moon grows dim again,
Or dull Repentance hath had dreary leisure
To wish him back a bachelor now and then.
And thus your Houri (it may be) disputes
Of these brief blossoms the immediate fruits.

CXIV.

Thus the young Khan, with Houris in his sight,
Thought not upon the charms of four young brides,
But bravely rush'd on his first heavenly night.
In short, howe'er *our* better faith derides,
These black-eyed virgins make the Moslems fight,
As though there were one heaven and none besides,—
Whereas, if all be true we hear of heaven
And hell, there must at least be six or seven.

CXV.

So fully flash'd the phantom on his eyes,
That when the very lance was in his heart,
He shouted, « Allah!» and saw Paradise
With all its veil of mystery drawn apart,
And bright eternity without disguise
On his soul, like a ceaseless sunrise, dart,—
With prophets, houris, angels, saints, descried
In one voluptuous blaze,—and then he died:

CXVI.

But, with a heavenly rapture on his face,
The good old Khan—who long had ceased to see
Houris, or aught except his florid race,
Who grew like cedars round him gloriously—
When he beheld his latest hero grace
The earth, which he became like a fell'd tree,
Paused for a moment from the fight, and cast
A glance on that slain son, his first and last.

CXVII.

The soldiers, who beheld him drop his point,
Stopp'd as if once more willing to concede
Quarter, in case he bade them not « aroint!»
As he before had done. He did not heed
Their pause nor signs: his heart was out of joint,
And shook (till now unshaken) like a reed,
As he look'd down upon his children gone,
And felt—though done with life—he was alone.

CXVIII.

But 't was a transient tremor:—with a spring
Upon the Russian steel his breast he flung,
As carelessly as hurls the moth her wing
Against the light wherein she dies: he clung
Closer, that all the deadlier they might wring,
Unto the bayonets which had pierced his young;
And, throwing back a dim look on his sons,
In one wide wound pour'd forth his soul at once.

CXIX.

'T is strange enough—the rough, tough soldiers, who
Spared neither sex nor age in their career
Of carnage, when this old man was pierced through,
And lay before them with his children near,
Touch'd by the heroism of him they slew,
Were melted for a moment; though no tear
Flow'd from their blood-shot eyes, all red with strife,
They honour'd such determined scorn of life.

CXX.

But the stone bastion still kept up its fire,
Where the chief Pacha calmly held his post:
Some twenty times he made the Russ retire,
And baffled the assaults of all their host;
At length he condescended to inquire
If yet the city's rest were won or lost;
And being told the latter, sent a Bey
To answer Ribas' summons to give way.

CXXI.

In the mean time, cross-legg'd, with great sang-froid,
Among the scorching ruins he sat smoking
Tobacco on a little carpet;—Troy
Saw nothing like the scene around;—yet, looking
With martial stoicism, nought seem'd to annoy
His stern philosophy: but gently stroking
His beard, he puff'd his pipe's ambrosial gales,
As if he had three lives as well as tails.

CXXII.

The town was taken—whether he might yield
Himself or bastion, little matter'd now;
His stubborn valour was no future shield.
Ismail 's no more! The crescent's silver bow
Sunk, and the crimson cross glared o'er the field,
But red with no *redeeming* gore: the glow
Of burning streets, like moonlight on the water,
Was imaged back in blood, the sea of slaughter.

CXXIII.

All that the mind would shrink from of excesses;
All that the body perpetrates of bad;
All that we read, hear, dream, of man's distresses;
All that the devil would do if run stark mad;
All that defies the worst which pen expresses;
All by which hell is peopled, or as sad
As hell—mere mortals who their power abuse,—
Was here (as heretofore and since) let loose.

CXXIV.

If here and there some transient trait of pity
Was shown, and some more noble heart broke through
Its bloody bond, and saved perhaps some pretty
Child, or an aged, helpless man or two—
What 's this in one annihilated city,
Where thousand loves, and ties, and duties grow?
Cockneys of London! Muscadins of Paris!
Just ponder what a pious pastime war is.

CXXV.

Think how the joys of reading a gazette
Are purchased by all agonies and crimes:
Or, if these do not move you, don't forget
Such doom may be your own in after times.
Meantime the taxes, Castlereagh, and debt,
Are hints as good as sermons, or as rhymes.
Read your own hearts and Ireland's present story,
Then feed her famine fat with Wellesley's glory.

CXXVI.

But still there is unto a patriot nation,
Which loves so well its country and its king,
A subject of sublimest exultation—
Bear it, ye Muses, on your brightest wing!
Howe'er the mighty locust, Desolation,
Strip your green fields, and to your harvests cling,
Gaunt Famine never shall approach the throne—
Though Ireland starve, great George weighs twenty stone.

CXXVII.

But let me put an end unto my theme:
There was an end of Ismail—hapless town!
Far flash'd her burning towers o'er Danube's stream,
And redly ran his blushing waters down.
The horrid war-whoop and the shriller scream
Rose still; but fainter were the thunders grown:
Of forty thousand who had mann'd the wall,
Some hundreds breathed—the rest were silent all!

CXXVIII.

In one thing ne'ertheless 't is fit to praise
The Russian army upon this occasion,
A virtue much in fashion now-a-days,
And therefore worthy of commemoration:
The topic 's tender, so shall be my phrase—
Perhaps the season's chill, and their long station
In winter's depth, or want of rest and victual,
Had made them chaste:—they ravish'd very little.

CXXIX.

Much did they slay, more plunder, and no less
Might here and there occur some violation
In the other line;—but not to such excess
As when the French, that dissipated nation,
Take towns by storm: no causes can I guess,
Except cold weather and commiseration;
But all the ladies, save some twenty score,
Were almost as much virgins as before.

CXXX.

Some odd mistakes too happen'd in the dark,
Which show'd a want of lanthorns, or of taste—
Indeed the smoke was such they scarce could mark
Their friends from foes,—besides such things from haste
Occur, though rarely, when there is a spark
Of light to save the venerably chaste:—
But six old damsels, each of seventy years,
Were all deflower'd by different grenadiers.

CXXXI.

But on the whole their continence was great;
So that some disappointment there ensued
To those who had felt the inconvenient state
Of «single blessedness,» and thought it good
(Since it was not their fault, but only fate,
To bear these crosses) for each waning prude
To make a Roman sort of Sabine wedding,
Without the expense and the suspense of bedding.

CXXXII.

Some voices of the buxom middle-aged
Were also heard to wonder in the din
(Widows of forty were these birds long caged)
«Wherefore the ravishing did not begin!»
But, while the thirst for gore and plunder raged,
There was small leisure for superfluous sin;
But whether they escaped or no, lies hid
In darkness—I can only hope they did.

CXXXIII.

Suwarrow now was conqueror—a match
For Timour or for Zinghis in his trade.
While mosques and streets, beneath his eyes, like thatch
Blazed, and the cannon's roar was scarce allay'd,
With bloody hands he wrote his first dispatch;
And here exactly follows what he said:—
«Glory to *God* and to the Empress!» (*Powers Eternal! such names mingled!*) «Ismail 's ours!»[9]

CXXXIV.

Methinks these are the most tremendous words,
Since «Menè, Menè, Tekel,» and «Upharsin,»
Which hands or pens have ever traced of swords.
Heaven help me! I 'm but little of a parson:
What Daniel read was short-hand of the Lord's,
Severe, sublime; the prophet wrote no farce on
The fate of nations;—but this Russ, so witty,
Could rhyme, like Nero, o'er a burning city.

CXXXV.

He wrote this polar melody, and set it,
Duly accompanied by shrieks and groans,
Which few will sing, I trust, but none forget it—
For I will teach, if possible, the stones
To rise against earth's tyrants. Never let it
Be said, that we still truckle unto thrones;—
But ye—our children's children! think how we
Show'd *what things were* before the world was free!

CXXXVI.

That hour is not for us, but 't is for you;
And as, in the great joy of your millennium,
You hardly will believe such things were true
As now occur, I thought that I would pen you 'em;
But may their very memory perish too!—
Yet, if perchance remember'd, still disdain you 'em,
More than you scorn the savages of yore,
Who *painted* their *bare* limbs, but *not* with gore.

CXXXVII.

And when you hear historians talk of thrones,
And those that sate upon them, let it be
As we now gaze upon the Mammoth's bones,
And wonder what old world such things could see;
Or hieroglyphics on Egyptian stones,
The pleasant riddles of futurity—
Guessing at what shall happily be hid
As the real purpose of a pyramid.

CXXXVIII.

Reader! I have kept my word,—at least so far
As the first canto promised. You have now
Had sketches of love, tempest, travel, war—
All very accurate, you must allow,
And *Epic*, if plain truth should prove no bar;
For I have drawn much less with a long bow
Than my fore-runners. Carelessly I sing,
But Phœbus lends me now and then a string,

CXXXIX.

With which I still can harp, and carp, and fiddle.
What further hath befallen or may befal
The hero of this grand poetic riddle,
I by and bye may tell you, if at all:
But now I choose to break off in the middle,
Worn out with battering Ismail's stubborn wall,
While Juan is sent off with the dispatch,
For which all Petersburgh is on the watch.

CXL.

This special honour was conferr'd, because
He had behaved with courage and humanity;—
Which *last* men like, when they have time to pause
From their ferocities produced by vanity.
His little captive gain'd him some applause,
For saving her amidst the wild insanity
Of carnage, and I think he was more glad in her
Safety, than his new order of St Vladimir.

CXLI.

The Moslem orphan went with her protector,
For she was homeless, houseless, helpless: all
Her friends, like the sad family of Hector,
Had perish'd in the field or by the wall:
Her very place of birth was but a spectre
Of what it had been; there the Muezzin's call
To prayer was heard no more!—and Juan wept,
And made a vow to shield her, which he kept.

CANTO IX.

I.

Oh, Wellington! (or « Vilainton »—for fame
Sounds the heroic syllables both ways;
France could not even conquer your great name,
But punn'd it down to this facetious phrase—
Beating or beaten she will laugh the same)—
You have obtain'd great pensions and much praise;
Glory like yours should any dare gainsay,
Humanity would rise, and thunder « Nay! »

II.

I don't think that you used K—n—rd quite well
In Marinet's affair—in fact 't was shabby,
And, like some other things, won't do to tell
Upon your tomb in Westminster's old abbey.
Upon the rest 't is not worth while to dwell,
Such tales being for the tea hours of some tabby;
But though your years as *man* tend fast to *zero*,
In fact your grace is still but a *young hero*.

III.

Though Britain owes (and pays you too) so much,
Yet Europe doubtless owes you greatly more:
You have repair'd legitimacy's crutch—
A prop not quite so certain as before:
The Spanish, and the French, as well as Dutch,
Have seen, and felt, how strongly you *restore;*
And Waterloo has made the world your debtor—
(I wish your bards would sing it rather better).

IV.

You are « the best of cut-throats: »—do not start;
The phrase is Shakspeare's, and not misapplied:
War 's a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art,
Unless her cause by right be sanctified.
If you have acted *once* a generous part,
The world, not the world's masters, will decide,
And I shall be delighted to learn who,
Save you and yours, have gain'd by Waterloo?

V.

I am no flatterer—you 've supp'd full of flattery:
They say you like it too—'t is no great wonder:
He whose whole life has been assault and battery,
At last may get a little tired of thunder;
And, swallowing eulogy much more than satire, he
May like being praised for every lucky blunder:
Call'd « Saviour of the Nations »—not yet saved,
And « Europe's Liberator »—still enslaved.

VI.

I 've done. Now go and dine from off the plate
Presented by the Prince of the Brazils,
And send the sentinel before your gate[2]
A slice or two from your luxurious meals:
He fought, but has not fed so well of late.
Some hunger too they say the people feels:
There is no doubt that you deserve your ration—
But pray give back a little to the nation.

VII.

I don't mean to reflect—a man so great as
You, my Lord Duke! is far above reflection.
The high Roman fashion too of Cincinnatus,
With modern history has but small connexion:
Though as an Irishman you love potatoes,
You need not take them under your direction;
And half a million for your Sabine farm
Is rather dear!—I 'm sure I mean no harm.

VIII.

Great men have always scorn'd great recompenses;
Epaminondas saved his Thebes, and died,
Not leaving even his funeral expenses:
George Washington had thanks and nought beside,
Except the all-cloudless glory (which few men's is)
To free his country: Pitt too had his pride,
And as a high-soul'd minister of state, is
Renown'd for ruining Great Britain, gratis.

IX.

Never had mortal man such opportunity,
Except Napoleon, or abused it more:
You might have freed fall'n Europe from the unity
Of tyrants, and been bless'd from shore to shore;
And *now*—what *is* your fame? Shall the muse tune it ye?
Now—that the rabble's first vain shouts are o'er?
Go, hear it in your famish'd country's cries!
Behold the world! and curse your victories!

X.

As these new cantos touch on warlike feats,
To *you* the unflattering muse deigns to inscribe
Truths that you will not read in the gazettes,
But which, 't is time to teach the hireling tribe
Who fatten on their country's gore and debts,
Must be recited, and—without a bribe.
You *did great* things; but, not being *great* in mind,
Have left *undone* the *greatest*—and mankind.

XI.

Death laughs—Go ponder o'er the skeleton
With which men image out the unknown thing
That hides the past world, like to a set sun
Which still elsewhere may rouse a brighter spring:
Death laughs at all you weep for;—look upon
This hourly dread of all whose *threaten'd sting*
Turns life to terror, even though in its sheath!
Mark! how its lipless mouth grins without breath!

XII.

Mark! how it laughs and scorns at all you are!
And yet *was* what you are: from *ear* to *ear*
It *laughs not*—there is now no fleshy bar
So call'd; the antic long hath ceased to *hear*,
But still he *smiles;* and whether near or far
He strips from man that mantle—(far more dear
Than even the tailor's)—his incarnate skin,
White, black, or copper—the dead bones will grin.

XIII.

And thus Deaths laughs,—it is sad merriment,
But still it *is* so; and with such example
Why should not Life be equally content,
With his superior, in a smile to trample
Upon the nothings which are daily spent
Like bubbles on an ocean much less ample
Than the eternal deluge, which devours
Suns as rays—worlds like atoms—years like hours?

XIV.

«To be, or not to be! that is the question,»
Says Shakspeare, who just now is much in fashion.
I am neither Alexander nor Hephæstion,
Nor ever had for *abstract* fame much passion;
But would much rather have a sound digestion,
Than Buonaparte's cancer:—could I dash on
Through fifty victories to shame or fame,
Without a stomach—what were a good name?

XV.

«Oh, dura ilia messorum!»—«Oh,
Ye rigid guts of reapers!»—I translate
For the great benefit of those who know
What indigestion is—that inward fate
Which makes all Styx through one small liver flow.
A peasant's sweat is worth his lord's estate:
Let *this* one toil for bread—*that* rack for rent,—
He who sleeps best may be the most content.

XVI.

«To be, or not to be!»—Ere I decide,
I should be glad to know that which *is being.*
'T is true we speculate both far and wide,
And deem, because we *see*, we are *all-seeing:*
For my part, I 'll enlist on neither side,
Until I see both sides for once agreeing.
For me, I sometimes think that life is death,
Rather than life a mere affair of breath.

XVII.

«Que sais-je?» was the motto of Montaigne,
As also of the first academicians:
That all is dubious which man may attain,
Was one of their most favourite positions.
There 's no such thing as certainty, that 's plain
As any of mortality's conditions:
So little do we know what we 're about in
This world, I doubt if doubt itself be doubting.

XVIII.

It is a pleasant voyage perhaps to float,
Like Pyrrho, on a sea of speculation;
But what if carrying sail capsize the boat?
Your wise men don't know much of navigation;
And swimming long in the abyss of thought
Is apt to tire: a calm and shallow station
Well nigh the shore, where one stoops down and gathers
Some pretty shell, is best for moderate bathers.

XIX.

«But heaven,» as Cassio says, «is above all,—
No more of this then,—let us pray!» We have
Souls to save, since Eve's slip and Adam's fall,
Which tumbled all mankind into the grave,
Besides fish, beasts, and birds. «The sparrow's fall
«Is special providence,» though how it gave
Offence, we know not; probably it perch'd
Upon the tree which Eve so fondly search'd.

XX.

Oh, ye immortal gods! what is theogony?
Oh, thou too mortal man! what is philanthropy?
Oh, world, which was and is! what is cosmogony?
Some people have accused me of misanthropy;
And yet I know no more than the mahogany
That forms this desk, of what they mean:—*Lykanthropy*
I comprehend; for, without transformation,
Men become wolves on any slight occasion.

XXI.

But I, the mildest, meekest of mankind,
Like Moses, or Melancthon, who have ne'er
Done any thing exceedingly unkind,—
And (though I could not now and then forbear
Following the bent of body or of mind)
Have always had a tendency to spare,—
Why do they call me misanthrope? Because
They hate me, not I them:—And here we 'll pause.

XXII.

'T is time we should proceed with our good poem,
For I maintain that it is really good,
Not only in the body, but the proem,
However little both are understood
Just now,—but by and bye the truth will show 'em
Herself in her sublimest attitude:
And till she doth, I fain must be content
To share her beauty and her banishment.

XXIII.

Our hero (and, I trust, kind reader! yours)—
Was left upon his way to the chief city
Of the immortal Peter's polish'd boors,
Who still have shown themselves more brave than witty.
I know its mighty empire now allures
Much flattery—even Voltaire's, and that 's a pity.
For me, I deem an absolute autocrat
Not a barbarian, but much worse than that.

XXIV.

And I will war, at least in words (and—should
My chance so happen—deeds) with all who war
With thought;—and of thought's foes by far most rude,
Tyrants and sycophants have been and are.
I know not who may conquer: if I could
Have such a prescience, it should be no bar
To this my plain, sworn, downright detestation
Of every despotism in every nation.

XXV.

It is not that I adulate the people:
Without *me*, there are demagogues enough,
And infidels, to pull down every steeple,
And set up in their stead some proper stuff.
Whether they may sow scepticism to reap hell,
As is the Christian dogma rather rough,
I do not know;—I wish men to be free
As much from mobs as kings—from you as me.

XXVI.

The consequence is, being of no party,
I shall offend all parties:—never mind!
My words, at least, are more sincere and hearty
Than if I sought to sail before the wind.
He who has nought to gain can have small art:
He who neither wishes to be bound nor bind
May still expatiate freely, as will I,
Nor give my voice to slavery's jackal cry.

XXVII.

That 's an appropriate simile, *that jackal;*
I 've heard them in the Ephesian ruins howl
By night, as do that mercenary pack all,
Power's base purveyors, who for pickings prowl,
And scent the prey their masters would attack all.
However, the poor jackals are less foul
(As being the brave lions' keen providers)
Than human insects, catering for spiders.

XXVIII.

Raise but an arm! 't will brush their web away,
And without *that*, their poison and their claws
Are useless. Mind, good people! what I say—
Or rather peoples,—*go on* without pause!
The web of these tarantulas each day
Increases, till you shall make common cause:
None, save the Spanish fly and Attic bee,
As yet are strongly stinging to be free.

XXIX.

Don Juan, who had shone in the late slaughter,
Was left upon his way with the dispatch,
Where blood was talk'd of as we would of water;
And carcasses that lay as thick as thatch
O'er silenced cities, merely served to flatter
Fair Catherine's pastime—who look'd on the match
Between these nations as a main of cocks,
Wherein she liked her own to stand like rocks.

XXX.

And there in a *kibitka* he roll'd on
(A cursed sort of carriage without springs,
Which on rough roads leaves scarcely a whole bone),
Pondering on glory, chivalry, and kings,
And orders, and on all that he had done—
And wishing that post-horses had the wings
Of Pegasus, or at the least post-chaises
Had feathers, when a traveller on deep ways is.

XXXI.

At every jolt—and they were many—still
He turn'd his eyes upon his little charge,
As if he wish'd that she should fare less ill
Than he, in these sad highways left at large
To ruts, and flints, and lovely nature's skill,
Who is no paviour, nor admits a barge
On *her* canals, where God takes sea and land,
Fishery and farm, both into his own hand.

XXXII.

At least he pays no rent, and has best right
To be the first of what we used to call
« Gentlemen farmers»—a race worn out quite,
Since lately there have been no rents at all,
And « gentlemen» are in a piteous plight,
And « farmers» can't raise Ceres from her fall:
She fell with Buonaparte:—What strange thoughts
Arise, when we see emperors fall with oats!

XXXIII.

But Juan turn'd his eyes on the sweet child
Whom he had saved from slaughter—what a trophy!
Oh! ye who build up monuments, defiled
With gore, like Nadir Shah, that costive Sophy,
Who, after leaving Hindostan a wild,
And scarce to the Mogul a cup of coffee
To soothe his woes withal, was slain, the sinner!
Because he could no more digest his dinner:—[3]

XXXIV.

Oh ye! or we! or she! or he! reflect,
That *one* life saved, especially if young
Or pretty, is a thing to recollect
Far sweeter than the greenest laurels sprung
From the manure of human clay, though deck'd
With all the praises ever said or sung:
Though hymn'd by every harp, unless within
Your heart joins chorus, fame is but a din.

XXXV.

Oh, ye great authors luminous, voluminous!
Ye twice ten hundred thousand daily scribes!
Whose pamphlets, volumes, newspapers illumine us!
Whether you 're paid by government in bribes,
To prove the public debt is not consuming us—
Or, roughly treading on the « courtier's kibes»
With clownish heel, your popular circulation
Feeds you by printing half the realm's starvation:—

XXXVI.

Oh, ye great authors!—« A propos des bottes»—
I have forgotten what I meant to say,
As sometimes have been greater sages' lots:—
'T was something calculated to allay
All wrath in barracks, palaces, or cots:
Certes it would have been but thrown away,
And that 's one comfort for my lost advice,
Although no doubt it was beyond all price.

XXXVII.

But let it go:—it will one day be found
With other relics of « a former world,»
When this world shall be *former*, underground,
Thrown topsy-turvy, twisted, crisp'd, and curl'd,
Baked, fried, or burnt, turn'd inside-out, or drown'd,
Like all the worlds before, which have been hurl'd
First out of and then back again to chaos,
The superstratum which will overlay us.

XXXVIII.

So Cuvier says;—and then shall come again
Unto the new creation, rising out
From our old crash, some mystic, ancient strain
Of things destroy'd and left in airy doubt:
Like to the notions we now entertain
Of Titans, giants, fellows of about
Some hundred feet in height, *not* to say *miles*,
And mammoths, and your winged crocodiles.

XXXIX.

Think if then George the Fourth should be dug up?
How the new worldlings of the then new east
Will wonder where such animals could sup!
(For they themselves will be but of the least:
Even worlds miscarry, when too oft they pup,
And every new creation hath decreased
In size, from over-working the material—
Men are but maggots of some huge earth's burial.)

XL.

How will—to these young people, just thrust out
From some fresh paradise, and set to plough,
And dig, and sweat, and turn themselves about,
And plant, and reap, and spin, and grind, and sow,
Till all the arts at length are brought about,
Especially of war and taxing,—how,
I say, will these great relics, when they see 'em,
Look like the monsters of a new museum!

XLI.

But I am apt to grow too metaphysical:
«The time is out of joint,»—and so am I;
I quite forget this poem's merely quizzical,
And deviate into matters rather dry.
I ne'er decide what I shall say, and this I call
Much too poetical: men should know why
They write, and for what end; but, note or text,
I never know the word which will come next.

XLII.

So on I ramble, now and then narrating,
Now pondering:—it is time we should narrate:
I left Don Juan with his horses baiting—
Now we'll get o'er the ground at a great rate.
I shall not be particular in stating
His journey, we've so many tours of late:
Suppose him then at Petersburgh; suppose
That pleasant capital of painted snows;

XLIII.

Suppose him in a handsome uniform;
A scarlet coat, black facings, a long plume,
Waving, like sails new shiver'd in a storm,
Over a cock'd hat, in a crowded room,
And brilliant breeches, bright as a Cairn Gorme,
Of yellow kerseymere we may presume,
White stockings drawn, uncurdled as new milk,
O'er limbs whose symmetry set off the silk:

XLIV.

Suppose him sword by side, and hat in hand,
Made up by youth, fame, and an army-tailor—
That great enchanter, at whose rod's command
Beauty springs forth, and nature's self turns paler,
Seeing how art can make her work more grand,
(When she don't pin men's limbs in like a jailor)—
Behold him placed as if upon a pillar! He
Seems Love turn'd a lieutenant of artillery!

XLV.

His bandage slipp'd down into a cravat;
His wings subdued to epaulettes; his quiver
Shrunk to a scabbard, with his arrows at
His side as a small sword, but sharp as ever;
His bow converted into a cock'd hat;
But still so like, that Psyche were more clever
Than some wives (who make blunders no less stupid)
If she had not mistaken him for Cupid.

XLVI.

The courtiers stared, the ladies whisper'd, and
The empress smiled; the reigning favourite frown'd—
I quite forget which of them was in hand
Just then, as they are rather numerous found,
Who took by turns that difficult command
Since first her majesty was singly crown'd:
But they were mostly nervous six-foot fellows,
All fit to make a Patagonian jealous.

XLVII.

Juan was none of these, but slight and slim,
Blushing and beardless; and yet nevertheless
There was a something in his turn of limb,
And still more in his eye, which seem'd to express,
That though he look'd one of the seraphim,
There lurk'd a man beneath the spirit's dress.
Besides, the empress sometimes liked a boy,
And had just buried the fair-faced Lanskoi. [4]

XLVIII.

No wonder then that Yermoloff, or Momonoff,
Or Scherbatoff, or any other *off*
Or *on*, might dread her majesty had not room enough
Within her bosom (which was not too tough)
For a new flame; a thought to cast of gloom enough
Along the aspect, whether smooth or rough,
Of him who, in the language of his station,
Then held that «high official situation.»

XLIX.

Oh, gentle ladies! should you seek to know
The import of this diplomatic phrase,
Bid Ireland's Londonderry's Marquess [5] show
His parts of speech; and, in the strange displays
Of that odd string of words, all in a row,
Which none divine, and every one obeys,
Perhaps you may pick out some queer *no*-meaning,
Of that weak wordy harvest the sole gleaning.

L.

I think I can explain myself without
That sad inexplicable beast of prey—
That sphinx, whose words would ever be a doubt,
Did not his deeds unriddle them each day—
That monstrous hieroglyphic—that long spout
Of blood and water, leaden Castlereagh!
And here I must an anecdote relate,
But luckily of no great length or weight.

LI.

An English lady ask'd of an Italian,
What were the actual and official duties
Of the strange thing, some women set a value on,
Which hovers oft about some married beauties,
Called «Cavalier Servente?»—a Pygmalion
Whose statues warm (I fear, alas! too true 'tis)
Beneath his art. The dame, press'd to disclose them,
Said—«Lady, I beseech you to *suppose them*.»

LII.

And thus I supplicate your supposition,
And mildest, matron-like interpretation
Of the imperial favourite's condition.
'T was a high place, the highest in the nation
In fact, if not in rank; and the suspicion
Of any one's attaining to his station,
No doubt gave pain, where each new pair of shoulders,
If rather broad, made stocks rise and their holders.

LIII.

Juan, I said, was a most beauteous boy,
And had retain'd his boyish look beyond
The usual hirsute seasons which destroy,
With beards and whiskers and the like, the fond
Parisian aspect which upset old Troy
And founded Doctors' Commons:—I have conn'd
The history of divorces, which, though chequer'd,
Calls Ilion's the first damages on record.

LIV.

And Catherine, who loved all things (save her lord,
Who was gone to his place), and pass'd for much,
Admiring those (by dainty dames abhorr'd)
Gigantic gentlemen, yet had a touch
Of sentiment; and he she most adored
Was the lamented Lanskoi, who was such
A lover as had cost her many a tear,
And yet but made a middling grenadier.

LV.

Oh, thou «teterrima causa» of all «belli!»—
Thou gate of life and death!—thou nondescript!
Whence is our exit and our entrance,—well I
May pause in pondering how all souls are dipp'd
In thy perennial fountain:—how man *fell*, I
Know not, since knowledge saw her branches stripp'd
Of her first fruit; but how he falls and rises
Since, Thou hast settled beyond all surmises.

LVI.

Some call thee «the worse cause of war,» but I
Maintain thou art the *best:* for, after all,
From thee we come, to thee we go; and why,
To get at thee, not batter down a wall,
Or waste a world? Since no one can deny
Thou dost replenish worlds both great and small:
With, or without thee, all things at a stand
Are, or would be, thou sea of life's dry land!

LVII.

Catherine, who was the grand epitome
Of that great cause of war, or peace, or what
You please (it causes all the things which be,
So you may take your choice of this or that,—
Catherine, I say, was very glad to see
The handsome herald, on whose plumage sat
Victory; and, pausing as she saw him kneel
With his dispatch, forgot to break the seal.

LVIII.

Then recollecting the whole empress, nor
Forgetting quite the woman (which composed
At least three parts of this great whole), she tore
The letter open with an air which posed
The court, that watch'd each look her visage wore,
Until a royal smile at length disclosed
Fair weather for the day. Though rather spacious,
Her face was noble, her eyes fine, mouth gracious.

LIX.

Great joy was hers, or rather joys; the first
Was a ta'en city, thirty thousand slain.
Glory and triumph o'er her aspect burst,
As an East-Indian sunrise on the main.
These quench'd a moment her ambition's thirst—
So Arab deserts drink in summer's rain:
In vain!—As fall the dews on quenchless sands,
Blood only serves to wash ambition's hands!

LX.

Her next amusement was more fanciful;
She smiled at mad Suwarrow's rhymes, who threw
Into a Russian couplet, rather dull,
The whole gazette of thousands whom he slew.
Her third was feminine enough to annul
The shudder which runs naturally through
Our veins, when things called sovereigns think it best
To kill, and generals turn it into jest.

LXI.

The two first feelings ran their course complete,
And lighted first her eye and then her mouth:
The whole court look'd immediately most sweet,
Like flowers well water'd after a long drouth:—
But when on the lieutenant, at her feet,
Her majesty—who liked to gaze on youth
Almost as much as on a new dispatch—
Glanced mildly, all the world was on the watch.

LXII.

Though somewhat large, exuberant, and truculent,
When *wroth;* while *pleased*, she was as fine a figure
As those who like things rosy, ripe, and succulent,
Would wish to look on, while they are in vigour.
She could repay each amatory look you lent
With interest, and in turn was wont with rigour
To exact of Cupid's bills the full amount
At sight, nor would permit you to discount.

LXIII.

With her the latter, though at times convenient,
Was not so necessary: for they tell
That she was handsome, and, though fierce, *look'd* lenient,
And always used her favourites too well.
If once beyond her boudoir's precincts in ye went,
Your «fortune» was in a fair way «to swell
A man,» as Giles says;[6] for, though she would widow all
Nations, she liked man as an individual.

LXIV.

What a strange thing is man! and what a stranger
Is woman! What a whirlwind is her head,
And what a whirlpool full of depth and danger
Is all the rest about her! Whether wed,
Or widow, maid or mother, she can change her
Mind like the wind; whatever she has said
Or done, is right to what she'll say or do;—
The oldest thing on record, and yet new!

LXV.

Oh, Catherine! (for of all interjections
To thee both *oh!* and *ah!* belong of right
In love and war, how odd are the connexions
Of human thoughts, which jostle in their flight!
Just now *yours* were cut out in different sections:
First, Ismail's capture caught your fancy quite;
Next, of new knights, the fresh and glorious batch;
And, *thirdly*, he who brought you the dispatch!

LXVI.

Shakspeare talks of «the herald Mercury
New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;»
And some such visions cross'd her majesty,
While her young herald knelt before her still.
'T is very true the hill seem'd rather high
For a lieutenant to climb up; but skill
Smooth'd even the Simplon's steep, and, by God's blessing,
With youth and health all kisses are «heaven-kissing.»

LXVII.

Her majesty look'd down, the youth look'd up—
And so they fell in love;—she with his face,
His grace, his God-knows-what: for Cupid's cup
With the first draught intoxicates apace,
A quintessential laudanum or «black drop,»
Which makes one drunk at once, without the base
Expedient of full bumpers; for the eye
In love drinks all life's fountains (save tears) dry.

LXVIII.

He, on the other hand, if not in love,
Fell into that no less imperious passion,
Self-love—which, when some sort of thing above
Ourselves, a singer, dancer, much in fashion,
Or duchess, princess, empress, «deigns to prove»
'T is Pope's phrase) a great longing, though a rash one,
For one especial person out of many,
Makes us believe ourselves as good as any.

LXIX.

Besides, he was of that delighted age
Which makes all female ages equal—when
We dont much care with whom we may engage,
As bold as Daniel in the lion's den,
So that we can our native sun assuage
In the next ocean, which may flow just then,
To make a twilight in—just as Sol's heat is
Quench'd in the lap of the salt sea, or Thetis.

LXX.

And Catherine (we must say thus much for Catherine)
Though bold and bloody, was the kind of thing
Whose temporary passion was quite flattering,
Because each lover look'd a sort of king,
Made up upon an amatory pattern—
A royal husband in all save the *ring*—
Which, being the damn'dest part of matrimony,
Seem'd taking out the sting to leave the honey.

LXXI.

And when you add to this, her womanhood
In its meridian, her blue eyes, or grey—
(The last, if they have soul, are quite as good,
Or better, as the best examples say:
Napoleon's, Mary's (Queen of Scotland) should
Lend to that colour a transcendant ray;
And Pallas also sanctions the same hue—
Too wise to look through optics black or blue)—

LXXII.

Her sweet smile, and her then majestic figure,
Her plumpness, her imperial condescension,
Her preference of a boy to men much bigger
(Fellows whom Messalina's self would pension),
Her prime of life, just now in juicy vigour,
With other *extras*, which we need not mention,—
All these, or any one of these, explain
Enough to make a stripling very vain.

LXXIII.

And that 's enough, for love is vanity,
Selfish in its beginning as its end,
Except where 't is a mere insanity,
A maddening spirit which would strive to blend
Itself with beauty's frail inanity,
On which the passion's self seems to depend:
And hence some heathenish philosophers
Make love the main-spring of the universe.

LXXIV.

Besides Platonic love, besides the love
Of God, the love of sentiment, the loving
Of faithful pairs—(I needs must rhyme with dove,
That good old steam-boat which keeps verses moving
'Gainst reason—reason ne'er was hand-and-glove
With rhyme, but always lean'd less to improving
The sound than sense)—besides all these pretences
To love, there are those things which words name senses;

LXXV.

Those movements, those improvements in our bodies,
Which make all bodies anxious to get out
Of their own sand-pits to mix with a goddess—
For such all women are at first, no doubt.
How beautiful that moment! and how odd is
That fever which precedes the languid rout
Of our sensations! What a curious way
The whole thing is of clothing souls in clay!

LXXVI.

The noblest kind of love is love Platonical,
To end or to begin with; the next grand
Is that which may be christen'd love canonical,
Because the clergy take the thing in hand;
The third sort, to be noted in our chronicle,
As flourishing in every Christian land,
Is, when chaste matrons to their other ties
Add what may be call'd *marriage in disguise*.

LXXVII.

Well, we won't analyze—our story must
Tell for itself: the sovereign was smitten,
Juan much flatter'd by her love, or lust;—
I cannot stop to alter words once written,
And the two are so mix'd with human dust,
That he who *names one*, both perchance may hit on:
But in such matters Russia's mighty empress
Behaved no better than a common sempstress.

LXXVIII.

The whole court melted into one wide whisper,
And all lips were applied unto all ears!
The elder ladies' wrinkles curl'd much crisper
As they beheld; the younger cast some leers
On one another, and each lovely lisper
Smiled as she talk'd the matter o'er; but tears
Of rivalship rose in each clouded eye
Of all the standing army who stood by.

LXXIX.

All the ambassadors of all the powers
Inquired, Who was this very new young man,
Who promised to be great in some few hours?
Which is full soon (though life is but a span).
Already they beheld the silver showers
Of rubles rain, as fast as specie can,
Upon his cabinet, besides the presents
Of several ribbons and some thousand peasants.

LXXX.

Catherine was generous,—all such ladies are;
Love, that great opener of the heart and all
The ways that lead there, be they near or far,
Above, below, by turnpikes great or small,—
Love—(though she had a cursed taste for war,
And was not the best wife, unless we call
Such Clytemnestra; though perhaps 't is better
That one should die, than two drag on the fetter)—

LXXXI.

Love had made Catherine make each lover's fortune,
Unlike our own half-chaste Elizabeth,
Whose avarice all disbursements did importune,
If history, the grand liar, ever saith
The truth; and though grief her old age might shorten,
Because she put a favourite to death,
Her vile, ambiguous method of flirtation,
And stinginess, disgrace her sex and station.

LXXXII.

But when the levee rose, and all was bustle
In the dissolving circle, all the nations'
Ambassadors began as 't were to hustle
Round the young man with their congratulations.
Also the softer silks were heard to rustle
Of gentle dames, among whose recreations
It is to speculate on handsome faces,
Especially when such lead to high places.

LXXXIII.

Juan, who found himself, he knew not how,
A general object of attention, made
His answers with a very graceful bow,
As if born for the ministerial trade.
Though modest, on his unembarrass'd brow
Nature had written «gentleman.» He said
Little, but to the purpose; and his manner
Flung hovering graces o'er him like a banner.

LXXXIV.

An order from her majesty consign'd
Our young lieutenant to the genial care
Of those in office: all the world look'd kind
(As it will look sometimes with the first stare,
Which youth would not act ill to keep in mind,
As also did Miss Protasoff then there,
Named, from her mystic office, «l'Eprouveuse,»
A term inexplicable to the muse.

LXXXV.

With *her* then, as in humble duty bound,
Juan retired,—and so will I, until
My Pegasus shall tire of touching ground.
We have just lit on a «heaven-kissing hill,»
So lofty that I feel my brain turn round,
And all my fancies whirling like a mill.
Which is a signal to my nerves and brain
To take a quiet ride in some green lane.

CANTO X.

I.

When Newton saw an apple fall, he found
In that slight startle from his contemplation—
'T is *said* (for I 'll not answer above ground
For any sage's creed or calculation)—
A mode of proving that the earth turn'd round
In a most natural whirl, call'd «gravitation;»
And thus is the sole mortal who could grapple,
Since Adam, with a fall or with an apple.

II.

Man fell with apples, and with apples rose,
If this be true; for we must deem the mode
In which Sir Isaac Newton could disclose,
Through the then unpaved stars, the turnpike road,
A thing to counterbalance human woes;
For, ever since, immortal man hath glow'd
With all kinds of mechanics, and full soon
Steam-engines will conduct him to the moon.

III.

And wherefore this exordium?—Why, just now,
In taking up this paltry sheet of paper,
My bosom underwent a glorious glow,
And my internal spirit cut a caper:
And though so much inferior, as I know,
To those who, by the dint of glass and vapour,
Discover stars, and sail in the wind's eye,
I wish to do as much by poesy.

IV.

In the wind's eye I have sail'd, and sail; but for
The stars, I own my telescope is dim;
But at the least I have shunn'd the common shore,
And leaving land far out of sight, would skim
The ocean of eternity: the roar
Of breakers has not daunted my slight, trim,
But *still* sea-worthy skiff; and she may float
Where ships have founder'd, as doth many a boat.

V.

We left our hero, Juan, in the *bloom*
Of favouritism, but not yet in the *blush*;—
And far be it from my *Muses* to presume
(For I have more than one Muse at a push,
To follow him beyond the drawing-room:
It is enough that fortune found him flush
Of youth, and vigour, beauty, and those things
Which for an instant clip enjoyment's wings.

VI.

But soon they grow again and leave their nest.
«Oh!» saith the Psalmist, «that I had a dove's
Pinions, to flee away and be at rest!»
And who, that recollects young years and loves,—
Though hoary now, and with a withering breast,
And palsied fancy, which no longer roves
Beyond its dimm'd eye's sphere,—but would much rather
Sigh like his son, than cough like his grandfather?

VII.

But sighs subside, and tears (even widows') shrink,
Like Arno, in the summer, to a shallow,
So narrow as to shame their wintry brink,
Which threatens inundations deep and yellow!
Such difference doth a few months make. You'd think
Grief a rich field which never would lie fallow;
No more it doth, its ploughs but change their boys,
Who furrow some new soil to sow for joys.

VIII.

But coughs will come when sighs depart—and now
And then before sighs cease; for oft the one
Will bring the other, ere the lake-like brow
Is ruffled by a wrinkle, or the sun
Of life reach'd ten o'clock: and, while a glow,
Hectic and brief as summer's day nigh done,
O'erspreads the cheek which seems too pure for clay,
Thousands blaze, love, hope, die—how happy they!—

IX.

But Juan was not meant to die so soon.
We left him in the focus of such glory
As may be won by favour of the moon,
Or ladies' fancies—rather transitory
Perhaps: but who would scorn the month of June,
Because December, with his breath so hoary,
Must come? Much rather should he court the ray,
To hoard up warmth against a wintry day.

X.

Besides, he had some qualities which fix
Middle-aged ladies even more than young:
The former know what's what; while new-fledged chicks
Know little more of love than what is sung
In rhymes, or dream'd (for fancy will play tricks)
In visions of those skies from whence love sprung.
Some reckon women by their suns or years—
I rather think the moon should date the dears.

XI.

And why? because she 's changeable and chaste.
I know no other reason, whatsoe'er
Suspicious people, who find fault in haste,
May choose to tax me with; which is not fair,
Nor flattering to «their temper or their taste,»
As my friend Jeffery writes with such an air:
However, I forgive him, and I trust
He will forgive himself;—if not, I must.

XII.

Old enemies who have become new friends
Should so continue—'t is a point of honour;
And I know nothing which could make amends
For a return to hatred: I would shun her
Like garlick, howsoever she extends
Her hundred arms and legs, and fain outrun her.
Old flames, new wives, become our bitterest foes—
Converted foes should scorn to join with those.

XIII.

This were the worst desertion: renegadoes,
Even shuffling Southey—that incarnate lie—
Would scarcely join again the «reformadoes,»[1]
Whom he forsook to fill the laureate's sty:
And honest men, from Iceland to Barbadoes,
Whether in Caledon or Italy,
Should not veer round with every breath, nor seize,
To pain, the moment when you cease to please.

XIV.

The lawyer and the critic but behold
The baser sides of literature and life,
And nought remains unseen, but much untold,
By those who scour those double vales of strife.
While common men grow ignorantly old,
The lawyer's brief is like the surgeon's knife,
Dissecting the whole inside of a question,
And with it all the process of digestion.

XV.

A legal broom 's a moral chimney-sweeper,
And that 's the reason he himself 's so dirty;
The endless soot[2] bestows a tint far deeper
Than can be hid by altering his shirt; he
Retains the sable stains of the dark creeper—
At least some twenty-nine do out of thirty,
In all their habits: not so *you*, I own;
As Cæsar wore his robe you wear your gown.

XVI.

And all our little feuds, at least all *mine*,
Dear Jeffery, once my most redoubted foe
(As far as rhyme and criticism combine
To make such puppets of us things below),
Are over: Here 's a health to «Auld Lang Syne!»
I do not know you, and may never know
Your face,—but you have acted on the whole
Most nobly, and I own it from my soul.

XVII.

And when I use the phrase of «Auld Lang Syne!»
'T is not address'd to you—the more 's the pity
For me, for I would rather take my wine
With you, than aught (save Scott) in your proud city.
But somehow,—it may seem a schoolboy's whine,
And yet I seek not to be grand nor witty,
But I am half a Scot by birth, and bred
A whole one, and my heart flies to my head,—

XVIII.

As «Auld Lang Syne» brings Scotland, one and all,
Scotch plaids, Scotch snoods, the blue hills, and clear streams,
The Dee, the Don, Balgounie's Brig's *black wall*,[3]
All my boy feelings, all my gentler dreams
Of what I *then dreamt*, clothed in their own pall,
Like Banquo's offspring—floating past me seems
My childhood in this childishness of mine:
I care not—'t is a glimpse of «Auld Lang Syne.»

XIX.

And though, as you remember, in a fit
Of wrath and rhyme, when juvenile and curly,
I rail'd at Scots to show my wrath and wit,
Which must be own'd was sensitive and surly,
Yet 't is in vain such sallies to permit—
They cannot quench young feelings fresh and early:
I «*scotch'd*, not kill'd,» the Scotchman in my blood,
And love the land of «mountain and of flood.»

XX.

Don Juan, who was real or ideal,—
For both are much the same, since what men think
Exists when the once thinkers are less real
Than what they thought, for mind can never sink,
And 'gainst the body makes a strong appeal;
And yet 't is very puzzling on the brink
Of what is call'd eternity, to stare,
And know no more of what is here, than there:—

XXI.

Don Juan grew a very polish'd Russian—
How we won't mention, *why* we need not say:
Few youthful minds can stand the strong concussion
Of any slight temptation in their way;
But *his* just now were spread as is a cushion
Smooth'd for a monarch's seat of honour: gay
Damsels, and dances, revels, ready money,
Made ice seem paradise, and winter sunny.

XXII.

The favour of the empress was agreeable;
And though the duty wax'd a little hard,
Young people at his time of life should be able
To come off handsomely in that regard.
He now was growing up like a green tree, able
For love, war, or ambition, which reward
Their luckier votaries, till old age's tedium
Make some prefer the circulating medium.

XXIII.

About this time, as might have been anticipated,
Seduced by youth and dangerous examples,
Don Juan grew, I fear a little dissipated;
Which is a sad thing, and not only tramples
On our fresh feelings, but—as being participated
With all kinds of incorrigible samples
Of frail humanity—must make us selfish,
And shut our souls up in us like a shell-fish.

XXIV.

This we pass over. We will also pass
The usual progress of intrigues between
Unequal matches, such as are, alas!
A young lieutenant's with a *not old* queen,
But one who is not so youthful as she was
In all the royalty of sweet seventeen.
Sovereigns may sway materials, but not matter,
And wrinkles (the d—d democrats) won't flatter.

XXV.

And Death, the sovereigns' sovereign, though the great
Gracchus of all mortality, who levels
With his *Agrarian* laws, the high estate
Of him who feasts, and fights, and roars, and revels,
To one small grass-grown patch (which must await
Corruption for its crop) with the poor devils
Who never had a foot of land till now,—
Death 's a reformer, all men must allow.

XXVI.

He lived (not Death, but Juan) in a hurry
Of waste, and haste, and glare, and gloss, and glitter,
In this gay clime of bear-skins black and furry—
Which though I hate to say a thing that 's bitter)
Peep out sometimes, when things are in a flurry,
Through all the «purple and fine linen,» fitter,
For Babylon's than Russia's royal harlot—
And neutralize her outward show of scarlet.

XXVII.

And this same state we won't describe: we would
Perhaps from hearsay, or from recollection;
But getting nigh grim Dante's «obscure wood,»
That horrid equinox, that hateful section
Of human years, that half-way house, that rude
Hut, whence wise travellers drive with circumspection
Life's sad post-horses o'er the dreary frontier
Of age, and, looking back to youth, give *one* tear;—

XXVIII.

I won't describe—that is, if I can help
Description: and I won't reflect—that is,
If I can stave off thought, which—as a whelp
Clings to its teat—sticks to me through the abyss
Of this odd labyrinth; or as the kelp
Holds by the rock; or as a lover's kiss
Drains its first draught of lips: but, as I said,
I *wont* philosophize, and *will* be read.

XXIX.

Juan, instead of courting courts, was courted,
A thing which happens rarely; this he owed
Much to his youth, and much to his reported
Valour; much also to the blood he show'd,
Like a race-horse; much to each dress he sported,
Which set the beauty off in which he glow'd,
As purple clouds befringe the sun; but most
He owed to an old woman and his post.

XXX.

He wrote to Spain;—and all his near relations,
Perceiving he was in a handsome way
Of getting on himself, and finding stations
For cousins also, answer'd the same day.
Several prepared themselves for emigrations;
And, eating ices, were o'erheard to say,
That with the addition of a slight pelisse,
Madrid's and Moscow's climes were of a-piece.

XXXI.

His mother, Donna Inez, finding too
That in the lieu of drawing on his banker,
Where his assets were waxing rather few,
He had brought his spending to a handsome anchor,—
Replied, «that she was glad to see him through
Those pleasures after which wild youth will hanker;
As the sole sign of man's being in his senses
Is, learning to reduce his past expenses.

XXXII.

«She also recommended him to God,
And no less to God's Son, as well as Mother,
Warn'd him against Greek-worship, which looks odd
In Catholic eyes; but told him too to smother
Outward dislike, which don't look well abroad:
Inform'd him that he had a little brother
Born in a second wedlock; and above
All, praised the empress's *maternal* love.

XXXIII.

«She could not too much give her approbation
Unto an empress, who preferr'd young men
Whose age, and, what was better still, whose nation
And climate, stopp'd all scandal (now and then);—
At home it might have given her some vexation;
But where thermometers sunk down to ten,
Or five, or one, or zero, she could never
Believe that virtue thaw'd before the river.»

XXXIV.

Oh for a *forty-parson power* to chaunt
Thy praise, hypocrisy! Oh for a hymn
Loud as the virtues thou dost loudly vaunt,
Not practise! Oh for trumps of cherubim!
Or the ear-trumpet of my good old aunt,
Who, though her spectacles at last grew dim,
Drew quiet consolation through its hint,
When she no more could read the pious print.

XXXV.

She was no hypocrite, at least, poor soul!
But went to heaven in as sincere a way
As any body on the elected roll,
Which portions out upon the judgment day
Heaven's freeholds, in a sort of doomsday scroll,
Such as the conqueror William did repay
His knights with, lotting others' properties
Into some sixty thousand new knights' fees.

XXXVI.

I can't complain, whose ancestors are there,
Erneis, Radulphus—eight-and-forty manors
(If that my memory doth not greatly err)
Were their reward for following Billy's banners;
And, though I can't help thinking 't was scarce fair
To strip the Saxons of their *hydes*,[5] like tanners,
Yet as they founded churches with the produce,
You 'll deem, no doubt, they put it to a good use.

XXXVII.

The gentle Juan flourish'd, though at times
He felt like other plants—call'd sensitive,
Which shrink from touch, as monarchs do from rhymes,
Save such as Southey can afford to give.
Perhaps he long'd, in bitter frosts, for climes
In which the Neva's ice would cease to live
Before May-day: perhaps, despite his duty,
In royalty's vast arms he sigh'd for beauty:

XXXVIII.

Perhaps,—but, *sans* perhaps, we need to seek
For causes young or old: the canker-worm
Will feed upon the fairest, freshest cheek,
As well as further drain the wither'd form:
Care, like a housekeeper, brings every week
His bills in, and, however we may storm,
They must be paid: though six days smoothly run,
The seventh will bring blue devils or a dun.

XXXIX.

I don't know how it was, but he grew sick:
The empress was alarm'd, and her physician
(The same who physic'd Peter) found the tick
Of his fierce pulse betoken a condition
Which augur'd of the dead, however *quick*
Itself, and show'd a feverish disposition;
At which the whole court was extremely troubled,
The sovereign shock'd, and all his medicines doubled.

XL.

Low were the whispers, manifold the rumours:
Some said he had been poison'd by Potemkin;
Others talk'd learnedly of certain tumours,
Exhaustion, or disorders of the same kin;
Some said 't was a concoction of the humours,
Which with the blood too readily will claim kin;
Others again were ready to maintain,
«'T was only the fatigue of last campaign.»

XLI.

But here is one prescription out of many:
«Sodæ-sulphat. 3. vi. 3. s. Mannæ optim.
Aq. fervent. F. 3. iss. 3. ij. tinct. Sennæ
Haustus» (And here the surgeon came and cupp'd him).
«R. Pulv. Com. gr. iii. Ipecacuanhæ»
(With more beside if Juan had not stopp'd 'em.)
«Bolus potassæ sulphuret. sumendus,
Et haustus ter in die capiendus.»

XLII.

This is the way physicians mend or end us,
Secundum artem: but although we sneer
In health—when ill, we call them to attend us,
Without the least propensity to jeer:
While that «hiatus maxime deflendus,»
To be fill'd up by spade or mattock, 's near,
Instead of gliding graciously down Lethe,
We tease mild Baillie, or soft Abernethy.

XLIII.

Juan demurr'd at this first notice to
Quit; and, though death had threaten'd an ejection,
His youth and constitution bore him through,
And sent the doctors in a new direction.
But still his state was delicate: the hue
Of health but flicker'd with a faint reflection
Along his wasted cheek, and seem'd to gravel
The faculty—who said that he must travel.

XLIV.

The climate was too cold, they said, for him,
Meridian-born, to bloom in. This opinion
Made the chaste Catherine look a little grim,
Who did not like at first to lose her minion:
But when she saw his dazzling eye wax dim,
And drooping like an eagle's with clipp'd pinion,
She then resolved to send him on a mission,
But in a style becoming his condition.

XLV.

There was just then a kind of a discussion,
A sort of treaty or negotiation
Between the British cabinet and Russian,
Maintain'd with all the due prevarication
With which great states such things are apt to push on;
Something about the Baltic's navigation,
Hides, train-oil, tallow, and the rights of Thetis,
Which Britons deem their «uti possidetis.»

XLVI.

So Catherine, who had a handsome way
Of fitting out her favourites, conferr'd
This secret charge on Juan, to display
At once her royal splendour, and reward
His services. He kiss'd hands the next day,
Received instructions how to play his card,
Was laden with all kinds of gifts and honours,
Which show'd what great discernment was the donor's.

XLVII.

But she was lucky, and luck 's all. Your queens
Are generally prosperous in reigning;
Which puzzles us to know what fortune means.
But to continue: though her years were waning,
Her climacteric teased her like her teens;
And though her dignity brook'd no complaining,
So much did Juan's setting off distress her,
She could not find at first a fit successor.

XLVIII.

But time, the comforter, will come at last;
And four-and-twenty hours, and twice that number
Of candidates requesting to be placed,
Made Catherine taste next night a quiet slumber:—
Not that she meant to fix again in haste,
Nor did she find the quantity encumber,
But, always choosing with deliberation,
Kept the place open for their emulation.

XLIX.

While this high post of honour 's in abeyance,
For one or two days, reader, we request
You 'll mount with our young hero the conveyance
Which wafted him from Petersburgh: the best
Barouche, which had the glory to display once
The fair Czarina's autocratic crest
(When, a new Iphigene, she went to Tauris),
Was given to her favourite,[6] and now *bore his.*

L.

A bull-dog, and a bull-finch, and an ermine,
All private favourites of Don Juan; for
(Let deeper sages the true cause determine)
He had a kind of inclination, or
Weakness, for what most people deem mere vermin—
Live animals:—an old maid of threescore
For cats and birds more penchant ne'er display'd,
Although he was not old, nor even a maid.

LI.

The animals aforesaid occupied
Their station: there were valets, secretaries,
In other vehicles; but at his side
Sat little Leila, who survived the parries
He made 'gainst Cossack sabres, in the wide
Slaughter of Ismail. Though my wild muse varies
Her note, she don't forget the infant girl
Whom he preserved, a pure and living pearl.

LII.

Poor little thing! She was as fair as docile,
And with that gentle, serious character,
As rare in living beings as a fossile
Man, 'midst thy mouldy mammoths, « grand Cuvier! »
Ill fitted with her ignorance to jostle
With this o'erwhelming world, where all must err:
But she was yet but ten years old, and therefore
Was tranquil, though she knew not why or wherefore.

LIII.

Don Juan loved her, and she loved him, as
Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love.
I cannot tell exactly what it was;
He was not yet quite old enough to prove
Parental feelings, and the other class,
Call'd brotherly affection, could not move
His bosom—for he never had a sister:
Ah! if he had, how much he would have miss'd her!

LIV.

And still less was it sensual; for besides
That he was not an ancient debauchee
(Who like sour fruit to stir their veins' salt tides,
As acids rouse a dormant alkali),
Although (*'t will* happen as our planet guides)
His youth was not the chastest that might be,
There was the purest platonism at bottom
Of all his feelings—only he forgot 'em.

LV.

Just now there was no peril of temptation;
He loved the infant orphan he had saved,
As patriots (now and then) may love a nation;
His pride too felt that she was not enslaved,
Owing to him;—as also her salvation,
Through his means and the church's, might be paved.
But one thing 's odd, which here must be inserted—
The little Turk refused to be converted.

LVI.

'T was strange enough she should retain the impression
Through such a scene of change, and dread, and slaughter;
But, though three bishops told her the transgression,
She show'd a great dislike to holy water:
She also had no passion for confession;
Perhaps she had nothing to confess:—no matter;
Whate'er the cause, the church made little of it—
She still held out that Mahomet was a prophet.

LVII.

In fact, the only Christian she could bear
Was Juan, whom she seem'd to have selected
In place of what her home and friends once *were.*
He *naturally* loved what he protected;
And thus they form'd a rather curious pair:
A guardian green in years, a ward connected
In neither clime, time, blood, with her defender;
And yet this want of ties made theirs more tender.

LVIII.

They journey'd on through Poland and through Warsaw,
Famous for mines of salt and yokes of iron:
Through Courland also, which that famous farce saw
Which gave her dukes the graceless name of « Biron. »
'T is the same landscape which the modern Mars saw,
Who march'd to Moscow, led by fame, the syren!
To lose, by one month's frost, some twenty years
Of conquest, and his guard of grenadiers.

LIX.

Let not this seem an anti-climax:—« Oh!
My guard! my old guard! » exclaim'd that god of clay.—
Think of the thunderer's falling down below
Carotid-artery-cutting Castlereagh!—
Alas! that glory should be chill'd by snow!
But, should we wish to warm us, on our way
Through Poland, there is Kosciusko's name
Might scatter fire through ice, like Hecla's flame.

LX.

From Poland they came on through Prussia Proper,
And Koningsberg the capital, whose vaunt,
Besides some veins of iron, lead, or copper,
Has lately been the great Professor Kant.
Juan, who cared not a tobacco-stopper
About philosophy, pursued his jaunt
To Germany, whose somewhat tardy millions
Have princes who spur more than their postilions.

LXI.

And thence through Berlin, Dresden, and the like,
Until he reach'd the castellated Rhine:—
Ye glorious Gothic scenes! how much ye strike
All phantasies, not even excepting mine:
A grey wall, a green ruin, rusty pike,
Make my soul pass the equinoctial line
Between the present and past worlds, and hover
Upon their airy confine, half-seas-over.

LXII.

But Juan posted on through Manheim, Bonn,
Which Drachenfels frowns over, like a spectre
Of the good feudal times for ever gone,
On which I have not time just now to lecture.
From thence he was drawn onwards to Cologne,
A city which presents to the inspector
Eleven thousand maidenheads of bone,
The greatest number flesh hath ever known.[8]

LXIII.

From thence to Holland's Hague and Helvoetsluys,
That water land of Dutchmen and of ditches,
Where juniper expresses its best juice—
The poor man's sparkling substitute for riches.
Senates and sages have condemn'd its use—
But to deny the mob a cordial which is
Too often all the clothing, meat, or fuel,
Good government has left them, seems but cruel.

LXIV.

Here he embark'd, and, with a flowing sail,
Went bounding for the island of the free,
Towards which the impatient wind blew half a gale;
High dash'd the spray, the bows dipp'd in the sea,
And sea-sick passengers turn'd somewhat pale:
But Juan, season'd, as he well might be
By former voyages, stood to watch the skiffs
Which pass'd, or catch the first glimpse of the cliffs.

LXV.

At length they rose, like a white wall along
The blue sea's border; and Don Juan felt—
What even young strangers feel a little strong
At the first sight of Albion's chalky belt—
A kind of pride that he should be among
Those haughty shop-keepers, who sternly dealt
Their goods and edicts out from pole to pole,
And made the very billows pay them toll.

LXVI.

I have no great cause to love that spot of earth,
Which holds what *might have been* the noblest nation:
But, though I owe it little but my birth,
I feel a mix'd regret and veneration
For its decaying fame and former worth.
Seven years (the usual term of transportation)
Of absence lay one's old resentments level,
When a man's country 's going to the devil.

LXVII.

Alas! could she but fully, truly, know
How her great name is now throughout abhorr'd;
How eager all the earth is for the blow
Which shall lay bare her bosom to the sword;
How all the nations deem her their worst foe,
That worse than *worst of foes*—the once adored
False friend, who held out freedom to mankind,
And now would chain them, to the very mind;—

LXVIII.

Would she be proud, or boast herself the free,
Who is but first of slaves? The nations are
In prison; but the jailor, what is he?
No less a victim to the bolt and bar.
Is the poor privilege to turn the key
Upon the captive, freedom? He 's as far
From the enjoyment of the earth and air
Who watches o'er the chain, as they who wear.

LXIX.

Don Juan now saw Albion's earliest beauties—
Thy cliffs, *dear* Dover! harbour, and hotel;
Thy custom-house with all its delicate duties;
Thy waiters running mucks at every bell;
Thy packets, all whose passengers are booties
To those who upon land or water dwell;
And last, not least, to strangers uninstructed,
Thy long, long bills, whence nothing is deducted.

LXX.

Juan, though careless, young, and magnifique,
And rich in rubles, diamonds, cash, and credit,
Who did not limit much his bills per week,
Yet stared at this a little, though he paid it—
(His maggior duomo, a smart, subtle Greek,
Before him summ'd the awful scroll and read it:)
But doubtless as the air, though seldom sunny,
Is free, the respiration 's worth the money.

LXXI.

On with the horses! Off to Canterbury!
Tramp, tramp o'er pebble, and splash, splash through puddle;
Hurrah! how swiftly speeds the post so merry!
Not like slow Germany, wherein they muddle
Along the road, as if they went to bury
Their fare; and also pause, besides, to fuddle
With «schnapps»—sad dogs! whom «Hundsfot» or «Ferfluchter»
Affect no more than lightning a conductor.

LXXII.

Now, there is nothing gives a man such spirits,
Leavening his blood as Cayenne doth a curry,
As going at full speed—no matter where its
Direction be, so 't is but in a hurry,
And merely for the sake of its own merits:
For the less cause there is for all this flurry,
The greater is the pleasure in arriving
At the great *end* of travel—which is driving.

LXXIII.

They saw at Canterbury the Cathedral;
Black Edward's helm, and Becket's bloody stone,
Were pointed out as usual by the bedral.
In the same quaint, uninterested tone:—
There 's glory again for you, gentle reader! all
Ends in a rusty casque and dubious bone,
Half-solved into those sodas or magnesias,
Which form that bitter draught, the human species.

LXXIV.

The effect on Juan was of course sublime:
He breathed a thousand Cressys, as he saw
That casque, which never stoop'd, except to Time.
Even the bold churchman's tomb excited awe,
Who died in the then great attempt to climb
O'er kings, who *now* at least *must talk* of law,
Before they butcher. Little Leila gazed,
And ask'd why such a structure had been raised:

LXXV.

And, being told it was «God's house,» she said
He was well lodged, but only wonder'd how
He suffer'd infidels in his home-stead,
The cruel Nazarenes, who had laid low
His holy temples in the lands which bred
The true believers;—and her infant brow
Was bent with grief that Mahomet should resign
A mosque so noble, flung like pearls to swine.

LXXVI.

On, on! through meadows, managed like a garden,
A paradise of hops and high production;
For, after years of travel by a bard in
Countries of greater heat but lesser suction,
A green field is a sight which makes him pardon
The absence of that more sublime construction,
Which mixes up vines, olives, precipices,
Glaciers, volcanos, oranges, and ices.

LXXVII.

And when I think upon a pot of beer——
But I won't weep!—and so, drive on, postilions!
As the smart boys spurr'd fast in their career,
Juan admired these highways of free millions;
A country in all senses the most dear
To foreigner or native, save some silly ones,
Who «kick against the pricks» just at this juncture,
And for their pains get only a fresh puncture.

LXXVIII.

What a delightful thing 's a turnpike-road!
So smooth, so level, such a mode of shaving
The earth, as scarce the eagle in the broad
Air can accomplish, with his wide wings waving.
Had such been cut in Phaeton's time, the god
Had told his son to satisfy his craving
With the York mail;—but, onward as we roll,
«Surgit amari aliquid»—the toll!

LXXIX.

Alas! how deeply painful is all payment!
Take lives, take wives, take aught except men's purses.
As Machiavel shows those in purple raiment,
Such is the shortest way to general curses.
They hate a murderer much less than a claimant
On that sweet ore, which every body nurses:—
Kill a man's family, and he may brook it—
But keep your hands out of his breeches' pocket.

LXXX.

So said the Florentine: ye monarchs, hearken
To your instructor. Juan now was borne,
Just as the day began to wane and darken,
O'er the high hill which looks with pride or scorn
Toward the great city:—ye who have a spark in
Your veins of Cockney spirit, smile or mourn,
According as you take things well or ill—
Bold Britons, we are now on Shooter's Hill!

LXXXI.

The sun went down, the smoke rose up, as from
A half-unquench'd volcano, o'er a space
Which well beseem'd the «Devil's drawing-room,»
As some have qualified that wondrous place.
But Juan felt, though not approaching *home*,
As one who, though he were not of the race,
Revered the soil, of those true sons the mother,
Who butcher'd half the earth, and bullied t'other. 9

LXXXII.

A mighty mass of brick, and smoke, and shipping,
Dirty and dusky, but as wide as eye
Could reach, with here and there a sail just skipping
In sight, then lost amidst the forestry
Of masts; a wilderness of steeples peeping
On tiptoe, through their sea-coal canopy;
A huge, dun cupola, like a foolscap crown
On a fool's head—and there is London town!

LXXXIII.

But Juan saw not this: each wreath of smoke
Appear'd to him but as the magic vapour
Of some alchymic furnace, from whence broke
The wealth of worlds (a wealth of tax and paper):
The gloomy clouds, which o'er it as a yoke
Are bow'd, and put the sun out like a taper,
Were nothing but the natural atmosphere—
Extremely wholesome, though but rarely clear.

LXXXIV.

He paused—and so will I—as doth a crew
Before they give their broadside. By and by,
My gentle countrymen, we will renew
Our old acquaintance, and at least I'll try
To tell you truths *you* will not take as true,
Because they are so,—a male Mrs Fry,
With a soft besom will I sweep your halls,
And brush a web or two from off the walls.

LXXXV.

Oh, Mrs Fry! why go to Newgate? Why
Preach to poor rogues? And wherefore not begin
With C—lt—n, or with other houses? Try
Your hand at harden'd and imperial sin.
To mend the people 's an absurdity,
A jargon, a mere philanthropic din,
Unless you make their betters better:—Fie!
I thought you had more religion, Mrs Fry.

LXXXVI.

Teach them the decencies of good threescore:
Cure them of tours, Hussar and Highland dresses:
Tell them that youth once gone returns no more;
That hired huzzas redeem no land's distresses:
Tell them Sir W—ll—m C—rt—s is a bore,
Too dull even for the dullest of excesses—
The witless Falstaff of a hoary Hal,
A fool whose bells have ceased to ring at all;—

LXXXVII.

Tell them, though it may be perhaps too late,
On life's worn confine, jaded, bloated, sated,
To set up vain pretences of being great,
'Tis not so to be good; and be it stated,
The worthiest kings have ever loved least state;
And tell them——but you won't, and I have prated
Just now enough; but by and by I'll prattle
Like Roland's horn in Roncesvalles' battle.

CANTO XI.

I.

When Bishop Berkeley said «there was no matter,»
And proved it—'t was no matter what he said:
They say his system 't is in vain to batter,
Too subtle for the airiest human head;
And yet who can believe it? I would shatter,
Gladly all matters down to stone or lead,
Or adamant, to find the world a spirit,
And wear my head, denying that I wear it.

II.

What a sublime discovery 't was to make the
Universe universal egotism!
That all 's ideal—*all ourselves!* I'll stake the
World (be it what you will) that *that* 's no schism.
Oh, doubt!—if thou be'st doubt, for which some take thee,
But which I doubt extremely—thou sole prism
Of the truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!
Heaven's brandy—though our brain can hardly bear it.

III.

For ever and anon comes indigestion
(Not the most «dainty Ariel»), and perplexes
Our soarings with another sort of question:
And that which, after all, my spirit vexes
Is, that I find no spot where man can rest eye on,
Without confusion of the sorts and sexes,
Of beings, stars, and this unriddled wonder,
The world, which at the worst 's a glorious blunder—

IV.

If it be chance; or if it be according
To the old text, still better?—lest it should
Turn out so, we 'll say nothing 'gainst the wording,
As several people think such hazards rude:
They 're right; our days are too brief for affording
Space to dispute what *no one* ever could
Decide, and *every body one day* will
Know very clearly—or at least lie still.

V.

And therefore will I leave off metaphysical
Discussion, which is neither here nor there:
If I agree that what is, is—then this I call
Being quite perspicuous and extremely fair.
The truth is, I 've grown lately rather phthisical:
I don't know what the reason is—the air
Perhaps; but, as I suffer from the shocks
Of illness, I grow much more orthodox.

VI.

The first attack at once proved the divinity
(But *that* I never doubted, nor the devil);
The next, the Virgin's mystical virginity;
The third, the usual origin of evil;
The fourth at once establish'd the whole Trinity
On so incontrovertible a level,
That I devoutly wish the three were four,
On purpose to believe so much the more.

VII.

To our theme:—The man who has stood on the Acropolis,
And look'd down over Attica; or he
Who has sail'd where picturesque Constantinople is,
Or seen Tombuctoo, or hath taken tea
In small-eyed China's crockery-ware metropolis,
Or sat amidst the bricks of Nineveh,
May not think much of London's first appearance—
But ask him what he thinks of it a year hence?

VIII.

Don Juan had got out on Shooter's hill—
Sunset the time, the place the same declivity
Which looks along that vale of good and ill
Where London streets ferment in full activity;
While every thing around was calm and still,
Except the creak of wheels, which on their pivot he
Heard—and that bee-like, bubbling, busy hum
Of cities, that boils over with their scum:—

IX.

I say, Don Juan, wrapt in contemplation,
Walk'd on behind his carriage, o'er the summit,
And, lost in wonder of so great a nation,
Gave way to 't, since he could not overcome it.
«And here,» he cried, «is Freedom's chosen station;
Here peals the people's voice, nor can entomb it
Racks, prisons, inquisitions; resurrection
Awaits it, each new meeting or election.

X.

«Here are chaste wives, pure lives; here people pay
But what they please; and if that things be dear,
T is only that they love to throw away
Their cash, to show how much they have a-year.
Here laws are all inviolate; none lay
Traps for the traveller; every highway's clear:
Here——» he was interrupted by a knife,
With «Damn your eyes! your money or your life.»

XI.

These freeborn sounds proceeded from four pads,
In ambush laid, who had perceived him loiter
Behind his carriage; and, like handy lads,
Had seized the lucky hour to reconnoitre,
In which the heedless gentleman who gads
Upon the road, unless he prove a fighter,
May find himself, within that isle of riches,
Exposed to lose his life as well as breeches.

XII.

Juan, who did not understand a word
Of English, save their shibboleth «God damn!»
And even that he had so rarely heard,
He sometimes thought 'twas only their «salam,»
Or «God be with you!»—and 'tis not absurd
To think so; for, half English as I am
(To my misfortune), never can I say
I heard them wish «God with you,» save that way:—

XIII.

Juan yet quickly understood their gesture,
And, being somewhat choleric and sudden,
Drew forth a pocket-pistol from his vesture,
And fired it into one assailant's pudding—
Who fell, as rolls an ox o'er in his pasture,
And roar'd out, as he writhed his native mud in,
Unto his nearest follower or henchman,
«Oh Jack! I 'm floor'd by that ere bloody Frenchman!»

XIV.

On which Jack and his train set off at speed,
And Juan's suite, late scatter'd at a distance,
Came up, all marvelling at such a deed,
And offering, as usual, late assistance.
Juan, who saw the moon's late minion bleed
As if his veins would pour out his existence,
Stood calling out for bandages and lint,
And wish'd he had been less hasty with his flint.

XV.

«Perhaps,» thought he, «it is the country's wont
To welcome foreigners in this way: now
I recollect some inkeepers who don't
Differ, except in robbing with a bow,
In lieu of a bare blade and brazen front.
But what is to be done? I can't allow
The fellow to lie groaning on the road:
So take him up; I 'll help you with the load.»

XVI.

But, ere they could perform this pious duty,
The dying man cried, «Hold! I 've got my gruel!
Oh! for a glass of *max!* We 've miss'd our booty;
Let me die where I am!» And, as the fuel
Of life shrunk in his heart, and thick and sooty
The drops fell from his death-wound, and he drew ill
His breath, he from his swelling throat untied
A kerchief, crying «Give Sal that!»—and died.

XVII.

The cravat, stain'd with bloody drops, fell down
Before Don Juan's feet: he could not tell
Exactly why it was before him thrown,
Nor what the meaning of the man's farewell.
Poor Tom was once a kiddy upon town,
A thorough varmint, and a *real* swell,
Full flash, all fancy, until fairly diddled—
His pockets first, and then his body riddled.

XVIII.

Don Juan, having done the best he could
In all the circumstances of the case,
As soon as «crowner's quest» allow'd, pursued
His travels to the capital apace;—
Esteeming it a little hard he should
In twelve hours' time, and very little space,
Have been obliged to slay a freeborn native
In self-defence: this made him meditative.

XIX.

He from the world had cut off a great man,
Who in his time had made heroic bustle.
Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,
Booze in the ken, or at the spellken hustle?
Who queer a flat? Who (spite of Bow-street's ban)
On the high toby-spice so flash the muzzle?
Who on a lark, with black-eyed Sal (his blowing),
So prime, so swell, so nutty, and so knowing? [1]

XX.

But Tom's no more—and so no more of Tom.
Heroes must die; and, by God's blessing, 't is
Not long before the most of them go home.—
Hail! Thamis, hail! Upon thy verge it is
That Juan's chariot, rolling like a drum
In thunder, holds the way it can't well miss,
Through Kennington and all the other «tons,»
Which make us wish ourselves in town at once;—

XXI.

Through groves, so called as being void of trees
(Like *lucus* from *no* light); through prospects named
Mount Pleasant, as containing nought to please,
Nor much to climb; through little boxes framed
Of bricks, to let the dust in at your ease,
With «To be let,» upon their doors proclaim'd;
Through «rows» most modestly call'd «Paradise,»
Which Eve might quit without much sacrifice;—

XXII.

Through coaches, drays, choked turnpikes, and a whirl
Of wheels, and roar of voices, and confusion;
Here taverns wooing to a pint of «purl,»
There mails fast flying off like a delusion;
Their barbers' blocks with periwigs in curl
In windows; here the lamp-lighter's infusion
Slowly distill'd into the glimmering glass—
(For in those days we had not got to gas,):

XXIII.

Through this and much and more, is the approach
Of travellers to mighty Babylon:
Whether they come by horse, or chaise, or coach,
With slight exceptions, all the ways seem one.
I could say more, but do not choose to encroach
Upon the guide-book's privilege. The sun
Had set some time, and night was on the ridge
Of twilight, as the party cross'd the bridge.

XXIV.

That 's rather fine, the gentle sound of Thamis—
Who vindicates a moment too his stream—
Though hardly heard through multifarious «dam'mes.»
The lamps of Westminter's more regular gleam,
The breadth of pavement, and yon shrine where Fame is
A spectral resident—whose pallid beam
In shape of moonshine hovers o'er the pile—
Make this a sacred part of Albion's isle.

XXV.

The Druid's groves are gone—so much the better:
Stone-Henge is not—but what the devil is it?—
But Bedlam still exists with its sage fetter,
That madmen may not bite you on a visit;
The Bench too seats or suits full many a debtor;
The Mansion-House too (though some people quiz it)
To me appears a stiff yet grand erection;
But then the Abbey's worth the whole collection.

XXVI.

The line of lights too up to Charing-Cross,
Pall-Mall, and so forth, have a coruscation
Like gold as in comparison to dross,
Match'd with the continent's illumination,
Whose cities night by no means deigns to gloss:
The French were not yet a lamp-lighting nation,
And when they grew so—on their new-found lanthorn,
Instead of wicks, they made a wicked man turn.

XXVII.

A row of gentlemen along the streets
Suspended, may illuminate mankind,
As also bonfires made of country seats;
But the old way is best for the purblind:
The other looks like phosphorus on sheets,
A sort of ignis-fatuus to the mind,
Which, though 't is certain to perplex and frighten,
Must burn more mildly ere it can enlighten.

XXVIII.

But London 's so well lit, that if Diogenes
Could recommence to hunt his *honest man*,
And found him not amidst the various progenies
Of this enormous city's spreading spawn,
'T were not for want of lamps to aid his dodging his
Yet undiscover'd treasure. What *I* can,
I 've done to find the same throughout life's journey,
But see the world is only one attorney.

XXIX.

Over the stones still rattling, up Pall-Mall,
Through crowds and carriages—but waxing thinner
As thunder'd knockers broke the long-seal'd spell
Of doors 'gainst duns, and to an early dinner
Admitted a small party as night fell,—
Don Juan, our young diplomatic sinner,
Pursued his path, and drove past some hotels,
St James's Palace and St James's «Hells.» [2]

XXX.

They reach'd the hotel: forth stream'd from the front door
A tide of well-clad waiters, and around
The mob stood, and as usual several score
Of those pedestrian Paphians who abound
In decent London, when the daylight 's o'er;
Commodious but immoral, they are found
Useful, like Malthus, in promoting marriage:
But Juan now is stepping from his carriage

XXXI.

Into one of the sweetest of hotels,
Especially for foreigners—and mostly
For those whom favour or whom fortune swells,
And cannot find a bill's small items costly.
There many an envoy either dwelt or dwells
(The den of many a diplomatic lost lie),
Until to some conspicuous square they pass,
And blazon o'er the door their names in brass.

XXXII.

Juan, whose was a delicate commission,
Private, though publicly important, bore
No title to point out with due precision
The exact affair on which he was sent o'er.
'T was merely known that on a secret mission
A foreigner of rank had graced our shore,
Young, handsome, and accomplish'd, who was said
(In whispers) to have turn'd his sovereign's head.

XXXIII.

Some rumour also of some strange adventures
Had gone before him, and his wars and loves;
And as romantic heads are pretty painters,
And above all, an Englishwoman 's roves
Into the excursive, breaking the indentures
Of sober reason, wheresoe'er it moves,
He found himself extremely in the fashion,
Which serves our thinking people for a passion.

XXXIV.

I don't mean that they are passionless, but quite
The contrary; but then 't is in the head;
Yet, as the consequences are as bright
As if they acted with the heart instead,
What after all can signify the site
Of ladies' lucubrations? So they lead
In safety to the place for which you start,
What matters if the road be head or heart?

XXXV.

Juan presented in the proper place,
To proper placemen, every Russ credential;
And was received, with all the due grimace,
By those who govern in the mood potential,
Who, seeing a handsome stripling with smooth face,
Thought (what in state affairs is most essential)
That they as easily might *do* the youngster,
As hawks may pounce upon a woodland songster.

XXXVI.

They err'd, as aged men will do; but by
And by we'll talk of that; and if we don't,
'T will be because our notion is not high
Of politicians and their double front,
Who live by lies, yet dare not boldly lie:—
Now what I love in women is, they won't
Or can't do otherwise than lie, but do it
So well, the very truth seems falsehood to it.

XXXVII.

And, after all, what is a lie? 'T is but
The truth in masquerade; and I defy
Historians, heroes, lawyers, priests, to put
A fact without some leaven of a lie.
The very shadow of true truth would shut
Up annals, revelations, poesy,
And prophecy—except it should be dated
Some years before the incidents related.

XXXVIII.

Praised be all liars and all lies! Who now
Can tax my mild Muse with misanthropy?
She rings the world's «Te Deum,» and her brow
Blushes for those who will not:—but to sigh
Is idle; let us, like most others, bow,
Kiss hands, feet—any part of Majesty,
After the good example of «Green Erin,»
Whose shamrock now seems rather worse for wearing.

XXXIX.

Don Juan was presented, and his dress
And mien excited general admiration—
I don't know which was most admired or less:
One monstrous diamond drew much observation,
Which Catherine, in a moment of «ivresse»
(In love or brandy's fervent fermentation),
Bestow'd upon him as the public learn'd;
And, to say truth, it had been fairly earn'd.

XL.

Besides the ministers and underlings,
Who must be courteous to the accredited
Diplomatists of rather wavering kings,
Until their royal riddle 's fully read,
The very clerks—those somewhat dirty springs
Of office, or the house of office, fed
By foul corruption into streams—even they
Were hardly rude enough to earn their pay:

XLI.

And insolence no doubt is what they are
Employ'd for, since it is their daily labour,
In the dear offices of peace or war;
And should you doubt, pray ask of your next neighbour,
When for a passport, or some other bar
To freedom, he applied (a grief and a bore)
If he found not this spawn of tax-born riches,
Like lap-dogs, the least civil sons of b——s.

XLII.

But Juan was received with much «empressement:»—
These phrases of refinement I must borrow
From our next neighbours 'land, where, like a chessman,
There is a move set down for joy or sorrow,
Not only in mere talking, but the press. Man,
In islands, is, it seems, downright and thorough,
More than on continents—as if the sea
(See Billingsgate) made even the tongue more free.

XLIII.

And yet the British «Dam'me» 's rather Attic:
Your continental oaths are but incontinent,
And turn on things which no aristocratic
Spirit would name, and therefore even I won't anent[3]
This subject quote; as it would be schimastic
In politesse, and have a sound affronting in 't:—
But «Dam'me» 's quite ethereal, though too daring—
Platonic blasphemy, the soul of swearing.

XLIV.

For downright rudeness, ye may stay at home;
For true or false politeness (and scarce *that Now*) you may cross the blue deep and white foam—
The first the emblem (rarely though) of what
You leave behind, the next of much you come
To meet. However, 't is no time to chat
On general topics: poems must confine
Themselves to unity, like this of mine.

XLV.

In the great world,—which, being interpreted,
Meaneth the west or worst end of a city,
And about twice two thousand people bred
By no means to be very wise or witty,
But to sit up while others lie in bed,
And look down on the universe with pity—
Juan, as an inveterate patrician,
Was well received by persons of condition.

XLVI.

He was a bachelor, which is a matter
Of import both to virgin and to bride,
The former's hymeneal hopes to flatter;
And (should she not hold fast by love or pride)
'T is also of some moment to the latter:
A rib 's a thorn in a wed gallant's side,
Requires decorum, and is apt to double
The horrid sin—and, what 's still worse, the trouble.

XLVII.

But Juan was a bachelor—of arts,
And parts, and hearts: he danced and sung, and had
An air as sentimental as Mozart's
Softest of melodies; and could be sad
Or cheerful, without any «flaws or starts,»
Just at the proper time; and, though a lad,
Had seen the world—which is a curious sight,
And very much unlike what people write.

XLVIII.

Fair virgins blush'd upon him; wedded dames
Bloom'd also in less transitory hues;
For both commodities dwell by the Thames,
The painting and the painted; youth, ceruse,
Against his heart preferr'd their usual claims,
Such as no gentleman can quite refuse;
Daughters admired his dress, and pious mothers
Inquired his income, and if he had brothers.

XLIX.

The milliners who furnish «drapery misses»[4]
Throughout the season, upon speculation
Of payment ere the honeymoon's last kisses
Have waned into a crescent's coruscation,
Thought such an opportunity as this is,
Of a rich foreigner's initiation,
Not to be overlook'd—and gave such credit,
That future bridegrooms swore, and sigh'd, and paid it.

L.

The Blues, that tender tribe, who sigh o'er sonnets,
And with the pages of the last review
Line the interior of their heads or bonnets,
Advanced in all their azure's highest hue:
They talk'd bad French of Spanish, and upon its
Late authors ask'd him for a hint or two;
And which was softest, Russian or Castilian?
And whether in his travels he saw Ilion?

LI.

Juan, who was a little superficial,
And not in literature a great Drawcansir,
Examined by this learned and especial
Jury of matrons, scarce knew what to answer:
His duties warlike, loving, or official,
His steady application as a dancer,
Had kept him from the brink of Hippocrene,
Which now he found was blue instead of green.

LII.

However, he replied at hazard, with
A modest confidence and calm assurance,
Which lent his learned lucubrations pith,
And pass'd for arguments of good endurance.
That prodigy, Miss Araminta Smith
(Who, at sixteen, translated «Hercules Furens»
Into as furious English), with her best look,
Set down his sayings in her common-place book.

LIII.

Juan knew several languages—as well
He might—and brought them up with skill, in time
To save his fame with each accomplish'd belle,
Who still regretted that he did not rhyme.
There wanted but this requisite to swell
His qualities (with them) into sublime:
Lady Fitz-Frisky, and Miss Mævia Mannish,
Both long'd extremely to be sung in Spanish.

LIV.

However, he did pretty well, and was
Admitted as an aspirant to all
The coteries, and, as in Banquo's glass,
At great assemblies or in parties small,
He saw ten thousand living authors pass,
That being about their average numeral;
Also the eighty «greatest living poets,»
As every paltry magazine can show *its*.

LV.

In twice five years the «greatest living poet,»
Like to the champion in the fisty ring,
Is call'd on to support his claim, or show it,
Although 't is an imaginary thing.
Even I—albeit I 'm sure I did not know it,
Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king—
Was reckon'd, a considerable time,
The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme.

LVI.

But Juan was my Moscow, and Faliero
My Leipsic, and my Mont-Saint-Jean seems Cain:
«La Belle-Alliance» of dunces down at zero,
Now that the lion 's fall'n, may rise again:
But I will fall at least as fell my hero;
Nor reign at all, or as a *monarch* reign;
Or to some lonely isle of jailors go,
With turncoat Southey for my turnkey Lowe.

LVII.

Sir Walter reign'd before me; Moore and Campbell
Before and after; but now, grown more holy,
The Muses upon Sion's hill must ramble
With poets almost clergymen, or wholly;

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LVIII.

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LIX.

Then there 's my gentle Euphues, who, they say,
Sets up for being a sort of *moral me;*
He'll find it rather difficult some day
To turn out both, or either, it may be.
Some persons think that Coleridge hath the sway;
And Wordsworth has supporters, two or three;
And that deep mouth'd Bœotian, « Savage Landor,»
Has taken for a swan rogue Southey's gander.

LX.

John Keats—who was kill'd off by one critique,
Just as he really promised something great,
If not intelligible, without Greek
Contrived to talk about the gods of late,
Much as they might have been supposed to speak.
Poor fellow! his was an untoward fate:
'T is strange the mind, that very fiery particle,[5]
Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article.

LXI.

The list grows long of live and dead pretenders
To that which none will gain—or none will know
The conqueror at least; who, ere time renders
His last award, will have the long grass grow
Above his burnt-out brain and sapless cinders.
If I might augur, I should rate but low
Their chances; they 're too numerous, like the thirty
Mock tyrants, when Rome's annals wax'd but dirty.

LXII.

This is the literary *lower* empire,
Where the Prætorian bands take up the matter;—
A « dreadful trade,» like his who « gathers samphire,»
The insolent soldiery to soothe and flatter,
With the same feelings as you 'd coax a vampire.
Now, were I once at home, and in good satire,
I 'd try conclusions with those janizaries,
And show them *what* an intellectual war is.

LXIII.

I think I know a trick or two, would turn
Their flanks;—but it is hardly worth my while
With such small gear to give myself concern:
Indeed I 've not the necessary bile;
My natural temper 's really aught but stern,
And even my Muse's worst reproof's a smile;
And then she drops a brief and modern curtsey,
And glides away, assured she never hurts ye.

LXIV.

My Juan, whom I left in deadly peril
Amongst live poets and blue ladies, pass'd
With some small profit through that field so sterile.
Being tired in time, and neither least nor last,
Left it before he had been treated very ill;
And henceforth found himself more gaily class'd
Amongst the higher spirits of the day,
The sun's true son—no vapour, but a ray.

LXV.

His morns he pass'd in business—which, dissected,
Was like all business, a laborious nothing,
That leads to lassitude, the most infected
And Centaur Nessus garb of mortal clothing,
And on our sofas makes us lie dejected,
And talk in tender horrors of our loathing
All kinds of toil, save for our country's good—
Which grows no better, though 't is time it should.

LXVI.

His afternoons he pass'd in visits, luncheons,
Lounging, and boxing; and the twilight hour
In riding round those vegetable puncheons
Call'd « Parks,» where there is neither fruit nor flower
Enough to gratify a bee's slight munchings;
But after all it is the only « bower»
(In Moore's phrase) where the fashionable fair
Can form a slight acquaintance with fresh air.

LXVII.

Then dress, then dinner, then awakes the world!
Then glare the lamps, then whirl the wheels, then roar
Through street and square fast flashing chariots, hurl'd
Like harness'd meteors! then along the floor
Chalk mimics painting; then festoons are twirl'd;
Then roll the brazen thunders of the door,
Which opens to the thousand happy few
An earthly paradise of « Or Molu.»

LXVIII.

There stands the noble hostess, nor shall sink
With the three-thousandth curtsey; there the waltz—
The only dance which teaches girls to think—
Makes one in love even with its very faults.
Saloon, room, all o'erflow beyond their brink,
And long the latest of arrivals halts,
'Midst royal dukes and dames condemn'd to climb,
And gain an inch of staircase at a time.

LXIX.

Thrice happy he, who, after a survey
Of the good company, can win a corner,
A door that 's *in*, or boudoir *out* of the way,
Where he may fix himself, like small « Jack Horner,»
And let the Babel round run as it may,
And look on as a mourner, or a scorner,
Or an approver, or a mere spectator,
Yawning a little as the night grows later.

LXX.

But this won't do, save by and by; and he
Who, like Don Juan, takes an active share,
Must steer with care through all that glittering sea
Of gems and plumes, and pearls and silks, to where
He deems it is his proper place to be;
Dissolving in the waltz to some soft air,
Or proudlier prancing with mercurial skill
Where science marshals forth her own quadrille.

LXXI.

Or, if he dance not, but hath higher views
Upon an heiress or his neighbour's bride,
Let him take care that that which he pursues
Is not at once too palpably descried.
Full many an eager gentleman oft rues
His haste: impatience is a blundering guide
Amongst a people famous for reflection,
Who like to play the fool with circumspection.

LXXII.

But, if you can contrive, get next at supper;
Or, if forestall'd, get opposite and ogle:—
Oh, ye ambrosial moments! always upper
In mind, a sort of sentimental bogle,
Which sits for ever upon memory's crupper,
The ghost of vanish'd pleasures once in vogue! Ill
Can tender souls relate the rise and fall
Of hopes and fears which shake a single ball.

LXXIII.

But these precautionary hints can touch
Only the common run, who must pursue,
And watch, and ward; whose plans a word too much
Or little overturns; and not the few
Or many (for the number 's sometimes such)
Whom a good mien, especially if new,
Or fame, or name, for wit, war, sense, or nonsense,
Permits whate'er they please, or *did* not long since.

LXXIV.

Our hero, as a hero, young and handsome,
Noble, rich, celebrated, and a stranger,
Like other slaves of course must pay his ransom
Before he can escape from so much danger
As will environ a conspicuous man. Some
Talk about poetry, and «rack and manger,»
And ugliness, disease, as toil and trouble;—
I wish they knew the life of a young noble.

LXXV.

They are young, but know not youth—it is anticipated;
Handsome but wasted, rich without a sous;
Their vigour in a thousand arms is dissipated;
Their cash comes *from*, their wealth goes *to* a Jew;
Both senates see their nightly votes participated
Between the tyrant's and the tribunes' crew;
And, having voted, dined, drank, gamed, and whored,
The family vault receives another lord.

LXXVI.

«Where is the world,» cries Young, «at *eighty*? Where
The world in which a man was born?» Alas!
Where is the world of *eight* years past? *'T was there*—
I look for it—'t is gone, a globe of glass!
Crack'd, shiver'd, vanish'd, scarcely gazed on ere
A silent change dissolves the glittering mass.
Statesmen, chiefs, orators, queens, patriots, kings,
And dandies, all are gone on the wind's wings.

LXXVII.

Where is Napoleon the Grand? God knows:
Where little Castlereagh? The devil can tell:
Where Grattan, Curran, Sheridan, all those
Who bound the bar or senate in their spell?
Where is the unhappy queen, with all her woes?
And where the daughter, whom the isles loved well?
Where are those martyr'd saints, the five per cents?
And where—oh where the devil are the rents?

LXXVIII.

Where 's Brummel? Dish'd. Where 's Long Pole Wellesley? Diddled.
Where is Whitbread? Romilly? Where 's George the Third?
Where is his will? (That 's not so soon unriddled.)
And where is «Fum» the Fourth, our «royal bird?»
Gone down it seems to Scotland, to be fiddled
Unto by Sawney's violin, we have heard:
«Caw me, caw thee»—for six months hath been hatching
This scene of royal itch and loyal scratching.

LXXIX.

Where is Lord This? And where my Lady That?
The Honourable Mistresses and Misses?
Some laid aside like an old opera-hat,
Married, unmarried, and remarried—(this is
An evolution oft perform'd of late.
Where are the Dublin shouts—and London hisses?
Where are the Grenvilles? Turn'd as usual. Where
My friends the Whigs? Exactly where they were.

LXXX.

Where are the Lady Carolines and Franceses?
Divorced or doing there anent. Ye annals
So brilliant, where the list of routs and dances is—
Thou Morning Post, sole records of the panels
Broken in carriages, and all the phantasies
Of fashion—say what streams now fill those channels?
Some die, some fly, some languish on the continent,
Because the times have hardly left them *one* tenant.

LXXXI.

Some who once set their caps at cautious dukes,
Have taken up at length with younger brothers;
Some heiresses have bit at sharper's hooks;
Some maids have been made wives—some merely mothers;
Others have lost their fresh and fairy looks;
In short, the list of alterations bothers.
There 's little strange in this, but something strange is
The unusual quickness of these common changes.

LXXXII.

Talk not of seventy years as age; in seven
I have seen more changes, down from monarchs to
The humblest individual under heaven,
Than might suffice a moderate century through.
I knew that nought was lasting, but now even
Change grows too changeable, without being new:
Nought 's permanent among the human race,
Except the Whigs *not* getting into place.

LXXXIII.

I have seen Napoleon, who seem'd quite a Jupiter,
Shrink to a Saturn. I have seen a duke
(No matter which) turn politician stupider,
If that can well be, than his wooden look.
But it is time that I should hoist my «blue Peter,»
And sail for a new theme: I have seen—and shook
To see it—the king hiss'd, and then caress'd;
But don't pretend to settle which was best.

LXXXIV.

I have seen the landholders without a rap—
I have seen Johanna Southcote—I have seen
The House of Commons turn'd to a tax-trap—
I have seen that sad affair of the late queen—
I have seen crowns worn instead of a fool's-cap—
I have seen a congress doing all that 's mean—
I have seen some nations like o'erloaded asses
Kick off their burthens—meaning the high classes.

LXXXV.

I have seen small poets, and great prosers, and
Interminable—*not eternal*—speakers—
I have seen the funds at war with house and land—
I 've seen the country gentlemen turn squeakers—
I 've seen the people ridden o'er like sand
By slaves on horseback—I have seen malt liquors
Exchanged for «thin potations» by John Bull—
I have seen John half detect himself a fool.—

LXXXVI.

But «Carpe, diem,» Juan, «Carpe, carpe!»
To-morrow sees another race as gay
And transient, and devour'd by the same harpy.
«Life 's a poor player»—then «play out the play,
Ye villains!» and, above all, keep a sharp eye
Much less on what you do than what you say:
Be hypocritical, be cautious, be
Not what you *seem*, but always what you *see*.

LXXXVII.

But how shall I relate in other cantos
Of what befel our hero, in the land
Which 't is the common cry and lie to vaunt as
A moral country? But I hold my hand—
For I disdain to write an Atalantis;
But 't is as well at once to understand,
You are *not* a moral people, and you know it
Without the aid of too sincere a poet.

LXXXVIII.

What Juan saw and underwent shall be
My topic, with of course the due restriction
Which is required by proper courtesy;
And recollect the work is only fiction,
And that I sing of neither mine nor me,
Though every scribe, in some slight turn of diction,
Will hint allusions never *meant*. Ne'er doubt
This—when I speak, I *don't hint,* but *speak out.*

LXXXIX.

Whether he married with the third or fourth
Offspring of some sage, husband-hunting countess,
Or whether with some virgin of more worth
(I mean in fortune 's matrimonial bounties)
He took to regularly peopling earth,
Of which your lawful awful wedlock fount is—
Or whether he was taken in for damages,
For being too excursive in his homages—

XC.

Is yet within the unread events of time.
Thus far, go forth, thou lay, which I will back
Against the same given quantity of rhyme,
For being as much the subject of attack
As ever yet was any work sublime,
By those who love to say that white is black.
So much the better!—I may stand alone,
But would not change my free thoughts for a throne.

CANTO XII.

I.

Of all the barbarous middle ages, that
Which is most barbarous is the middle age
Of man; it is—I really scarce know what;
But when we hover between fool and sage,
And don't know justly what we would be at—
A period something like a printed page,
Black letter upon foolscap, while our hair
Grows grizzled, and we are not what we were;—

II.

Too old for youth—too young, at thirty-five,
To herd with boys, or hoard with good threescore—
I wonder people should be left alive;
But, since they are, that epoch is a bore:
Love lingers still, although 't were late to wive;
And as for other love, the illusion 's o'er;
And money, that most pure imagination,
Gleams only through the dawn of its creation.

III.

Oh gold! why call we misers miserable?
Theirs is the pleasure that can never pall;
Theirs is the best bower-anchor, the chain-cable
Which holds fast other pleasures great and small.
Ye who but see the saving man at table,
And scorn his temperate board, as none at all,
And wonder how the wealthy can be sparing,
Know not what visions spring from each cheese-paring.

IV.

Love or lust makes man sick, and wine much sicker;
Ambition rends, and gaming gains a loss;
But making money, slowly first, then quicker,
And adding still a little through each cross
(Which *will* come over things), beats love or liquor,
The gamester's counter, other statesman's *dross.*
Oh gold! I still prefer thee unto paper,
Which makes bank credit like a bark of vapour.

V.

Who hold the balance of the world? Who reign
O'er Congress, whether royalist or liberal?
Who rouse the shirtless patriots of Spain
(That make old Europe's journals squeak and gibber all)?
Who keep the world, both old and new, in pain
Or pleasure? Who make politics run glibber all?
The shade of Bonaparte's noble daring?—
Jew Rothschild, and his fellow Christian Baring.

VI.

Those, and the truly liberal Lafitte,
Are the true lords of Europe. Every loan
Is not a merely speculative hit,
But seats a nation or upsets a throne.
Republics also get involved a bit;
Columbia's stock hath holders not unknown
On 'Change; and even thy silver soil, Peru,
Must get itself discounted by a Jew.

VII.

Why call the miser miserable? as
I said before: the frugal life is his,
Which in a saint or cynic ever was
The theme of praise: a hermit would not miss
Canonization for the self-same cause,
And wherefore blame gaunt wealth's austerities?
Because, you 'll say, nought calls for such a trial;—
Then there 's more merit in his self-denial.

VIII.

He is your only poet;—passion, pure
And sparkling on from heap to heap, displays,
Possess'd, the ore, of which *mere hopes* allure
Nations athwart the deep: the golden rays
Flash up in ingots from the mine obscure;
On him the diamond pours its brilliant blaze;
While the mild emerald's beam shades down the dyes
Of other stones, to soothe the miser's eyes.

IX.

The lands on either side are his: the ship
From Ceylon, Inde, or far Cathay, unloads
For him the fragrant produce of each trip;
Beneath his cars of Ceres groan the roads,
And the vine blushes like Aurora's lip;
His very cellars might be kings' abodes;
While he, despising every sensual call,
Commands—the intellectual lord of all.

X.

Perhaps he hath great projects in his mind,
To build a college, or to found a race,
An hospital, a church,—and leave behind
Some dome surmounted by his meagre face:
Perhaps he fain would liberate mankind
Even with the very ore which makes them base;
Perhaps he would be wealthiest of his nation,
Or revel in the joys of calculation.

XI.

But whether all, or each, or none of these
May be the hoarder's principle of action,
The fool will call such mania a disease:—
What is his *own*? Go—look at each transaction,
Wars, revels, loves—do these bring men more ease
Than the mere plodding thro' each «vulgar fraction?»
Or do they benefit mankind? Lean miser!
Let spendthrifts' heirs inquire of yours—who 's wiser?

XII.

How beauteous are rouleaus! how charming chests
Containing ingots, bags of dollars, coins
(Not of old victors, all whose heads and crests
Weigh not the thin ore where their visage shines,
But) of fine unclipp'd gold, where dully rests
Some likeness which the glitering cirque confines,
Of modern, reigning, sterling, stupid stamp:—
Yes! ready money *is* Aladdin's lamp.

XIII.

«Love rules the camp, the court, the grove,»—«for love
Is heaven, and heaven is love:»—so sings the bard;
Which it were rather difficult to prove
(A thing with poetry in general hard).
Perhaps there may be something in «the grove,»
At least it rhymes to «love;» but I 'm prepared
To doubt (no less than landlords of their rental)
If «courts» and «camps» be quite so sentimental.

XIV.

But if love don't, *cash* does, and cash alone:
Cash rules the grove, and fells it too besides;
Without cash, camps were thin, and courts were none;
Without cash, Malthus tells you—«take no brides.»
So cash rules love the ruler, on his own
High ground, as Virgin Cynthia sways the tides;
And, as for «heaven» being «love,» why not say honey
Is wax? Heaven is not love, 't is matrimony.

XV.

Is not all love prohibited whatever,
Excepting marriage? which is love, no doubt,
After a sort; but somehow people never
With the same thought the two words have help'd out:
Love may exist *with* marriage, and *should* ever,
And marriage also may exist without;
But love *sans* banns is both a sin and shame,
And ought to go by quite another name.

XVI.

Now if the «court» and «camp» and «grove» be not
Recruited all with constant married men,
Who never coveted their neighbour's lot,
I say *that* line 's a lapsus of the pen;—
Strange too in my «buon camerado» Scott,
So celebrated for his morals, when
My Jeffrey held him up as an example
To me;—of which these morals are a sample.

XVII.

Well, if I don't succeed, I *have* succeeded,
And that 's enough; succeeded in my youth,
The only time when much success is needed:
And my success produced what I in sooth
Cared most about; it need not now be pleaded—
Whate'er it was, 't was mine; I 've paid, in truth,
Of late the penalty of such success,
But have not learn'd to wish it any less.

XVIII.

That suit in Chancery,—which some persons plead
In an appeal to the unborn, whom they,
In the faith of their procreative creed,
Baptize posterity, or future clay,—
To me seems but a dubious kind of reed
To lean on for support in any way;
Since odds are that posterity will know
No more of them, than they of her, I trow.

XIX.

Why, I 'm posterity—and so are you;
And whom do we remember? Not a hundred.
Were every memory written down all true,
The tenth or twentieth name would be but blunder'd:
Even Plutarch's Lives have but pick'd out a few,
And 'gainst those few your annalists have thunder'd;
And Mitford, in the nineteenth century,
Gives, with Greek truth, the good old Greek the lie.[1]

XX.

Good people all, of every degree,
Ye gentle readers and ungentle writers,
In this twelfth Canto 't is my wish to be
As serious as if I had for inditers
Malthus and Wilberforce: the last set free
The Negroes, and is worth a million fighters;
While Wellington has but enslaved the whites,
And Malthus does the thing 'gainst which he writes.

XXI.

I 'm serious—so are all men upon paper;
And why should I not form my speculation,
And hold up to the sun my little taper?
Mankind just now seem wrapt in meditation
On constitutions and steam-boats of vapour;
While sages write against all procreation,
Unless a man can calculate his means
Of feeding brats the moment his wife weans.

XXII.

That 's noble! that 's romantic! For my part,
I think that «philo-genitiveness» is—
(Now here 's a word quite after my own heart,
Though there 's a shorter a good deal than this,
If that politeness set it not apart;
But I 'm resolved to say nought that 's amiss)—
I say, methinks that «philo-genitiveness»
Might meet from men a little more forgiveness.

XXIII.

And now to business. Oh, my gentle Juan!
Thou art in London—in that pleasant place
Where every kind of mischief 's daily brewing,
Which can await warm youth in its wild race.
'T is true, that thy career it not a new one;
Thou art no novice in the headlong chase
Of early life; but this is a new land
Which foreigners can never understand.

XXIV.

What with a small diversity of climate,
Of hot or cold, mercurial or sedate,
I could send forth my mandate like a primate,
Upon the rest of Europe's social state;
But thou art the most difficult to rhyme at,
Great Britain, which the Muse may penetrate:
All countries have their «lions,» but in thee
There is but one superb menagerie.

XXV.

But I am sick of politics. Begin,
«Paulo Majora.» Juan, undecided
Amongst the paths of being «taken in,»
Above the ice had like a skaiter glided:
When tired of play, he flirted without sin
With some of those fair creatures who have prided
Themselves on innocent tantalization,
And hate all vice except its reputation.

XXVI.

But these are few, and in the end they make
Some devilish escapade or stir, which shows
That even the purest people may mistake
Their way through virtue's primrose paths of snows;
And then men stare, as if a new ass spake
To Balaam, and from tongue to ear o'erflows
Quick-silver small talk, ending (if you note it)
With the kind world's amen!—«Who would have thought it?»

XXVII.

The little Leila, with her orient eyes
And taciturn Asiatic disposition
(Which saw all western things with small surprise,
To the surprise of people of condition,
Who think that novelties are butterflies
To be pursued as food for inanition),
Her charming figure and romantic history,
Became a kind of fashionable mystery.

XXVIII.

The women much divided—as is usual
Amongst the sex in little things or great.
Think not, fair creatures, that I mean to abuse you all—
I have always liked you better than I state:
Since I 've grown moral, still I must accuse you all
Of being apt to talk at a great rate;
And now there was a general sensation
Amongst you, about Leila's education.

XXIX.

In one point only were you settled—and
You had reason; 't was that a young child of Grace,
As beautiful as her own native land,
And far away, the last bud of her race,
Howe'er our friend Don Juan might command
Himself for five, four, three, or two years' space,
Would be much better taught beneath the eye
Of peeresses whose follies had run dry.

XXX.

So first there was a generous emulation,
And then there was a general competition
To undertake the orphan's education.
As Juan was a person of condition,
It had been an affront on this occasion
To talk of a subscription or petition;
But sixteen dowagers, ten unwed she sages,
Whose tale belongs to «Hallam's Middle Ages,»

XXXI.

And one or two sad, separate wives, without
A fruit to bloom upon their withering bough—
Begg'd to bring *up* the little girl, and «*out*,»—
For that 's the phrase that settles all things now,
Meaning a virgin's first blush at a rout,
And all her points as thorough-bred to show:
And I assure you, that like virgin honey
Tastes their first season (mostly if they have money).

XXXII.

How all the needy honourable misters,
Each out-at-elbow peer, or desperate dandy,
The watchful mothers and the careful sisters
(Who, by the by, when clever, are more handy
At making matches, where «'t is gold that glisters,»
Than their *he* relatives), like flies o'er candy,
Buzz round «*the* Fortune» with their busy battery,
To turn her head with waltzing and with flattery!

XXXIII.

Each aunt, each cousin hath her speculation;
Nay, married dames will now and then discover
Such pure disinterestedness of passion,
I 've known them court an heiress for their lover.
«Tantæne!» Such the virtues of high station,
Even in the hopeful isle, whose outlet 's «Dover!»
While the poor rich wretch, object of these cares,
Has cause to wish her sire had had male heirs.

XXXIV.

Some are soon bagg'd, but some reject three dozen.
'T is fine to see them scattering refusals
And wild dismay o'er every angry cousin
(Friends of the party) who begin accusals
Such as—«Unless Miss (Blank) meant to have chosen
Poor Frederick, why did she accord perusals
To his billets? *Why* waltz with him? Why, I pray,
Look *yes* last night, and yet say *no* to-day?

XXXV.

«Why?—Why?——Besides, Fred. really was *attach'd;*
'T was not her fortune—he has enough without:
The time will come she 'll wish that she had snatch'd
So good an opportunity, no doubt:—
But the old marchioness some plan had hatch'd,
As I 'll tell Aurea at to-morrow's rout:
And after all poor Frederick may do better—
Pray, did you see her answer to his letter?»

XXXVI.

Smart uniforms and sparkling coronets
Are spurn'd in turn, until her turn arrives,
After male loss of time, and hearts, and bets
Upon the sweep-stakes for substantial wives:
And when at last the pretty creature gets
Some gentleman who fights, or writes, or drives,
It soothes the awkward squad of the rejected
To find how very badly she selected.

XXXVII.

For sometimes they accept some long pursuer,
Worn out with importunity; or fall
(But here perhaps the instances are fewer)
To the lot of him who scarce pursued at all.
A hazy widower turn'd of forty 's sure
(If 't is not vain examples to recal)
To draw a high prize: now, howe'er he got her, I
See nought more strange in this than t'other lottery.

XXXVIII.

I, for my part—(one «modern instance» more,
«True, 't is a pity—pity 't is, 't is true»—
Was chosen from out an amatory score,
Albeit my years were less discreet than few;
But, though I also had reform'd before
Those became one who soon were to be two,
I 'll not gainsay the generous public's voice—
That the young lady made a monstrous choice.

XXXIX.

Oh, pardon me digression—or at least
Peruse! 'T is always with a moral end
That I dissert, like grace before a feast:
For like an aged aunt, or tiresome friend,
A rigid guardian, or a zealous priest,
My Muse by exhortation means to mend
All people, at all times, and in most places,
Which puts my Pegasus to these grave paces.

XL.

But now I 'm going to be immoral; now
I mean to show things really as they are,
Not as they ought to be: for I avow,
That till we see what 's what in fact, we 're far
From much improvement with that virtuous plough
Which skims the surface, leaving scarce a scar
Upon the black loam long manured by Vice,
Only to keep its corn at the old price.

XLI.

But first of little Leila we 'll dispose;
For like a day-dawn she was young and pure,
Or like the old comparison of snows,
Which are more pure than pleasant to be sure,
Like many people every body knows,
Don Juan was delighted to secure
A goodly guardian for his infant charge,
Who might not profit much by being at large.

XLII.

Besides, he had found out that he was no tutor
(I wish that others would find out the same):
And rather wish'd in such things to stand neuter,
For silly wards will bring their guardians blame:
So, when he saw each ancient dame a suitor
To make his little wild Asiatic tame,
Consulting the «Society for Vice
Suppression,» Lady Pinchbeck was his choice.

XLIII.

Olden she was—but had been very young:
Virtuous she was—and had been, I believe:
Although the world has such an evil tongue
That—but my chaster ear will not receive
An echo of a syllable that 's wrong:
In fact, there 's nothing makes me so much grieve
As that abominable tittle tattle,
Which is the cud eschew'd by human cattle.

XLIV.

Moreover I 've remark'd (and I was once
A slight observer in a modest way),
And so may every one except a dunce,
That ladies in their youth a little gay,
Besides their knowledge of the world, and sense
Of the sad consequence of going astray,
Are wiser in their warnings 'gainst the woe
Which the mere passionless can never know.

XLV.

While the harsh prude indemnifies her virtue
By railing at the unknown and envied passion,
Seeking far less to save you than to hurt you,
Or, what 's still worse, to put you out of fashion,—
The kinder veteran with calm words will court you,
Entreating you to pause before you dash on;
Expounding and illustrating the riddle
Of Epic Love's beginning, end, and middle.

XLVI.

Now, whether it be thus, or that they are stricter,
As better knowing why they should be so,
I think you 'll find from many a family picture,
That daughters of such mothers as may know
The world by experience rather than by lecture,
Turn out much better for the Smithfield show
Of vestals brought into the marriage mart,
Than those bred up by prudes without a heart.

XLVII.

I said that Lady Pinchbeck had been talk'd about—
As who has not, if female, young, and pretty?
But now no more the ghost of scandal stalk'd about;
She merely was deem'd amiable and witty,
And several of her best bon-mots were hawk'd about;
Then she was given to charity and pity,
And pass'd (at least the latter years of life)
For being a most exemplary wife.

XLVIII.

High in high circles, gentle in her own,
She was the mild reprover of the young
Whenever—which means every day—they 'd shown
An awkward inclination to go wrong.
The quantity of good she did 's unknown,
Or at the least would lengthen out my song:—
In brief, the little orphan of the east
Had raised an interest in her which increased.

XLIX.

Juan too was a sort of favourite with her,
Because she thought him a good heart at bottom,
A little spoil'd, but not so altogether;
Which was a wonder, if you think who got him,
And how he had been toss'd, he scarce knew whither:
Though this might ruin others, it did *not* him,
At least entirely—for he had seen too many
Changes in youth to be surprised at any.

L.

And these vicissitudes tell best in youth;
For when they happen at a riper age,
People are apt to blame the Fates, forsooth,
And wonder Providence is not more sage.
Adversity is the first path to truth:
He who hath proved war, storm, or woman's rage,
Whether his winters be eighteen or eighty,
Hath won the experience which is deem'd so weighty.

LI.

How far it profits is another matter.—
Our hero gladly saw his little charge
Safe with a lady, whose last grown-up daughter
Being long married, and thus set at large,
Had left all the accomplishments she taught her
To be transmitted, like the lord mayor's barge,
To the next comer; or—as it will tell
More muse-like—like Cytherea's shell.

LII.

I call such things transmission; for there is
A floating balance of accomplishment
Which forms a pedigree from Miss to Miss,
According as their minds or backs are bent.
Some waltz; some draw; some fathom the abyss
Of metaphysics; others are content
With music; the most moderate shine as wits,
While others have a genius turn'd for fits.

LIII.

But whether fits, or wits, or harpsichords,
Theology, fine arts, or finer stays
May be the baits for gentlemen or lords
With regular descent, in these our days
The last year to the new transfers its hoards;
New vestals claim men's eyes with the same praise
Of «elegant,» *et cetera,* in fresh batches—
All matchless creatures and yet bent on matches.

LIV.

But now I will begin my poem. 'Tis
Perhaps a little strange, if not quite new,
That from the first of cantos up to this
I've not begun what we have to go through.
These first twelve books are merely flourishes,
Preludios, trying just a string or two
Upon my lyre, or making the pegs sure;
And when so, you shall have the overture.

LV.

My Muses do not care a pinch of rosin
About what 's call'd success, or not succeeding:
Such thoughts are quite below the strain they 've chosen;
'Tis a «great moral lesson» they are reading.
I thought, at setting off, about two dozen
Cantos would do; but, at Apollo's pleading,
If that my Pegasus should not be founder'd,
I think to canter gently through a hundred.

LVI.

Don Juan saw that microcosm on stilts,
Yclept the great world; for it is the least,
Although the highest: but as swords have hilts
By which their power of mischief is increased,
When man in battle or in quarrel tilts,
Thus the low world, north, south, or west, or east,
Must still obey the high—which is their handle,
Their moon, their sun, their gas, their farthing candle.

LVII.

He had many friends who had many wives, and was
Well look'd upon by both, to that extent
Of friendship which you may accept or pass;
It does nor good nor harm, being merely meant
To keep the wheels going of the higher class,
And draw them nightly when a ticket 's sent:
And what with masquerades, and fêtes, and balls,
For the first season such a life scarce palls.

LVIII.

A young unmarried man, with a good name
And fortune, has an awkward part to play;
For good society is but a game,
«The royal game of goose,» as I may say,
Where every body has some separate aim,
An end to answer, or a plan to lay—
The single ladies wishing to be double,
The married ones to save the virgins trouble.

LIX.

I don't mean this as general, but particular
Examples may be found of such pursuits:
Though several also keep their perpendicular
Like poplars, with good principles for roots;
Yet many have a method more *reticular*—
«Fishers for men,» like sirens with soft lutes;
For talk six times with the same single lady,
And you may get the wedding dresses ready.

LX.

Perhaps you 'll have a letter from the mother,
To say her daughter's feelings are trepann'd;
Perhaps you 'll have a visit from the brother,
All strut, and stays, and whiskers, to demand
What «your intentions are?»—One way or other
It seems the virgin's heart expects your hand;
And, between pity for her case and yours,
You 'll add to matrimony's list of cures.

LXI.

I've known a dozen weddings made even *thus,*
And some of them high names: I have also known
Young men who—though they hated to discuss
Pretensions which they never dream'd to have shown—
Yet neither frighten'd by a female fuss,
Nor by mustachios moved, were let alone,
And lived, as did the broken-hearted fair,
In happier plight than if they form'd a pair.

LXII.

There 's also nightly, to the uninitiated,
A peril—not indeed like love or marriage,
But not the less for this to be depreciated:
It is—I meant and mean not to disparage
The show of virtue even in the vitiated—
It adds an outward grace unto their carriage—
But to denounce the amphibious sort of harlot,
«Couleur de rose,» who 's neither white nor scarlet.

LXIII.

Such is your cold coquette, who can't say «No,»
And won't say «Yes,» and keeps you on and off-ing,
On a lee shore, till it begins to blow—
Then sees your heart wreck'd, with an inward scoffing;
This works a world of sentimental woe,
And sends new Werters yearly to their coffin;
But yet is merely innocent flirtation,
Not quite adultery, but adulteration.

LXIV.

«Ye gods, I grow a talker!» Let us prate.
The next of perils, though I place it *sternest,*
Is when, without regard to «Church or State,»
A wife makes or takes love in upright earnest.
Abroad, such things decide few women's fate—
(Such, early traveller! is the truth thou learnest)—
But in old England when a young bride errs,
Poor thing! Eve's was a trifling case to her's;

LXV.

For 'tis a low, newspaper, humdrum, lawsuit
Country, where a young couple of the same ages
Can't form a friendship but the world o'erawes it.
Then there 's the vulgar trick of those d—d damages!
A verdict—grievous foe to those who cause it!—
Forms a sad climax to romantic homages;
Besides those soothing speeches of the pleaders,
And evidences which regale all readers!

LXVI.

But they who blunder thus, are raw beginners;
A little genial sprinkling of hypocrisy
Has saved the fame of thousand splendid sinners,
The loveliest oligarchs of our gynocrasy;
You may see such at all the balls and dinners,
Among the proudest of our aristocracy,
So gentle, charming, charitable, chaste—
And all by having *tact* as well as taste.

LXVII.

Juan, who did not stand in the predicament
Of a mere novice, had one safeguard more;
For he was sick——no, 't was not the word *sick* I meant—
But he had seen so much good love before,
That he was not in heart so very weak;—I meant
But thus much, and no sneer against the shore
Of white cliffs, white necks, blue eyes, bluer stockings,
Tithes, taxes, duns, and doors with double knockings.

LXVIII.

But coming young from lands and scenes romantic,
Where lives, not lawsuits, must be risk'd for passion,
And passion's self must have a spice of frantic,
Into a country where 't is half a fashion,
Seem'd to him half commercial, half pedantic,
Howe'er he might esteem this moral nation;
Besides (alas! his taste—forgive and pity!)
At first he did not think the women pretty.

LXIX.

I say at *first*—for he found out at *last*,
But by degrees, that they were fairer far
Than the more glowing dames whose lot is cast
Beneath the influence of the eastern star—
A further proof we should not judge in haste;
Yet inexperience could not be his bar
To taste:—the truth is, if men would confess,
That novelties *please* less than they *impress*.

LXX.

Though travell'd, I have never had the luck to
Trace up those shuffling negroes, Nile or Niger,
To that impracticable place, Timbuctoo,
Where geography finds no one to oblige her
With such a chart as may be safely stuck to—
For Europe ploughs in Afric like «bos piger:»
But if I *had been* at Timbuctoo, there
No doubt I should be told that black is fair.

LXXI.

It is. I will not swear that black is white;
But I suspect in fact that white is black,
And the whole matter rests upon eye-sight.
Ask a blind man, the best judge. You 'll attack
Perhaps this new position—but I 'm right;
Or if I 'm wrong, I 'll not be ta'en aback:—
He hath no morn nor night, but all is dark
Within; and what see'st thou? A dubious spark.

LXXII.

But I 'm relapsing into metaphysics,
That labyrinth, whose clue is of the same
Construction as your cures for hectic phthisics,
Those bright moths fluttering round a dying flame:
And this reflection brings me to plain physics,
And to the beauties of a foreign dame,
Compared with those of our pure pearls of price,
Those Polar summers, *all* sun, and some ice.

LXXIII.

Or say they are like virtuous mermaids, whose
Beginnings are fair faces, ends mere fishes;—
Not that there 's not a quantity of those
Who have a due respect for their own wishes.
Like Russians rushing from hot baths to snows[3]
Are they, at bottom virtuous even when vicious:
They warm into a scrape, but keep of course,
As a reserve, a plunge into remorse.

LXXIV.

But this has nought to do with their outsides.
I said that Juan did not think them pretty
At the first blush; for a fair Briton hides
Half her attractions—probably from pity—
And rather calmly into the heart glides,
Than storms it as a foe would take a city;
But once there (if you doubt this, prithee try)
She keeps it for you like a true ally.

LXXV.

She cannot step as does an Arab barb,
Or Andalusian girl from mass returning,
Nor wear as gracefully as Gauls her garb,
Nor in her eye Ausonia's glance is burning;
Her voice, though sweet, is not so fit to warble
those bravuras (which I still am learning
To like, though I have been seven years in Italy,
And have, or had, an ear that served me prettily);—

LXXVI.

She cannot do these things, nor one or two
Others, in that off-hand and dashing style
Which takes so much—to give the devil his due;
Nor is she quite so ready with her smile,
Nor settles all things in one interview
(A thing approved as saving time and toil);—
But though the soil may give you time and trouble,
Well cultivated, it will render double.

LXXVII.

And if in fact she takes to a «grande passion,»
It is a very serious thing indeed:
Nine times in ten 't is but caprice or fashion,
Coquetry, or a wish to take the lead,
The pride of a mere child with a new sash on,
Or wish to make a rival's bosom bleed;
But the tenth instance will be a Tornado,
For there 's no saying what they will or may do.

LXXVIII.

The reason 's obvious: if there 's an eclât,
They lose their caste at once, as do the Parias;
And when the delicacies of the law
Have fill'd their papers with their comments various,
Society, that china without flaw,
(The hypocrite!) will banish them like Marius,
To sit amidst the ruins of their guilt:
For Fame 's a Carthage not so soon rebuilt.

LXXIX.

Perhaps this is as it should be;—it is
A comment on the Gospel's «Sin no more,
And be thy sins forgiven:»—but upon this
I leave the saints to settle their own score.
Abroad, though doubtless they do much amiss,
An erring woman finds an open door
For her return to virtue—as they call
The lady who should be at home to all.

LXXX.

For me, I leave the matter where I find it,
Knowing that such uneasy virtue leads
People some ten times less in fact to mind it,
And care but for discoveries and not deeds.
And as for chastity, you 'll never bind it
By all the laws the strictest lawyer pleads,
But aggravate the crime you have not prevented,
By rendering desperate those who had else repented.

LXXXI.

But Juan was no casuist, nor had ponder'd
Upon the moral lessons of mankind:
Besides, he had not seen, of several hundred,
A lady altogether to his mind.
A little «blasé»—'t is not to be wonder'd
At, that his heart had got a tougher rind:
And though not vainer from his past success,
No doubt his sensibilities were less.

LXXXII.

He also had been busy seeing sights—
The parliament and all the other houses;
Had sate beneath the gallery at nights,
To hear debates whose thunder *roused* (not *rouses*)
The world to gaze upon those northern lights[4]
Which flash'd as far as where the musk-bull browses:
He had also stood at times behind the throne—
But Grey was not arrived, and Chatham gone.

LXXXIII.

He saw, however, at the closing session,
That noble sight, when *really* free the nation,
A king in constitutional possession
Of such a throne as is the proudest station,
Though despots know it not—till the progression
Of freedom shall complete their education.
'T is not mere splendour makes the show august
To eye or heart—it is the people's trust.

LXXXIV.

There too he saw (whate'er he may be now)
A prince, the prince of princes, at the time
With fascination in his very bow,
And full of promise, as the spring of prime.
Though royalty was written on his brow,
He had *then* the grace too, rare in every clime,
Of being, without alloy of fop or beau,
A finish'd gentleman from top to toe.

LXXXV.

And Juan was received, as hath been said,
Into the best society: and there
Occurr'd what often happens, I 'm afraid,
However disciplined and debonnaire:
The talent and good humour he display'd,
Besides the mark'd distinction of his air,
Exposed him, as was natural, to temptation,
Even though himself avoided the occasion.

LXXXVI.

But what, and where, with whom, and when, and why,
Is not to be put hastily together;
And as my object is morality
(Whatever people say) I don't know whether
I 'll leave a single reader's eyelid dry,
But harrow up his feelings till they wither,
And hew out a huge monument of pathos,
As Philip's son proposed to do with Athos.[5]

LXXXVII.

Here the twelfth Canto of our introduction
Ends. When the body of the book 's begun,
You 'll find it of a different construction
From what some people say 't will be when done:
The plan at present 's simply in concoction.
I can't oblige you, reader! to read on;
That 's your affair, not mine: a real spirit
Should neither court neglect, nor dread to bear it.

LXXXVIII.

And if my thunderbolt not always rattles,
Remember, reader! you have had before
The worst of tempests and the best of battles
That e'er were brew'd from elements or gore,
Besides the most sublime of—Heaven knows what else:
An usurer could scarce expect much more—
But my best canto, save one on astronomy,
Will turn upon «political economy.»

LXXXIX.

That is your present theme for popularity:
Now that the public hedge hath scarce a stake,
It grows an act of patriotic charity,
To show the people the best way to break.
My plan (but I, if but for singularity,
Reserve it) will be very sure to take.
Meantime read all the national debt-sinkers,
And tell me what you think of your great thinkers.

CANTO XIII.

I.

I now mean to be serious;—it is time,
Since laughter now-a-days is deem'd too serious.
A jest at vice by virtue 's call'd a crime,
And critically held as deleterious:
Besides, the sad 's a source of the sublime,
Although when long a little apt to weary us;
And therefore shall my lay soar high and solemn,
As an old temple dwindled to a column.

II.

The Lady Adeline Amundeville
('T is an old Norman name, and to be found
In pedigrees by those who wander still
Along the last fields of that Gothic ground)
Was high-born, wealthy by her father's will,
And beauteous, even where beauties most abound,
In Britain—which of course true patriots find
The goodliest soil of body and of mind.

III.

I 'll not gainsay them; it is not my cue;
I leave them to their taste, no doubt the best:
An eye 's an eye, and whether black or blue,
Is no great matter, so 't is in request:
'T is nonsense to dispute about a hue—
The kindest may be taken as a test.
The fair sex should be always fair; and no man,
Till thirty, should perceive there 's a plain woman.

IV.

And after that serene and somewhat dull
Epoch, that awkward corner turn'd for days
More quiet, when our moon 's no more at full,
We may presume to criticise or praise;
Because indifference begins to lull
Our passions, and we walk in wisdom's ways;
Also because the figure and the face
Hint, that 't is time to give the younger place.

V.

I know that some would fain postpone this era,
Reluctant as all placemen to resign
Their post; but theirs is merely a chimera,
For they have pass'd life's equinoctial line:
But then they have their claret and madeira
To irrigate the dryness of decline;
And county meetings and the Parliament,
And debt, and what not, for their solace sent.

VI.

And is there not religion, and reform,
Peace, war, the taxes, and what 's call'd the «nation?»
The struggle to be pilots in a storm?
The landed and the monied speculation?
The joys of mutual hate to keep them warm,
Instead of love, that mere hallucination?
Now hatred is by far the longest pleasure;
Men love in haste, but they detest at leisure.

VII.

Rough Johnson, the great moralist, profess'd,
Right honestly, «he liked an honest hater»—
The only truth that yet has been confess'd
Within these latest thousand years or later.
Perhaps the fine old fellow spoke in jest;—
For my part, I am but a mere spectator,
And gaze where'er the palace or the hovel is,
Much in the mode of Goethe's Mephistopheles;

VIII.

But neither love nor hate in much excess;
Though 't was not once so. If I sneer sometimes,
It is because I cannot well do less,
And now and then it also suits my rhymes.
I should be very willing to redress
Men's wrongs, and rather check than punish crimes,
Had not Cervantes, in that too true tale
Of Quixote, shown how all such efforts fail.

IX.

Of all tales 't is the saddest—and more sad,
Because it makes us smile: his hero's right,
And still pursues the right;—to curb the bad,
His only object, and 'gainst odds to fight,
His guerdon: 't is his virtue makes him mad!
But his adventures form a sorry sight;—
A sorrier still is the great moral taught
By that real epic unto all who have thought.

X.

Redressing injury, revenging wrong,
To aid the damsel and destroy the caitiff;
Opposing singly the united strong,
From foreign yoke to free the helpless native;—
Alas! must noblest views, like an old song,
Be for mere fancy's sport a theme creative?
A jest, a riddle, fame through thin and thick sought?
And Socrates himself but Wisdom's Quixote?

XI.

Cervantes smiled Spain's chivalry away;
A single laugh demolish'd the right arm
Of his own country;—seldom since that day
Has Spain had heroes. While Romance could charm,
The world gave ground before her bright array;
And therefore have his volumes done such harm,
That all their glory, as a composition,
Was dearly purchased by his land's perdition.

XII.

I 'm «at my old Lunes»—digression, and forget
The Lady Adeline Amundeville;
The fair most fatal Juan ever met,
Although she was not evil nor meant ill;
But Destiny and Passion spread the net
(Fate is a good excuse for our own will),
And caught them; what do they *not* catch, methinks?
But I 'm not OEdipus, and life 's a sphinx.

XIII.

I tell the tale as it is told, nor dare
To venture a solution: «Davus sum!»
And now I will proceed upon the pair.
Sweet Adeline, amidst the gay world's hum,
Was the queen-bee, the glass of all that 's fair;
Whose charms made all men speak, and women dumb.
The last 's a miracle, and such was reckon'd,
And since that time there has not been a second.

XIV.

Chaste was she, to detraction's desperation,
And wedded unto one she had loved well—
A man known in the councils of the nation,
Cool, and quite English, imperturbable,
Though apt to act with fire upon occasion,
Proud of himself and her; the world could tell
Nought against either, and both seem'd secure—
She in her virtue, he in his hauteur.

XV.

It chanced some diplomatical relations,
Arising out of business, often brought
Himself and Juan in their mutual stations
Into close contact. Though reserved, nor caught
By specious seeming, Juan's youth, and patience,
And talent, on his haughty spirit wrought,
And form'd a basis of esteem, which ends
In making men what courtesy calls friends.

XVI.

And thus Lord Henry, who was cautious as
Reserve and pride could make him, and full slow
In judging men—when once his judgment was
Determined, right or wrong, on friend or foe,
Had all the pertinacity pride has,
Which knows no ebb to its imperious flow,
And loves or hates, disdaining to be guided,
Because its own good pleasure hath decided.

XVII.

His friendships therefore, and no less aversions,
Though oft well founded, which confirm'd but more
His prepossessions, like the laws of Persians
And Medes, would ne'er revoke what went before.
His feelings had not those strange fits, like tertians,
Of common likings, which make some deplore
What they should laugh at—the mere ague still
Of men's regard, the fever or the chill.

XVIII.

«'T is not in mortals to command success;
But *do you more*, Sempronius—*don't* deserve it.»
And take my word, you won't have any less:
Be wary, watch the time, and always serve it;
Give gently way, when there 's too great a press;
And for your conscience, only learn to nerve it,—
For, like a racer or a boxer training,
'T will make, if proved, vast efforts without paining.

XIX.

Lord Henry also liked to be superior,
As most men do, the little or the great;
The very lowest find out an inferior,
At least they think so, to exert their state
Upon: for there are very few things wearier
Than solitary pride's oppressive weight,
Which mortals generously would divide,
By bidding others carry while they ride.

XX.

In birth, in rank, in fortune likewise equal,
O'er Juan he could no distinction claim;
In years he had the advantage of time's sequel;
And, as he thought, in country much the same—
Because bold Britons have a tongue and free quill,
At which all modern nations vainly aim;
And the Lord Henry was a great debater,
So that few members kept the House up later.

XXI.

These were advantages: and then he thought—
It was his foible, but by no means sinister—
That few or none more than himself had caught
Court mysteries, having been himself a minister:
He liked to teach that which he had been taught,
And greatly shone whenever there had been a stir;
And reconciled all qualities which grace man,
Always a patriot, and sometimes a placeman.

XXII.

He liked the gentle Spaniard for his gravity;
He almost honour'd him for his docility,
Because, though young, he acquiesced with suavity,
Or contradicted but with proud humility.
He knew the world, and would not see depravity
In faults which sometimes show the soil's fertility,
If that the weeds o'erlive not the first crop,—
For then they are very difficult to stop.

XXIII.

And then he talk'd with him about Madrid,
Constantinople, and such distant places;
Where people always did as they were bid,
Or did what they should not with foreign graces.
Of coursers also spake they: Henry rid
Well, like most Englishmen, and loved the races;
And Juan, like a true-born Andalusian,
Could back a horse, as despots ride a Russian.

XXIV.

And thus acquaintance grew, at noble routs,
And diplomatic dinners, or at other—
For Juan stood well both with Ins and Outs,
As in Freemasonry a higher brother.
Upon his talent Henry had no doubts,
His manner show'd him sprung from a high mother;
And all men like to show their hospitality
To him whose breeding marches with his quality.

XXV.

At Blank-Blank Square;—for we will break no squares
By naming streets: since men are so censorious,
And apt to sow an author's wheat with tares,
Reaping allusions private and inglorious,
Where none were dreamt of, unto love's affairs,
Which were, or are, or are to be notorious,
That therefore do I previously declare,
Lord Henry's mansion was in Blank-Blank Square.

XXVI.

Also there bin[2] another pious reason
For making squares and streets anonymous;
Which is, that there is scarce a single season
Which doth not shake some very splendid house
With some slight heart-quake of domestic treason—
A topic scandal doth delight to rouse:
Such I might stumble over unawares,
Unless I knew the very chastest squares.

XXVII.

'T is true, I might have chosen Piccadilly,
A place where peccadillos are unknown;
But I have motives, whether wise or silly,
For letting that pure sanctuary alone.
Therefore I name not square, street, place, until I
Find one where nothing naughty can be shown,
A vestal shrine of innocence of heart:
Such are——but I have lost the London Chart.

XXVIII.

At Henry's mansion then in Blank-Blank Square,
Was Juan a recherché, welcome guest,
As many other noble scions were;
And some who had but talent for their crest;
Or wealth, which is a passport every where;
Or even mere fashion, which indeed 's the best
Recommendation, and to be well dress'd
Will very often supersede the rest.

XXIX.

And since «there 's safety in a multitude
Of counsellors,» as Solomon has said,
Or some one for him, in some sage grave mood;—
Indeed we see the daily proof display'd
In senates, at the bar, in wordy feud,
Where'er collective wisdom can parade,
Which is the only cause that we can guess
Of Britain's present wealth and happiness;—

XXX.

But as «there 's safety grafted in the number
Of counsellors» for men,—thus for the sex
A large acquaintance lets not virtue slumber;
Or should it shake, the choice will more perplex—
Variety itself will more encumber.
'Midst many rocks we guard more against wrecks;
And thus with women: howsoe'er it shock some's
Self-love, there 's safety in a crowd of coxcombs.

XXXI.

But Adeline had not the least occasion
For such a shield, which leaves but little merit
To virtue proper, or good education.
Her chief resource was in her own high spirit,
Which judged mankind at their due estimation;
And for coquetry, she disdain'd to wear it:
Secure of admiration, its impression
Was faint, as of an every-day possession.

XXXII.

To all she was polite without parade;
To some she show'd attention of that kind
Which flatters, but is flattery convey'd
In such a sort as cannot leave behind
A trace unworthy either wife or maid;—
A gentle, genial courtesy of mind,
To those who were, or pass'd for, meritorious,
Just to console sad Glory for being glorious;

XXXIII.

Which is in all respects, save now and then,
A dull and desolate appendage. Gaze
Upon the shades of those distinguish'd men,
Who were or are the puppet-shows of praise,
The praise of persecution. Gaze again
On the most favour'd; and, amidst the blaze
Of sunset halos o'er the laurel-brow'd,
What can ye recognize?—A gilded cloud.

XXXIV.

There also was of course in Adeline
That calm patrician polish in the address,
Which ne'er can pass the equinoctial line
Of any thing which Nature would express:
Just as a Mandarin finds nothing fine,—
At least his manner suffers not to guess
That any thing he views can greatly please.
Perhaps we have borrow'd this from the Chinese—

XXXV.

Perhaps from Horace: his «*Nil admirari*»
Was what he call'd the «Art of Happiness;»
An art on which the artists greatly vary,
And have not yet attain'd to much success.
However, 't is expedient to be wary:
Indifference certes don't produce distress;
And rash enthusiasm in good society
Were nothing but a moral inebriety.

XXXVI.

But Adeline was not indifferent: for,
(*Now* for a common-place!) beneath the snow,
As a volcano holds the lava more
Within—*et cetera*. Shall I go on?—No!
I hate to hunt down a tired metaphor:
So let the often-used volcano go.
Poor thing! how frequently, by me and others,
It hath been stirr'd up till its smoke quite smothers!

XXXVII.

I 'll have another figure in a trice:
What say you to a bottle of champagne?
Frozen into a very vinous ice,
Which leaves few drops of that immortal rain,
Yet in the very centre, past all price,
About a liquid glassful will remain;
And this is stronger than the strongest grape
Could e'er express in its expanded shape:

XXXVIII.

'T is the whole spirit brought to a quintessence;
And thus the chilliest aspects may concentre
A hidden nectar under a cold presence.
And such are many—though I only meant her,
From whom I now deduce these moral lessons,
On which the Muse has always sought to enter:—
And your cold people are beyond all price,
When once you have broken their confounded ice.

XXXIX.

But after all they are a North-West passage
Unto the glowing India of the soul;
And as the good ships sent upon that message
Have not exactly ascertain'd the Pole
(Though Parry's efforts look a lucky presage)
Thus gentlemen may run upon a shoal;
For, if the Pole 's not open, but all frost
(A chance still), 't is a voyage or vessel lost.

XL.

And young beginners may as well commence
With quiet cruising o'er the ocean woman;
While those who are not beginners, should have sense
Enough to make for port, ere time shall summon
With his grey signal flag; and the past tense,
The dreary «*Fuimus*» of all things human,
Must be declined, while life 's thin thread 's spun out
Between the gaping heir and gnawing gout.

XLI.

But Heaven must be diverted: its diversion
Is sometimes truculent—but never mind:
The world upon the whole is worth the assertion
(If but for comfort) that all things are kind:
And that same devilish doctrine of the Persian,
Of the two Principles, but leaves behind
As many doubts as any other doctrine
Has ever puzzled Faith withal, or yoked her in.

XLII.

The English winter—ending in July,
To recommence in August—now was done.
'T is the postilion's Paradise: wheels fly;
On roads, east, south, north, west, there is a run.
But for post-horses who finds sympathy?
Man's pity for himself, or for his son,
Always premising that said son at college
Has not contracted much more debt than knowledge.

XLIII.

The London winter 's ended in July—
Sometimes a little later. I don't err
In this: whatever other blunders lie
Upon my shoulders, here I must aver
My Muse a glass of Weatherology;
For Parliament is our barometer;
Let Radicals its other acts attack,
Its sessions form our only almanack.

XLIV.

When its quicksilver 's down at zero,—lo!
Coach, chariot, luggage, baggage, equipage!
Wheels whirl from Carlton Palace to Soho,
And happiest they who horses can engage;
The turnpikes glow with dust; and Rotten Row
Sleeps from the chivalry of this bright age:
And tradesmen, with long bills and longer faces,
Sigh—as the postboys fasten on the traces.

XLV.

They and their bills, «Arcadians both,»[3] are left
To the Greek kalends of another session.
Alas! to them of ready cash bereft,
What hope remains? Of *hope* the full possession,
Or generous draft, conceded as a gift,
At a long date—till they can get a fresh one,—
Hawk'd about at a discount, small or large;—
Also the solace of an overcharge.

XLVI.

But these are trifles. Downward flies my Lord,
Nodding beside my Lady in his carriage.
Away! away! «Fresh horses!» are the word,
And changed as quickly as hearts after marriage;
The obsequious landlord hath the change restored;
The postboys have no reason to disparage
Their fee; but, ere the water'd wheels may hiss hence,
The ostler pleads for a reminiscence.

XLVII.

'T is granted; and the valet mounts the dickey—
That gentleman of lords and gentlemen;
Also my Lady's gentlewoman, tricky,
Trick'd out, but modest more than poet's pen
Can paint, «*Cosi Viaggino i Ricchi!*»
(Excuse a foreign slipslop now and then,
If but to show I 've travell'd; and what 's travel,
Unless it teaches one to quote and cavil?»)

XLVIII.

The London winter and the country summer
Were well nigh over. 'T is perhaps a pity,
When Nature wears the gown that doth become her,
To lose those best months in a sweaty city,
And wait until the nightingale grows dumber,
Listening debates not very wise or witty,
Ere patriots their true *country* can remember;—
But there 's no shooting (save grouse) till September.

XLIX.

I 've done with my tirade. The world was gone;
The twice two thousand, for whom earth was made,
Were vanish'd to be what they call alone,—
That is, with thirty servants for parade,
As many guests or more; before whom groan
As many covers, duly, daily, laid.
Let none accuse old England's hospitality—
Its quantity is but condensed to quality.

L.

Lord Henry and the Lady Adeline
Departed, like the rest of their compeers,
The peerage, to a mansion very fine;
The Gothic Babel of a thousand years.
None than themselves could boast a longer line,
Where time through heroes and through beauties steers;
And oaks, as olden as their pedigree,
Told of their sires, a tomb in every tree.

LI.

A paragraph in every paper told
Of their departure: such is modern fame:
'T is pity that it takes no further hold
Than an advertisement, or much the same;
When ere the ink be dry, the sound grows cold.
The Morning Post was foremost to proclaim—
«Departure, for his country seat to-day,
Lord H. Amundeville and Lady A.

LII.

«We understand the splendid host intends
To entertain, this autumn, a select
And numerous party of his noble friends;
'Midst whom, we have heard from sources quite correct,
The Duke of D—— the shooting season spends,
With many more by rank and fashion deck'd;
Also a foreigner of high condition,
The envoy of the secret Russian mission.»

LIII.

And thus we see—who doubts the Morning Post?
(Whose articles are like the «thirty nine,»
Which those most swear to who believe them most)—
Our gay Russ Spaniard was ordain'd to shine,
Deck'd by the rays reflected from his host,
With those who, Pope says, «greatly daring dine.»
'T is odd, but true,—last war, the news abounded
More with these dinners than the kill'd or wounded.—

LIV.

As thus: «On Thursday there was a grand dinner;
Present, lords A. B. C.»—Earls, dukes, by name
Announced with no less pomp than victory's winner:
Then underneath, and in the very same
Column: «Date; Falmouth. There has lately been here
The slap-dash regiment, so well known to fame;
Whose loss in the late action we regret:
The vacancies are fill'd up—see Gazette.»

LV.

To Norman Abbey whirl'd the noble pair,
An old, old monastery once, and now
Still older mansion, of a rich and rare
Mix'd Gothic, such as artists all allow
Few specimens yet left us can compare
Withal: it lies perhaps a little low,
Because the monks preferr'd a hill behind,
To shelter their devotion from the wind.

LVI.

It stood embosom'd in a happy valley,
Crown'd by high woodlands, where the Druid oak
Stood like Caractacus in act to rally
His host, with broad arms 'gainst the thunder-stroke;
And from beneath his boughs were seen to sally
The dappled foresters—as day awoke,
The branching stag swept down with all his herd,
To quaff a brook which murmur'd like a bird.

LVII.

Before the mansion lay a lucid lake,
Broad as transparent, deep, and freshly fed
By a river, which its soften'd way did take
In currents through the calmer water spread
Around: the wild fowl nestled in the brake
And sedges, brooding in their liquid bed:
The woods sloped downwards to its brink, and stood
With their green faces fix'd upon the flood.

LVIII.

Its outlet dash'd into a deep cascade,
Sparkling with foam, until again subsiding
Its shriller echoes—like an infant made
Quiet—sank into softer ripples, gliding
Into a rivulet; and, thus allay'd,
Pursued its course, now gleaming, and now hiding
Its windings through the woods; now clear, now blue,
According as the skies their shadows threw.

LIX.

A glorious remnant of the Gothic pile
(While yet the church was Rome's), stood half apart
In a grand arch, which once screen'd many an aisle.
These last had disappear'd—a loss to art:
The first yet frown'd superbly o'er the soil,
And kindled feelings in the roughest heart,
Which mourn'd the power of time's or tempest's march,
In gazing on that venerable arch.

LX.

Within a niche, nigh to its pinnacle,
Twelve saints had once stood sanctified in stone:
But these had fallen, not when the friars fell,
But in the war which struck Charles from his throne,
When each house was a fortalice—as tell
The annals of full many a line undone,—
The gallant cavaliers, who fought in vain
For those who knew not to resign or reign.

LXI.

But in a higher niche, alone, but crown'd,
The Virgin Mother of the God-born child,
With her son in her bless'd arms, look'd round,
Spared by some chance when all beside was spoil'd;
She made the earth below seem holy ground.
This may be superstition, weak or wild,
But even the faintest relics of a shrine
Of any worship, wake some thoughts divine.

LXII.

A mighty window, hollow in the centre,
Shorn of its glass of thousand colourings,
Through which the deepen'd glories once could enter,
Streaming from off the sun like seraph's wings,
Now yawns all desolate: now loud, now fainter,
The gale sweeps through its fretwork, and oft sings
The owl his anthem, where the silenced quire
Lie with their hallelujahs quench'd like fire.

LXIII.

But in the noontide of the moon, and when
The wind is winged from one point of heaven,
There moans a strange unearthly sound, which then
Is musical—a dying accent driven
Through the huge arch, which soars and sinks again.
Some deem it but the distant echo given
Back to the night-wind by the waterfall,
And harmonized by the old choral wall:

LXIV.

Others, that some original shape or form,
Shaped by decay perchance, hath given the power
(Though less than that of Memnon's statue, warm
In Egypt's rays, to harp at a fix'd hour)
To this grey ruin, with a voice to charm.
Sad, but serene, it sweeps o'er tree or tower:
The cause I know not, nor can solve; but such
The fact:—I 've heard it,—once perhaps too much.

LXV.

Amidst the court a Gothic fountain play'd,
Symmetrical, but deck'd with carvings quaint—
Strange faces, like to men in masquerade,
And here perhaps a monster, there a saint:
The spring gush'd through grim mouths, of granite made
And sparkled into basins, where it spent
Its little torrent in a thousand bubbles,
Like man's vain glory, and his vainer troubles.

LXVI.

The mansion's self was vast and venerable,
With more of the monastic than has been
Elsewhere preserved: the cloisters still were stable,
The cells too and refectory, I ween:
An exquisite small chapel had been able,
Still unimpair'd, to decorate the scene;
The rest had been reform'd, replaced, or sunk,
And spoke more of the baron than the monk.

LXVII.

Huge halls, long galleries, spacious chambers, join'd
By no quite lawful marriage of the arts,
Might shock a connoisseur: but, when combined,
Form'd a whole which, irregular in parts,
Yet left a grand impression on the mind,
At least of those whose eyes are in their hearts.
We gaze upon a giant for his stature,
Nor judge at first if all be true to nature.

LXVIII.

Steel barons, molten the next generation
To silken rows of gay and garter'd earls,
Glanced from the walls in goodly preservation;
And Lady Marys, blooming into girls,
With fair long locks, had also kept their station;
And countesses mature in robes and pearls:
Also some beauties of Sir Peter Lely,
Whose drapery hints we may admire them freely:

LXIX.

Judges, in very formidable ermine
Were there, with brows that did not much invite
The accused to think their lordships would determine
His cause by leaning much from might to right:
Bishops, who had not left a single sermon;
Attorneys-general, awful to the sight,
As hinting more (unless our judgments warp us)
Of the «Star Chamber'» than of «Habeas Corpus.»

LXX.

Generals, some all in armour, of the old
And iron time, ere lead had ta'en the lead;
Others in wigs of Marlborough's martial fold,
Huger than twelve of our degenerate breed:
Lordlings, with staves of white or keys of gold:
Nimrods, whose canvas scarce contain'd the steed;
And here and there some stern high patriot stood,
Who could not get the place for which he sued.

LXXI.

But, ever and anon, to soothe your vision,
Fatigued with these hereditary glories,
There rose a Carlo Dolce or a Titian,
Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's:[4]
Here danced Albano's boys, and here the sea shone
In Vernet's ocean lights; and there the stories
Of martyrs awed, as Spagnoletto tainted
His brush with all the blood of all the sainted.

LXXII.

Here sweetly spread a landscape of Lorraine;
There Rembrandt made his darkness equal light,
Or gloomy Caravaggio's gloomier stain
Bronzed o'er some lean and stoic anchorite:—
But lo! a Teniers woos, and not in vain,
Your eyes to revel in a livelier sight:
His bell-mouth'd goblet makes me feel quite Danish
Or Dutch with thirst—What ho! a flask of Rhenish.

LXXIII.

Oh, reader! if that thou can'st read,—and know
'T is not enough to spell, or even to read,
To constitute a reader; there must go
Virtues of which both you and I have need.
Firstly, begin with the beginning (though
That clause is hard), and secondly, proceed;
Thirdly, commence not with the end—or, sinning
In this sort, end at least with the beginning.

LXXIV.

But, reader, thou hast patient been of late,
While I, without remorse of rhyme, or fear,
Have built and laid out ground at such a rate,
Dan Phœbus takes me for an auctioneer.
That poets were so from their earliest date,
By Homer's «Catalogue of Ships» is clear;
But a mere modern must be moderate—
I spare you, then, the furniture and plate.

LXXV.

The mellow autumn came, and with it came
The promised party, to enjoy its sweets.
The corn is cut, the manor full of game;
The pointer ranges, and the sportsman beats
In russet jacket:—lynx-like is his aim,
Full grows his bag, and wonder*ful* his feats.
Ah, nutbrown partridges! ah, brilliant pheasants!
And ah, ye poachers!—'T is no sport for peasants.

LXXVI.

An English autumn, though it hath no vines,
Blushing with Bacchant coronals along
The paths, o'er which the far festoon entwines
The red grape in the sunny lands of song,
Hath yet a purchased choice of choicest wines;
The claret light, and the madeira strong.
If Britain mourn her bleakness, we can tell her,
The very best of vineyards is the cellar.

LXXVII.

Then, if she hath not that serene decline
Which makes the southern autumn's day appear
As if 't would to a second spring resign
The season, rather than to winter drear,—
Of in-door comforts still she hath a mine,—
The sea-coal fires, the earliest of the year;
Without doors too she may complete in mellow,
As what is lost in green is gain'd in yellow.

LXXVIII.

And for the effeminate *villeggiatura*—
Rife with more horns than hounds—she hath the chase,
So animated that it might allure a
Saint from his beads to join the jocund race;
Even Nimrod's self might leave the plains of Dura,[6]
And wear the Melton jacket for a space:—
If she hath no wild boars, she hath a tame
Preserve of bores, who ought to be made game.

LXXIX.

The noble guests, assembled at the abbey,
Consisted of—we give the sex the *pas*—
The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke; the Countess Crabbey;
The Ladies Scilly, Busey;—Miss Eclât,
Miss Bombazeen, Miss Mackstay, Miss O'Tabby,
And Mrs Rabbi, the rich banker's squaw:
Also the Honourable Mrs Sleep,
Who look'd a white lamb, yet was a black sheep:

LXXX.

With other Countesses of Blank—but rank;
At once the «lie» and the «elite» of crowds;
Who pass like water filter'd in a tank,
All purged and pious from their native clouds;
Or paper turn'd to money by the Bank:
No matter how or why, the passport shrouds
The «passée» and the past; for good society
Is no less famed for tolerance than piety:

LXXXI.

That is, up to a certain point; which point
Forms the most difficult in punctuation.
Appearances appear to form the joint
On which it hinges in a higher station;
And so that no explosion cry «aroint
Thee, witch!» or each Medea has her Jason;
Or (to the point with Horace and with Pulci),
«*Omne tulit punctum, quæ miscuit utile dulci.*»

LXXXII.

I can't exactly trace their rule of right,
Which hath a little leaning to a lottery:
I've seen a virtuous woman put down quite
By the mere combination of a coterie;
Also a so-so matron boldly fight
Her way back to the world by dint of plottery,
And shine the very *Siria* of the spheres,
Escaping with a few slight, scarless sneers.

LXXXIII.

I have seen more than I'll say:—but we will see
How our *villeggiatura* will get on.
The party might consist of thirty-three
Of highest caste—the Bramins of the ton.
I have named a few; not foremost in degree,
But ta'en at hazard as the rhyme may run.
By way of sprinkling, scatter'd amongst these,
There also were some Irish absentees.

LXXXIV.

There was Parolles, too, the legal bully,
Who limits all his battles to the bar
And senate: when invited elsewhere, truly,
He shows more appetite for words than war.
There was the young bard Rackrhyme, who had newly
Come out and glimmer'd as a six-weeks' star.
There was Lord Pyrrho, too, the great free-thinker;
And Sir John Pottledeep, the mighty drinker.

LXXXV.

There was the Duke of Dash, who was a—duke,
«Ay, every inch a» duke; there were twelve peers
Like Charlemagne's—and all such peers in look
And intellect, that neither eyes nor ears
For commoners had ever them mistook.
There were the six Miss Rawbolds—pretty dears!
All song and sentiment; whose hearts were set
Less on a convent than a coronet.

LXXXVI.

There were four Honourable Misters, whose
Honour was more before their names than after;
There was the preux Chevalier de la Ruse,
Whom France and Fortune lately deign'd to waft here,
Whose chiefly harmless talent was to amuse;
But the clubs found it rather serious laughter,
Because—such was his magic power to please—
The dice seem'd charm'd too with his repartees.

LXXXVII.

There was Dick Dubious the metaphysician,
Who loved philosophy and a good dinner;
Angle, the soi-disant mathematician;
Sir Henry Silvercup, the great race-winner.
There was the Reverend Rodomont Precisian,
Who did not hate so much the sin as sinner;
And Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet,
Good at all things, but better at a bet.

LXXXVIII.

There was Jack Jargon, the gigantic guardsman;
And General Fireface, famous in the field,
A great tactician, and no less a swordsman,
Who ate, last war, more Yankees than he kill'd.
There was the waggish Welch Judge, Jefferies Hardsman,
In his grave office so completely skill'd,
That when a culprit came for condemnation,
He had his judge's joke for consolation.

LXXXIX.

Good company 's a chess-board—there are kings,
Queens, bishops, knights, rooks, pawns; the world 's a game;
Save that the puppets pull at their own strings;
Methinks gay Punch hath something of the same.
My Muse, the butterfly hath but her wings,
Not stings, and flits through ether without aim,
Alighting rarely: were she but a hornet,
Perhaps there might be vices which would mourn it.

XC.

I had forgotten—but must not forget—
An orator, the latest of the session,
Who had deliver'd well a very set
Smooth speech, his first and maidenly transgression
Upon debate: the papers echoed yet
With this debût, which made a strong impression,
And rank'd with what is every day display'd—
«The best first speech that ever yet was made.»

XCI.

Proud of his «Hear hims!» proud too of his vote
And lost virginity of oratory,
Proud of his learning (just enough to quote)
He revell'd in his Ciceronian glory:
With memory excellent to get by rote,
With wit to hatch a pun or tell a story,
Graced with some merit and with more effrontery,
«His country's pride,» he came down to the country.

XCII.

There also were two wits by acclamation,
Longbow from Ireland, Strongbow from the Tweed,
Both lawyers and both men of education;
But Strongbow's wit was of more polish'd breed:
Longbow was rich in an imagination
As beautiful and bounding as a steed,
But sometimes stumbling over a potatoe,—
While Strongbow's best things might have come from Cato.

XCIII.

Strongbow was like a new-tuned harpsichord;
But Longbow wild as an Æolian harp,
With which the winds of heaven can claim accord,
And make a music, whether flat or sharp.
Of Strongbow's talk you would not change a word;
At Longbow's phrases you might sometimes carp:
Both wits—one born so, and the other bred,
This by his heart—his rival by his head.

XCIV.

If all these seem a heterogeneous mass
To be assembled at a country seat,
Yet, think, a specimen of every class
Is better than a humdrum tête-a-tête.
The days of comedy are gone, alas!
When Congreve's fool could vie with Molière's *bête*:
Society is smoothed to that excess,
That manners hardly differ more than dress.

XCV.

Our ridicules are kept in the back-ground—
Ridiculous enough, but also dull;
Professions too are no more to be found
Professional; and there is nought to cull
Of folly's fruit; for though your fools abound,
They 're barren and not worth the pains to pull.
Society is now one polish'd horde,
Form'd of two mighty tribes, the *Bores* and *Bored*.

XCVI.

But from being farmers, we turn gleaners, leaning
The scanty but right-well thrash'd ears of truth;
And, gentle reader! when you gather meaning,
You may be Boaz, and I—modest Ruth.
Further I 'd quote, but Scripture, intervening,
Forbids. A great impression in my youth
Was made by Mrs Adams, where she cries
«That Scriptures out of church are blasphemies.»?

XCVII.

But when we can, we glean in this vile age
Of chaff, although our gleanings be not grist.
I must not quite omit the talking sage,
Kit-Cat, the famous conversationist,
Who, in his common-place book, had a page
Prepared each morn for evenings. «List, oh list!»—
«Alas, poor ghost!»—What unexpected woes
Await those who have studied their bons-mots!

XCVIII.

Firstly, they must allure the conversation
By many windings to their clever clinch;
And secondly, must let slip no occasion,
Nor *bate* (abate) their hearers of an *inch*,
But take an ell—and make a great sensation,
If possible; and thirdly, never flinch
When some smart talker puts them to the test,
But seize the last word, which no doubt 's the best.

XCIX.

Lord Henry and his lady were the hosts;
The party we have touch'd on were the guests:
Their table was a board to tempt even ghosts
To pass the Styx for more substantial feasts.
I will not dwell upon ragoûts or roasts,
Albeit all human history attests,
That happiness for man—the hungry sinner!—
Since Eve ate apples, much depends on dinner.

C.

Witness the lands which «flow'd with milk and honey,»
Held out unto the hungry Israelites:
To this we have added since, the love of money,
The only sort of pleasure which requites.
Youth fades, and leaves our days no longer sunny;
We tire of mistresses and parasites;
But oh, ambrosial cash! ah! who would lose thee?
When we no more can use, or even abuse thee!

CI.

The gentlemen got up betimes to shoot,
Or hunt; the young, because they liked the sport—
The first thing boys like, after play and fruit:
The middle-aged, to make the day more short;
For *ennui* is a growth of English root,
Though nameless in our language: we retort
The fact for words, and let the French translate
That awful yawn which sleep cannot abate.

CII.

The elderly walk'd through the library,
And tumbled books, or criticised the pictures,
Or saunter'd through the gardens piteously,
And made upon the hot-house several strictures,
Or rode a nag which trotted not too high,
Or on the morning papers read their lectures,
Or on the watch their longing eyes would fix,
Longing, at sixty, for the hour of six.

CIII.

But none were « gêné :» the great hour of union
Was rung by dinner's knell; till then all were
Masters of their own time—or in communion,
Or solitary, as they chose to bear
The hours, which how to pass is but to few known.
Each rose up at his own, and had to spare
What time he chose for dress, and broke his fast
When, where, and how he chose for that repast.

CIV.

The ladies—some rouged, some a little pale—
Met the morn as they might. If fine, they rode,
Or walk'd; if foul, they read, or told a tale;
Sung, or rehearsed the last dance from abroad;
Discuss'd the fashion which might next prevail;
And settled bonnets by the newest code;
Or cramm'd twelve sheets into one little letter,
To make each correspondent a new debtor.

CV.

For some had absent lovers, all had friends.
The earth has nothing like a she epistle,
And hardly heaven—because it never ends.
I love the mystery of a female missal,
Which, like a creed, ne'er says all it intends,
But full of cunning as Ulysses' whistle,
When he allured poor Dolon :—you had better
Take care what you reply to such a letter.

CVI.

Then there were billiards; cards too, but *no* dice;—
Save in the Clubs no man of honour plays;—
Boats when 't was water, skaiting when 't was ice,
And the hard frost destroy'd the scenting days:
And angling too, that solitary vice,
Whatever Isaac Walton sings or says:
The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet
Should have a hook, and a small trout to pull it.[8]

CVII.

With evening came the banquet and the wine;
The conversazione; the duet,
Attuned by voices more or less divine
(My heart or head aches with the memory yet).
The four Miss Rawbolds in a glee would shine;
But the two youngest loved more to be set
Down to the harp—because to music's charms
They added graceful necks, white hands and arms.

CVIII.

Sometimes a dance (though rarely on field days,
For then the gentlemen were rather tired)
Display'd some sylph-like figures in its maze:
Then there was small-talk ready when required;
Flirtation—but decorous; the mere praise
Of charms that should or should not be admired.
The hunters fought their fox-hunt o'er again,
And then retreated soberly—at ten.

CIX.

The politicians, in a nook apart,
Discuss'd the world, and settled all the spheres;
The wits watch'd every loop-hole for their art,
To introduce a bon-mot head and ears;
Small is the rest of those who would be smart,
A moment's good thing may have cost them years
Before they find an hour to introduce it,
And then, even *then*, some bore may make them lose it.

CX.

But all was gentle and aristocratic
In this our party; polish'd, smooth, and cold,
As Phidian forms cut out of marble Attic.
There now are no Squire Westerns as of old;
And our Sophias are not so emphatic,
But fair as then, or fairer to behold.
We have no accomplish'd blackguards, like Tom Jones,
But gentlemen in stays, as stiff as stones.

CXI.

They separated at an early hour;
That is, ere midnight—which is London's noon:
But in the country ladies seek their bower
A little earlier than the waning moon.
Peace to the slumbers of each folded flower—
May the rose call back its true colours soon!
Good hours of fair cheeks are the fairest tinters,
And lower the price of rouge—at least some winters.

CANTO XIV.

I.

If from great Nature's or our own abyss
Of thought we could but snatch a certainty,
Perhaps mankind might find the path they miss—
But then 't would spoil much good philosophy.
One system eats another up, and this
Much as old Saturn ate his progeny;
For when his pious consort gave him stones
In lieu of sons, of these he made no bones.

II.

But system doth reverse the Titan's breakfast,
And eats her parents, albeit the digestion
Is difficult. Pray tell me, can you make fast,
After due search, your faith to any question?
Look back o'er ages, ere unto the stake fast
You bind yourself, and call some mode the best one.
Nothing more true than *not* to trust your senses;
And yet what are your other evidences?

III.

For me, I know nought; nothing I deny,
Admit, reject, contemn; and what know *you*,
Except perhaps that you were born to die?
And both may after all turn out untrue.
An age may come, font of eternity,
When nothing shall be either old or new.
Death, so call'd, is a thing which makes men weep,
And yet a third of life is pass'd in sleep.

IV.

A sleep without dreams, after a rough day
Of toil, is what we covet most; and yet
How clay shrinks back from more quiescent clay!
The very suicide that pays his debt
At once without instalments (an old way
Of paying debts, which creditors regret)
Lets out impatiently his rushing breath,
Less from disgust of life than dread of death.

V.

'T is round him, near him, here, there, every where;
And there 's a courage which grows out of fear,
Perhaps of all most desperate, which will dare
The worst to *know* it:—when the mountains rear
Their peaks beneath your human foot, and there
You look down o'er the precipice, and drear
The gulf of rock yawns,—you can't gaze a minute
Without an awful wish to plunge within it.

VI.

'T is true, you don't—but, pale and struck with terror,
Retire: but look into your past impression!
And you will find, though shuddering at the mirror
Of your own thoughts, in all their self confession,
The lurking bias, be it truth or error,
To the *unknown*; a secret prepossession,
To plunge with all your fears—but where? You know not,
And that 's the reason why you do—or do not.

VII.

But what 's this to the purpose? you will say.
Gent. reader nothing; a mere speculation,
For which my sole excuse is—'t is my way.
Sometimes *with* and sometimes without occasion,
I write what 's uppermost, without delay;
This narrative is not meant for narration,
But a mere airy and fantastic basis,
To build up common things with common places.

VIII.

You know, or don't know, that great Bacon saith,
"Fling up a straw, 't will show the way the wind blows;"
And such a straw, borne on by human breath,
Is poesy, according as the mind glows;
A paper-kite which flies 'twixt life and death,
A shadow which the onward soul behind throws:
And mine 's a bubble not blown up for praise,
But just to play with, as an infant plays.

IX.

The world is all before me—or behind;
For I have seen a portion of that same,
And quite enough for me to keep in mind;—
Of passions too, I have proved enough to blame,
To the great pleasure of our friends, mankind,
Who like to mix some slight alloy with fame:
For I was rather famous in my time,
Until I fairly knock'd it up with rhyme.

X.

I have brought this world about my ears, and eke
The other: that 's to say, the clergy—who
Upon my head have bid their thunders break
In pious libels by no means a few.
And yet I can't help scribbling once a-week,
Tiring old readers, nor discovering new.
In youth I wrote because my mind was full,
And now because I feel it growing dull.

XI.

But "why then publish?"—There are no rewards
Of fame or profit, when the world grows weary.
I ask in turn,—why do you play at cards?
Why drink? Why read?—To make some hour less dreary.
It occupies me to turn back regards
On what I 've seen or ponder'd, sad or cheery;
And what I write I cast upon the stream,
To swim or sink—I have had at least my dream.

XII.

I think that were I *certain* of success,
I hardly could compose another line:
So long I 've battled either more or less,
That no defeat can drive me from the Nine.
This feeling 't is not easy to express,
And yet 't is not affected, I opine.
In play, there are two pleasures for your choosing—
The one is winning, and the other losing.

XIII.

Besides, my Muse by no means deals in fiction:
She gathers a repertory of facts,
Of course with some reserve and slight restriction,
But mostly sings of human things and acts—
And that 's one cause she meets with contradiction;
For too much truth, at first sight, ne'er attracts;
And were her object only what 's call'd glory,
With more ease too, she 'd tell a different story.

XIV.

Love, war, a tempest—surely there 's variety;
Also a seasoning slight of lucubration;
A bird's eye view too of that wild, Society;
A slight glance thrown on men of every station.
If you have nought else, here 's at least satiety
Both in performance and in preparation;
And though these lines should only line portmanteaus,
Trade will be all the better for these cantos.

XV.

The portion of this world which I at present
Have taken up to fill the following sermon,
Is one of which there 's no description recent:
The reason why, is easy to determine:
Although it seems both prominent and pleasant,
There is a sameness in its gems and ermine,
A dull and family likeness through all ages,
Of no great promise for poetic pages.

XVI.

With much to excite, there 's little to exalt;
Nothing that speaks to all men and all times;
A sort of varnish over every fault;
A kind of common-place, even in their crimes;
Factitious passions, wit without much salt,
A want of that true nature which sublimes
Whate'er it shows with truth; a smooth monotony
Of character, in those at least who have got any.

XVII.

Sometimes, indeed, like soldiers off parade,
They break their ranks and gladly leave the drill;
But then the roll-call draws them back afraid,
And they must be or seem what they were: still
Doubtless it is a brilliant masquerade;
But when of the first sight you have had your fill,
It palls—at least it did so upon me.
This paradise of pleasure and ennui.

XVIII.

When we have made our love, and gamed our gaming,
Dress'd, voted, shone, and, may be, something more;
With dandies dined; heard senators declaiming;
Seen beauties brought to market by the score;
Sad rakes to sadder husbands chastely taming;
There 's little left but to be bored or bore.
Witness those « *ci-devant jeunes hommes*» who stem
The stream, nor leave the world which leaveth them.

XIX.

'T is said—indeed a general complaint—
That no one has succeeded in describing
The *monde* exactly as they ought to paint.
Some say, that authors only snatch, by bribing
The porter, some slight scandals strange and quaint,
To furnish matter for their moral gibing;
And that their books have but one style in common—
My lady's prattle, filter'd through her woman.

XX.

But this can't well be true, just now; for writers
Are grown of the *beau monde* a part potential:
I 've seen them balance even the scale with fighters,
Especially when young, for that 's essential.
Why do their sketches fail them as inditers
Of, what they deem themselves most consequential,
The real portrait of the highest tribe?
'T is that, in fact, there 's little to describe.

XXI.

« *Haud ignara loquor*:» these are *Nugæ* « *quarum*
Pars parva *fui*,» but still art and part.
Now I could much more easily sketch a harem,
A battle, wreck, or history of the heart,
Than these things; and besides, I wish to spare 'em,
For reasons which I choose to keep apart.
« *Vetabo Cereris sacrum qui vulgaret*»—
Which means, that vulgar people must not share it.

XXII.

And therefore what I throw off is ideal—
Lower'd, leaven'd, like a history of Freemasons;
Which bears the same relation to the real,
As Captain Parry's voyage may do to Jason's.
The grand Arcanum 's not for men to see all;
My music has some mystic diapasons;
And there is much which could not be appreciated
In any manner by the uninitiated.

XXIII.

Alas! worlds fall—and woman, since she fell'd
The world (as, since that history, less polite
Than true, hath been a creed so strictly held),
Has not yet given up the practice quite.
Poor thing of usages! coerced, compell'd,
Victim when wrong, and martyr oft when right,
Condemn'd to child-bed, as men for their sins
Have shaving too entail'd upon their chins,—

XXIV.

A daily plague which, in the aggregate,
May average on the whole with parturition.
But as to women, who can penetrate
The real sufferings of their she condition?
Man's very sympathy with their estate
Has much of selfishness and more suspicion.
Their love, their virtue, beauty, education,
But form good housekeepers, to breed a nation.

XXV.

All this were very well and can't be better;
But even this is difficult, Heaven knows!
So many troubles from her birth beset her,
Such small distinction between friends and foes,
The gilding wears so soon from off her fetter,
That——but ask any woman if she 'd choose
(Take her at thirty, that is) to have been
Female or male? a school-boy or a queen?

XXVI.

« Petticoat influence» is a great reproach,
Which even those who obey would fain be thought
To fly from, as from hungry pikes a roach;
But, since beneath it upon earth we are brought
By various joltings of life's hackney-coach,
I for one venerate a petticoat—
A garment of a mystical sublimity,
No matter whether russet, silk, or dimity.

XXVII.

Much I respect, and much I have adored,
In my young days, that chaste and goodly veil,
Which holds a treasure, like a miser's hoard,
And more attracts by all it doth conceal—
A golden scabbard on a Damasque sword,
A loving letter with a mystic seal,
A cure for grief—for what can ever rankle
Before a petticoat and peeping ancle?

XXVIII.

And when upon a silent, sullen day,
With a Sirocco, for example, blowing,—
When even the sea looks dim with all its spray,
And sulkily the river's ripple 's flowing,
And the sky shows that very ancient gray,
The sober, sad antithesis to glowing,—
'T is pleasant, if *then* any thing is pleasant,
To catch a glimpse even of a pretty peasant.

XXIX.

We left our heroes and our heroines
In that fair clime which don't depend on climate,
Quite independent of the Zodiac's signs,
Though certainly more difficult to rhyme at,
Because the sun and stars, and aught that shines,
Mountains, and all we can be most sublime at,
Are there oft dull and dreary as a *dun*—
Whether a sky's or tradesman's is all one.

XXX.

And in-door life is less poetical;
And out of door hath showers, and mists, and sleet,
With which I could not brew a pastoral.
But be it as it may, a bard must meet
All difficulties, whether great or small,
To spoil his undertaking or complete,
And work away like spirit upon matter,
Embarrass'd somewhat both with fire and water.

XXXI.

Juan—in this respect at least like saints—
Was all things unto people of all sorts,
And lived contentedly, without complaints,
In camps, in ships, in cottages, or courts—
Born with that happy soul which seldom faints,
And mingling modestly in toils or sports.
He likewise could be most things to all women,
Without the coxcombry of certain *she* men.

XXXII.

A fox-hunt to a foreigner is strange;
'T is also subject to the double danger
Of tumbling first, and having in exchange
Some pleasant jesting at the awkward stranger;
But Juan had been early taught to range,
The wilds, as doth an Arab turn'd avenger,
So that his horse, or charger, hunter, hack,
Knew that he had a rider on his back.

XXXIII.

And now in this new field, with some applause,
He clear'd hedge, ditch, and double post, and rail,
And never *craned,*[1] and made but few «*faux pas,*»
And only fretted when the scent 'gan fail.
He broke, 't is true, some statutes of the laws
Of hunting—for the sagest youth is frail;
Rode o'er the hounds, it may be, now and then,
And once o'er several country gentlemen.

XXXIV.

But, on the whole, to general admiration
He acquitted both himself and horse: the 'squires
Marvell'd at merit of another nation:
The boors cried «Dang it! who 'd have thought it?»—Sires,
The Nestors of the sporting generation,
Swore praises, and recall'd their former fires;
The huntsman's self relented to a grin,
And rated him almost a whipper-in.

XXXV.

Such were his trophies;—not of spear and shield,
But leaps, and bursts, and sometimes foxes' brushes;
Yet I must own,—although in this I yield
To patriot sympathy a Briton's blushes,—
He thought at heart like courtly Chesterfield,
Who, after a long chase o'er hills, dales, bushes,
And what not, though he rode beyond all price,
Ask'd, next day, «if men ever hunted *twice*?»

XXXVI.

He also had a quality uncommon
To early risers after a long chase,
Who wake in winter ere the cock can summon
December's drowsy day to his dull race,—
A quality agreeable to woman,
When her soft, liquid words run on apace,
Who likes a listener, whether saint or sinner,—
He did not fall asleep just after dinner.

XXXVII.

But, light and airy, stood on the alert,
And shone in the best part of dialogue,
By humouring always what they might assert,
And listening to the topics most in vogue;
Now grave, now gay, but never dull or pert;
And smiling but in secret—cunning rogue!
He ne'er presumed to make an error clearer;
In short, there never was a better hearer.

XXXVIII.

And then he danced;—all foreigners excel
The serious Angles in the eloquence
Of pantomime;—he danced, I say, right well,
With emphasis, and also with good sense—
A thing in footing indispensable:
He danced without theatrical pretence,
Not like a ballet-master in the van
Of his drill'd nymphs, but like a gentleman.

XXXIX.

Chaste were his steps, each kept within due bound,
And elegance was sprinkled o'er his figure;
Like swift Camilla, he scarce skimm'd the ground,
And rather held in than put forth his vigour;
And then he had an ear for music's sound,
Which might defy a crotchet-critic's rigour.
Such classic *pas—sans* flaws—set off our hero,
He glanced like a personified bolero;

XL.

Or, like a flying hour before Aurora,
In Guido's famous fresco, which alone
Is worth a tour to Rome, although no more a
Remnant were there of the old world's sole throne.
The «*tout ensemble*» of his movements wore a
Grace of the soft ideal, seldom shown,
And ne'er to be described; for, to the dolour
Of bards and prosers, words are void of colour.

XLI.

No marvel then he was a favourite;
A full-grown Cupid, very much admired;
A little spoil'd, but by no means so quite;
At least he kept his vanity retired.
Such was his tact, he could alike delight
The chaste, and those who are not so much inspired.
The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke, who loved «*tracasserie,*»
Began to treat him with some small «*agaçerie.*»

XLII.

She was a fine and somewhat full-blown blonde,
Desirable, distinguish'd, celebrated
For several winters in the grand, *grand monde.*
I 'd rather not say what might be related
Of her exploits, for this were ticklish ground;
Besides there might be falsehood in what 's stated:
Her late performance had been a dead set
At Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

XLIII.

This noble personage began to look
A little black upon this new flirtation;
But such small licenses must lovers brook,
Mere freedoms of the female corporation.
Woe to the man who ventures a rebuke!
'T will but precipitate a situation
Extremely disagreeable, but common
To calculators when they count on woman.

XLIV.

The circle smiled, then whisper'd, and then sneer'd;
The Misses bridled, and the matrons frown'd;
Some hoped things might not turn out as they fear'd;
Some would not deem such women could be found;
Some ne'er believed one half of what they heard;
Some look'd perplex'd, and others look'd profound;
And several pitied with sincere regret
Poor Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

XLV.

But what is odd, none ever named the duke,
Who, one might think, was something in the affair.
True, he was absent, and 't was rumour'd, took
But small concern about the when, or where,
Or what his consort did: if he could brook
Her gaieties, none had a right to stare:
Theirs was that best of unions, past all doubt,
Which never meets, and therefore can't fall out.

XLVI.

But, oh that I should ever pen so sad a line!
Fired with an abstract love of virtue, she,
My Dian of the Ephesians, Lady Adeline,
Began to think the duchess' conduct free;
Regretting much that she had chosen so bad a line,
And waxing chiller in her courtesy,
Look'd grave and pale to see her friend's fragility,
For which most friends reserve their sensibility.

XLVII.

There 's nought in this bad world like sympathy:
'T is so becoming to the soul and face;
Sets to soft music the harmonious sigh,
And robes sweet friendship in a Brussels lace.
Without a friend, what were humanity,
To hunt our errors up with a good grace?
Consoling us with—«Would you had thought twice!
Ah! if you had but follow'd my advice!»

XLVIII.

Oh, Job! you had two friends: one 's quite enough,
Especially when we are ill at ease;
They are but bad pilots when the weather 's rough,
Doctors less famous for their cures than fees.
Let no man grumble when his friends fall off,
As they will do like leaves at the first breeze:
When your affairs come round, one way or t' other,
Go to the coffee-house, and take another. [2]

XLIX.

But this is not my maxim: had it been,
Some heart-aches had been spared me; yet I care not—
I would not be a tortoise in his screen
Of stubborn shell, which waves and weather wear not.
'T is better on the whole to have felt and seen
That which humanity may bear, or bear not:
'T will teach discernment to the sensitive,
And not to pour their ocean in a sieve.

L.

Of all the horrid, hideous notes of woe,
Sadder than owl-songs or the midnight blast,
Is that portentous phrase, «I told you so,»
Utter'd by friends, those prophets of the past,
Who, 'stead of saying what you now should do,
Own they foresaw that you would fall at last,
And solace your slight lapse 'gainst «*bonos mores*,»
With a long memorandum of old stories.

LI.

The Lady Adeline's serene severity
Was not confined to feeling for her friend,
Whose fame she rather doubted with posterity,
Unless her habits should begin to mend;
But Juan also shared in her austerity,
But mix'd with pity, pure as e'er was penn'd:
His inexperience moved her gentle ruth,
And (as her junior by six weeks) his youth.

LII.

These forty days' advantage of her years—
And hers were those which can face calculation,
Boldly referring to the list of peers,
And noble births, nor dread the enumeration—
Gave her a right to have maternal fears
For a young gentleman's fit education,
Though she was far from that leap-year, whose leap,
In female dates, strikes time all of a heap.

LIII.

This may be fix'd at somewhere before thirty—
Say seven-and-twenty; for I never knew
The strictest in chronology and virtue
Advance beyond, while they could pass for new.
Oh, time! why dost not pause? Thy scythe, so dirty
With rust, should surely cease to hack and hew.
Reset it; shave more smoothly, also slower,
If but to keep thy credit as a mower.

LIV.

But Adeline was far from that ripe age,
Whose ripeness is but bitter at the best:
'T was rather her experience made her sage,
For she had seen the world, and stood its test,
As I have said in—I forget what page;
My muse despises reference, as you have guess'd
By this time;—but strike six from seven-and-twenty,
And you will find her sum of years in plenty.

LV.

At sixteen she came out; presented, vaunted,
She put all coronets into commotion:
At seventeen too the world was still enchanted
With the new Venus of their brilliant ocean:
At eighteen, though below her feet still panted
A hecatomb of suitors with devotion,
She had consented to create again
That Adam, call'd «the happiest of men.»

LVI.

Since then she had sparkled through three glowing winters,
Admired, adored; but also so correct,
That she had puzzled all the acutest hinters,
Without the apparel of being circumspect;
They could not even glean the slightest splinters
From off the marble, which had no defect.
She had also snatch'd a moment since her marriage
To bear a son and heir—and one miscarriage.

LVII.

Fondly the wheeling fire-flies flew around her,
Those little glitterers of the London night;
But none of these possess'd a sting to wound her—
She was a pitch beyond a coxcomb's flight.
Perhaps she wish'd an aspirant profounder;
But, whatsoe'er she wish'd, she acted right;
And whether coldness, pride, or virtue, dignify
A woman, so she 's good, what does it signify?

LVIII.

I hate a motive like a lingering bottle,
Which with the landlord makes too long a stand,
Leaving all claretless the unmoisten'd throttle,
Especially with politics on hand;
I hate it, as I hate a drove of cattle,
Who whirl the dust as Simooms whirl the sand;
I hate it, as I hate an argument,
A laureate's ode, or servile peer's «content.»

LIX.

'T is sad to hack into the roots of things,
They are so much intertwisted with the earth:
So that the branch a goodly verdure flings,
I reck not if an acorn gave it birth.
To trace all actions to their secret springs
Would make indeed some melancholy mirth;
But this is not at present my concern,
And I refer you to wise Oxenstiern.[3]

LX.

With the kind view of saving an eclat,
Both to the duchess and diplomatist,
The Lady Adeline, as soon 's she saw
That Juan was unlikely to resist—
(For foreigners don't know that a *faux pas*
In England ranks quite on a different list
From those of other lands, unbless'd with juries,
Whose verdict for such sin a certain cure is)—

LXI.

The Lady Adeline resolved to take
Such measures as she thought might best impede
The further progress of this sad mistake.
She thought with some simplicity indeed;
But innocence is bold even at the stake,
And simple in the world, and doth not need
Nor use those palisades by dames erected,
Whose virtue lies in never being detected.

LXII.

It was not that she fear'd the very worst
His grace was an enduring, married man,
And was not likely all at once to burst
Into a scene, and swell the clients' clan
Of Doctors' Commons; but she dreaded first
The magic of her grace's talisman,
And next a quarrel (as he seem'd to fret)
With Lord Augustus Fitz-Plantagenet.

LXIII.

Her grace too pass'd for being an *intrigante*,
And somewhat *méchante* in her amorous sphere;
One of those pretty, precious plagues, which haunt
A lover with caprices soft and dear,
That like to *make* a quarrel, when they can't
Find one, each day of the delightful year;
Bewitching, torturing, as they freeze or glow,
And—what is worst of all—won't let you go:

LXIV.

The sort of thing to turn a young man's head,
Or make a Werter of him in the end.
No wonder then a purer soul should dread
This sort of chaste *liaison* for a friend;
It were much better to be wed or dead,
Than wear a heart a woman loves to rend.
'T is best to pause, and think, ere you rush on,
If that a «*bonne fortune*» be really «*bonne.*»

LXV.

And first, in the o'erflowing of her heart,
Which really knew or thought it knew no guile,
She call'd her husband now and then apart,
And bade him counsel Juan. With a smile
Lord Henry heard her plans of artless art
To wean Don Juan from the siren's wile;
And answer'd, like a statesman or a prophet,
In such guise that she could make nothing of it.

LXVI.

Firstly, he said, «he never interfered
In any body's business but the king's:»
Next, that «he never judged from what appear'd,
Without strong reason, of those sorts of things:»
Thirdly, that «Juan had more brain than beard,
And was not to be held in leading-strings;»
And fourthly, what need hardly be said twice,
«That good but rarely came from good advice.»

LXVII.

And, therefore, doubtless to approve the truth
Of the last axiom, he advised his spouse
To leave the parties to themselves, forsooth,
At least as far as *bienséance* allows:
That time would temper Juan's faults of youth;
That young men rarely made monastic vows;
That opposition only more attaches——
But here a messenger brought in dispatches:

LXVIII.

And being of the council call'd «the privy,»
Lord Henry walk'd into his cabinet,
To furnish matter for some future Livy
To tell how he reduced the nation's debt;
And if their full contents I do not give ye,
It is because I do not know them yet,
But I shall add them in a brief appendix,
To come between mine epic and its index.

LXIX.

But ere he went, he added a slight hint,
Another gentle common-place or two.
Such as are coin'd in conversation's mint,
And pass, for want of better, though not new:
Then broke his packet, to see what was in 't,
And having casually glanced it through,
Retired; and, as he went out, calmly kiss'd her,
Less like a young wife than an aged sister.

LXX.

He was a cold, good, honourable man,
Proud of his birth, and proud of every thing;
A goodly spirit for a state divan,
A figure fit to walk before a king;
Tall, stately, form'd to lead the courtly van
On birth-days, glorious with a star and string;
The very model of a chamberlain—
And such I mean to make him when I reign.

LXXI.

But there was something wanting on the whole—
I don't know what, and therefore cannot tell—
Which pretty women—the sweet souls!—call *soul.*
Certes it was not body; he was well
Proportion'd, as a poplar or a pole,
A handsome man, that human miracle;
And in each circumstance of love or war
Had still preserved his perpendicular.

LXXII.

Still there was something wanting, as I 've said—
That undefinable «*je ne sais quoi,*»
Which, for what I know, may of yore have led
To Homer's Iliad, since it drew to Troy
The Greek Eve, Helen, from the Spartan's bed;
Though on the whole, no doubt, the Dardan boy
Was much inferior to King Menelaus;—
But thus it is some women will betray us.

LXXIII.

There is an awkward thing which much perplexes,
Unless like wise Tiresias we had proved
By turns the difference of the several sexes:
Neither can show quite *how* they would be loved.
The sensual for a short time but connects us—
The sentimental boasts to be unmoved;
But both together form a kind of centaur,
Upon whose back 't is better not to venture.

LXXIV.

A something all-sufficient for the *heart*
Is that for which the sex are always seeking;
But how to fill up that same vacant part—
There lies the rub—and this they are but weak in.
Frail mariners afloat without a chart,
They run before the wind through high seas breaking;
And when they have made the shore, through every shock,
'T is odd, or odds, it may turn out a rock.

LXXV.

There is a flower call'd «love in idleness,»
For which see Shakspeare's ever-blooming garden;—
I will not make his great description less,
And beg his British godship's humble pardon,
If, in my extremity of rhyme's distress,
I touch a single leaf where he is warden;
But though the flower is different, with the French
Or Swiss Rousseau, cry, «*voilà la pervenche!*»

LXXVI.

Eureka! I have found it! What I mean
To say is, not that love is idleness,
But that in love such idleness has been
An accessary, as I have cause to guess.
Hard labour 's an indifferent go-between;
Your men of business are not apt to express
Much passion, since the merchant-ship, the Argo,
Convey'd Medea as her supercargo.

LXXVII.

«*Beatus ille procul!*» from «*negotiis,*»
Saith Horace; the great little poet 's wrong;
His other maxim, «*Noscitur a sociis.*»
Is much more to the purpose of his song;
Though even that were sometimes too ferocious,
Unless good company he kept too long;
But, in his teeth, whate'er their state or station,
Thrice happy they who *have* an occupation!

LXXVIII.

Adam exchanged his paradise for ploughing;
Eve made up millinery with fig-leaves—
The earliest knowledge from the tree so knowing,
As far as I know, that the church receives:
And since that time it need not cost much showing,
That many of the ills o'er which man grieves,
And still more women, spring from not employing
Some hours to make the remnant worth enjoying.

LXXIX.

And hence high life is oft a dreary void,
A rack of pleasures, where we must invent
A something wherewithal to be annoy'd.
Bards may sing what they please about *content;*
Contented, when translated, means but cloy'd;
And hence arise the woes of sentiment,
Blue devils, and blue-stockings, and romances
Reduced to practice, and perform'd like dances.

LXXX.

I do declare, upon an affidavit,
Romances I ne'er read like those I have seen;
Nor, if unto the world I ever gave it,
Would some believe that such a tale had been:
But such intent I never had, nor have it;
Some truths are better kept behind a screen,
Especially when they would look like lies;
I therefore deal in generalities.

LXXXI.

«An oyster may be cross'd in love,»—and why?
Because he mopeth idly in his shell,
And heaves a lonely subteraqueous sigh,
Much as a monk may do within his cell:
And *à propos* of monks, their piety
With sloth hath found it difficult to dwell;
Those vegetables of the catholic creed
Are apt exceedingly to run to seed.

LXXXII.

Oh, Wilberforce! thou man of black renown,
Whose merit none enough can sing or say,
Thou hast struck one immense colossus down,
Thou moral Washington of Africa!
But there 's another little thing, I own,
Which you should perpetrate some summer's day,
And set the other half of earth to rights:
You have freed the *blacks*—now pray shut up the whites.

LXXXIII.

Shut up the bald-coot bully Alexander;
Ship off the holy three to Senegal;
Teach them that «sauce for goose is sauce for gander,»
And ask them how *they* like to be in thrall.
Shut up each high heroic salamander,
Who eats fire gratis (since the pay 's but small);
Shut up—no, *not* the king, but the pavilion,
Or else 't will cost us all another million.

LXXXIV.

Shut up the world at large; let Bedlam out,
And you will be perhaps surprized to find
All things pursue exactly the same route,
As now with those of *soi-disant* sound mind.
This I could prove beyond a single doubt,
Were there a jot of sense among mankind;
But till that point *d'appui* is found, alas!
Like Archimedes, I leave earth as 't was.

LXXXV.

Our gentle Adeline had one defect—
Her heart was vacant, though a splendid mansion;
Her conduct had been perfectly correct,
As she had seen nought claiming its expansion.
A wavering spirit may be easier wreck'd,
Because 't is frailer, doubtless, than a stanch one;
But when the latter works its own undoing,
Its inner crash is like an earthquake's ruin.

LXXXVI.

She loved her lord, or thought so; but *that* love
Cost her an effort, which is a sad toil,
The stone of Sysiphus, if once we move
Our feelings 'gainst the nature of the soil.
She had nothing to complain of, or reprove,
No bickerings, no connubial turmoil:
Their union was a model to behold,
Serene and noble,—conjugal but cold.

LXXXVII.

There was no great disparity of years,
Though much in temper; but they never clash'd:
They moved like stars united in their spheres,
Or like the Rhone by Leman's waters wash'd,
Where mingled and yet separate appears
The river from the lake, all bluely dash'd
Through the serene and placid glassy deep,
Which fain would lull its river-child to sleep.

LXXXVIII.

Now, when she once had ta'en an interest
In any thing, however she might flatter
Herself that her intentions were the best,
Intense intentions are a dangerous matter:
Impressions were much stronger than she guess'd,
And gather'd as they run, like growing water,
Upon her mind; the more so, as her breast
Was not at first too readily impress'd.

LXXXIX.

But when it was, she had that lurking demon
Of double nature, and thus doubly named—
Firmness yclept in heroes, kings, and seamen,
That is, when they succeed; but greatly blamed
As *obstinacy*, both in men and women,
Whene'er their triumph pales, or star is tamed:—
And 't will perplex the casuists in morality,
To fix the due bounds of this dangerous quality.

XC.

Had Bonaparte won at Waterloo,
It had been firmness; now 't is pertinacity:
Must the event decide between the two?
I leave it to your people of sagacity
To draw the line between the false and true,
If such can e'er be drawn by man's capacity:
My business is with Lady Adeline,
Who in her way too was a heroine.

XCI.

She knew not her own heart; then how should I?
I think not she was *then* in love with Juan:
If so, she would have had the strength to fly
The wild sensation, unto her a new one:
She merely felt a common sympathy
(I will not say it was a false or true one)
In him, because she thought he was in danger—
Her husband's friend, her own, young, and a stranger.

XCII.

She was, or thought she was, his friend—and this
Without the farce of friendship, or romance
Of Platonism, which leads so oft amiss
Ladies who have studied friendship but in France,
Or Germany, where people *purely* kiss.
To thus much Adeline would not advance;
But of such friendship as man's may to man be,
She was as capable as woman can be.

XCIII.

No doubt the secret influence of the sex
Will there, as also in the ties of blood,
An innocent predominance annex,
And tune the concord to a finer mood.
If free from passion, which all friendship checks,
And your true feelings fully understood,
No friend like to a woman earth discovers,
So that you have not been nor will be lovers.

XCIV.

Love bears within its breast the very germ
Of change; and how should this be otherwise?
That violent things more quickly find a term
Is shown through nature's whole analogies:
And how should the most fierce of all be firm?
Would you have endless lightning in the skies?
Methinks love's very title says enough:
How should «the *tender* passion» e'er be *tough*?

XCV.

Alas! by all experience, seldom yet
(I merely quote what I have heard from many)
Had lovers not some reason to regret
The passion which made Solomon a Zany.
I've also seen some wives (not to forget
The marriage state, the best or worst of any)
Who were the very paragons of wives,
Yet made the misery of at least two lives.

XCVI.

I've also seen some female *friends* ('t is odd,
But true—as, if expedient, I could prove)
That faithful were, through thick and thin, abroad,
At home, far more than ever yet was love—
Who did not quit me when oppression trod
Upon me; whom no scandal could remove;
Who fought, and fight, in absence too, my battles,
Despite the snake society's loud rattles.

XCVII.

Whether Don Juan and chaste Adeline
Grew friends in this or any other sense,
Will be discuss'd hereafter, I opine:
At present I am glad of a pretence
To leave them hovering, as the effect is fine,
And keeps the atrocious reader in *suspense*;
The surest way for ladies and for books
To bait their tender or their tenter hooks.

XCVIII.

Whether they rode, or walk'd, or studied Spanish,
To read Don Quixote in the original,
A pleasure before which all others vanish;
Whether their talk was of the kind call'd «small,»
Or serious, are the topics I must banish
To the next canto; where, perhaps, I shall
Say something to the purpose, and display
Considerable talent in my way.

XCIX.

Above all, I beg all men to forbear
Anticipating aught about the matter:
They 'll only make mistakes about the fair,
And Juan too, especially the latter.
And I shall take a much more serious air
Than I have yet done in this epic satire.
It is not clear that Adeline and Juan
Will fall; but if they do, 't will be their ruin.

C.

But great things spring from little:—would you think,
That, in our youth, as dangerous a passion
As e'er brought man and woman to the brink
Of ruin, rose from such a slight occasion
As few would ever dream could form the link
Of such a sentimental situation?
You 'll never guess, I 'll bet you millions, milliards—
It all sprung from a harmless game at billiards.

CI.

'T is strange—but true; for truth is always strange,
Stranger than fiction: if it could be told,
How much would novels gain by the exchange!
How differently the world would men behold!
How oft would vice and virtue places change!
The new world would be nothing to the old,
If some Columbus of the moral seas
Would show mankind their soul's antipodes.

CII.

What «antres vast and desarts idle» then
Would be discovered in the human soul!
What icebergs in the hearts of mighty men,
With self-love in the centre as their pole!
What Anthropophagi is nine of ten
Of those who hold the kingdoms in controul!
Were things but only call'd by their right name,
Cæsar himself would be ashamed of fame.

CANTO XV.

I.

Ah!——What should follow slips from my reflection:
Whatever follows ne'ertheless may be
As apropos of hope or retrospection,
As though the lurking thought had follow'd free.
All present life is but an interjection,
An «Oh!» or «Ah!» of joy or misery,
Or a «Ha! ha!» or «Bah!»—a yawn, or «Pooh!»
Of which perhaps the latter is most true.

II.

But, more or less, the whole's a syncopé
Or a singultus—emblems of emotion,
The grand antithesis to great ennui,
Wherewith we break our bubbles on the ocean,
That watery outline of eternity,
Or miniature at least, as is my notion,
Which ministers unto the soul's delight,
In seeing matters which are out of sight.

III.

But all are better than the sigh suppress,
Corroding in the cavern of the heart,
Making the countenance a mask of rest,
And turning human nature to an art.
Few men dare show their thoughts of worst or best;
Dissimulation always sets apart
A corner for herself; and therefore fiction
Is that which passes with least contradiction.

IV.

Ah! who can tell? Or rather, who can not
Remember, without telling, passion's errors?
The drainer of oblivion, even the sot,
Hath got blue devils for his morning mirrors:
What though on Lethe's stream he seem to float,
He cannot sink his tremors or his terrors;
The ruby glass that shakes within his hand
Leaves a sad sediment of Time's worst sand.

V.

And as for love—Oh, Love!——We will proceed.
The Lady Adeline Amundeville,
A pretty name as one would wish to read,
Must perch harmonious on my tuneful quill.
There 's music in the sighing of a reed;
There 's music in the gushing of a rill;
There 's music in all things, if men had ears:
Their earth is but an echo of the spheres.

VI.

The Lady Adeline, right honourable,
And honour'd, ran a risk of growing less so;
For few of the soft sex are very stable
In their resolves—alas! that I should say so!
They differ as wine differs from its label,
When once decanted;—I presume to guess so,
But will not swear: yet both upon occasion,
Till old, may undergo adulteration.

VII.

But Adeline was of the purest vintage,
The unmingled essence of the grape; and yet
Bright as a new Napoleon from its mintage,
Or glorious as a diamond richly set;
A page where Time should hesitate to print age,
And for which Nature might forego her debt—
Sole creditor whose process doth involve in't
The luck of finding every body solvent.

VIII.

Oh, Death! thou dunnest of all duns! thou daily
Knockest at doors, at first with modest tap,
Like a meek tradesman when approaching palely
Some splendid debtor he would take by sap:
But oft denied, as patience 'gins to fail, he
Advances with exasperated rap,
And (if let in) insists, in terms unhandsome,
On ready money or «a draft on Ransom.»

IX.

Whate'er thou takest, spare awhile poor Beauty!
She is so rare, and thou hast so much prey.
What though she now and then may slip from duty,
The more 's the reason why you ought to stay.
Gaunt Gourmand! with whole nations for your booty,
You should be civil in a modest way:
Suppress then some slight feminine diseases,
And take as many heroes as Heaven pleases.

X.

Fair Adeline, the more ingenuous
Where she was interested (as was said),
Because she was not apt, like some of us,
To like too readily, or too high bred
To show it—points we need not now discuss—
Would give up artlessly both heart and head
Unto such feelings as seem'd innocent,
For objects worthy of the sentiment.

XI.

Some parts of Juan's history, which Rumour,
That live gazette, had scatter'd to disfigure,
She had heard; but women hear with more good humour
Such aberrations than we men of rigour.
Besides, his conduct, since in England, grew more
Strict, and his mind assumed a manlier vigour;
Because he had, like Alcibiades,
The art of living in all climes with ease.

XII.

His manner was perhaps the more seductive,
Because he ne'er seem'd anxious to seduce;
Nothing affected, studied, or constructive
Of coxcombry or conquest: no abuse
Of his attractions marr'd the fair perspective,
To indicate a Cupidon broke loose,
And seem to say, «resist us if you can»—
Which makes a dandy while it spoils a man.

XIII.

They are wrong—that's not the way to set about it;
As, if they told the truth, could well be shown.
But right or wrong, Don Juan was without it;
In fact, his manner was his own alone:
Sincere he was—at least you could not doubt it,
In listening merely to his voice's tone.
The devil hath not in all his quiver's choice
An arrow for the heart like a sweet voice.

XIV.

By nature soft, his whole address held off
Suspicion: though not timid, his regard
Was such as rather seem'd to keep aloof,
To shield himself, than put you on your guard:
Perhaps 't was hardly quite assured enough,
But modesty 's at times its own reward,
Like virtue; and the absence of pretension
Will go much further than there 's need to mention.

XV.

Serene, accomplish'd, cheerful, but not loud;
Insinuating without insinuation;
Observant of the foibles of the crowd,
Yet ne'er betraying this in conversation;
Proud with the proud, yet courteously proud,
So as to make them feel he knew his station
And theirs:—without a struggle for priority,
He neither brook'd nor claim'd superiority.

XVI.

That is, with men: with women he was what
They pleased to make or take him for; and their
Imagination 's quite enough for that:
So that the outline 's tolerably fair,
They fill the canvas up—and «verbum sat.»
If once their phantasies be brought to bear
Upon an object, whether sad or playful,
They can transfigure brighter than a Raphael.

XVII.

Adeline, no deep judge of character,
Was apt to add a colouring from her own.
'T is thus the good will amiably err,
And eke the wise, as has been often shown.
Experience is the chief philosopher,
But saddest when his science is well known:
And persecuted sages teach the schools
Their folly in forgetting there are fools.

XVIII.

Was it not so, great Locke? and greater Bacon?
Great Socrates? And thou Diviner still,
Whose lot it is by man to be mistaken,
And thy pure creed made sanction of all ill?
Redeeming worlds to be by bigots shaken,
How was thy toil rewarded? We might fill
Volumes with similar sad illustrations,
But leave them to the conscience of the nations.

XIX.

I perch upon an humbler promontory,
Amidst life's infinite variety:
With no great care for what is nicknamed glory,
But speculating as I cast mine eye
On what may suit or may not suit my story,
And never straining hard to versify,
I rattle on exactly as I'd talk
With any body in a ride or walk.

XX.

I don't know that there may be much ability
Shown in this sort of desultory rhyme;
But there 's a conversational facility,
Which may round off an hour upon a time.
Of this I 'm sure at least, there 's no servility
In mine irregularity of chime,
Which rings what 's uppermost of new or hoary,
Just as I feel the «improvisatore.»

XXI.

«Omnia vult *belle* Matho dicere—dic aliquando
Et *bene*, dic *neutrum*, dic aliquando *male*.»
The first is rather more than mortal can do;
The second may be sadly done or gaily;
The third is still more difficult to stand to;
The fourth we hear, and see, and say too, daily;
The whole together is what I could wish
To serve in this conundrum of a dish.

XXII.

A modest hope—but modesty 's my forte,
And pride my feeble:—les us ramble on.
I meant to make this poem very short,
But now I can't tell where it may not run.
No doubt, it I had wish'd to pay my court
To critics, or to hail the *setting* sun
Of tyranny of all kinds, my concision
Were more;—but I was born for opposition.

XXIII.

But then 't is mostly on the weaker side:
So that I verily believe if they
Who now are basking in their full-blown pride,
Were shaken down, and «dogs had had their day,»
Though at the first I might perchance deride
Their tumble, I should turn the other way,
And wax an ultra-royalist in loyalty,
Because I hate even democratic royalty.

XXIV.

I think I should have made a decent spouse,
If I had never proved the soft condition;
I think I should have made monastic vows,
But for my own peculiar superstition:
'Gainst rhyme I never should have knock'd my brows,
Nor broken my own head, nor that of Priscian,
Nor worn the motley mantle of a poet,
If some one had not told me to forego it.

XXV.

But «laissez aller»—knights and dames I sing,
Such as the times may furnish. 'T is a flight
Which seems at first to need no lofty wing,
Plumed by Longinus or the Stagyrite:
The difficulty lies in colouring
(Keeping the due proportions still in sight)
With nature manners which are artificial,
And rend'ring general that which is especial.

XXVI.

The difference is, that in the days of old
Men made the manners; manners now make men—
Pinned like a flock, and fleeced too in their fold,
At least nine, and a ninth beside of ten.
Now this at all events must render cold
Your writers, who must either draw again
Days better drawn before, or else assume
The present, with their common-place costume.

XXVII.

We 'll do our best to make the best on't:—March!
March, my Muse! If you cannot fly, yet flutter;
And when you may not be sublime, be arch,
Or starch, as are the edicts statesmen utter.
We surely shall find something worth research:
Columbus found a new world in a cutter,
Or brigantine, or pink, of no great tonnage,
While yet America was in her non-age.

XXVIII.

When Adeline, in all her growing sense
Of Juan's merits and his situation,
Felt on the whole an interest intense—
Partly perhaps because a fresh sensation,
Or that he had an air of innocence,
Which is for innocence a sad temptation,—
As women hate half measures, on the whole,
She 'gan to ponder how to save his soul.

XXIX.

She had a good opinion of advice,
Like all who give and eke receive it gratis,
For which small thanks are still the market price,
Even where the article at highest rate is.
She thought upon the subject twice or thrice,
And morally decided, the best state is
For morals, marriage; and this question carried,
She seriously advised him to get married.

XXX.

Juan replied, with all becoming deference,
He had a predilection for that tie;
But that at present, with immediate reference
To his own circumstances, there might lie
Some difficulties, as in his own preference,
Or that of her to whom he might apply;
That still he 'd wed with such or such a lady,
If that they were not married all already.

XXXI.

Next to the making matches for herself,
And daughters, brothers, sisters, kith or kin,
Arranging them like books on the same shelf,
There 's nothing women love to dabble in
More (like a stockholder in growing pelf)
Than match-making in general: 't is no sin
Certes, but a preventative, and therefore
That is, no doubt, the only reason wherefore.

XXXII.

But never yet (except of course a miss
Unwed, or mistress never to be wed,
Or wed already, who object to this)
Was there chaste dame who had not in her head
Some drama of the marriage unities,
Observed as strictly both at board and bed,
As those of Aristotle, though sometimes
They turn out melodrames or pantomimes.

XXXIII.

They generally have some only son,
Some heir to a large property, some friend
Of an old family, some gay Sir John,
Or grave Lord George, with whom perhaps might end
A line, and leave posterity undone,
Unless a marriage was applied to mend
The prospect and their morals: and besides,
They have at hand a blooming glut of brides.

XXXIV.

From these they will be careful to select,
For this an heiress, and for that a beauty;
For one a songstress who hath no defect,
For t' other one who promises much duty;
For this a lady no one can reject,
Whose sole accomplishments were quite a booty;
A second for her excellent connexions;
A third, because there can be no objections.

XXXV.

When Rapp the harmonist[2] embargoed marriage
In his harmonious settlement—(which flourishes
Strangely enough as yet without miscarriage,
Because it breeds no more mouths than it nourishes,
Without those sad expenses which disparage
What Nature naturally most encourages)—
Why call'd he «Harmony» a state sans wedlock?
Now here I have got the preacher at a dead lock.

XXXVI.

Because he either meant to sneer at harmony
Or marriage, by divorcing them thus oddly.
But whether reverend Rapp learn'd this in Germany
Or no, 't is said his sect is rich and godly,
Pious and pure, beyond what I can term any
Of ours, although they propagate more broadly.
My objection 's to his title, not his ritual,
Although I wonder how it grew habitual.

XXXVII.

But Rapp is the reverse of zealous matrons,
Who favour, malgré Malthus, generation—
Professors of that genial art, and patrons
Of all the modest part of propagation,
Which after all at such a desperate rate runs,
That half its produce tends to emigration,
That sad result of passions and potatoes—
Two weeds which pose our economic Catos.

XXXVIII.

Had Adeline read Malthus? I can't tell;
I wish she had: his book 's the eleventh commandment,
Which says, «thou shalt not marry»—unless *well*:
This he (as far as I can understand) meant:
'T is not my purpose on his views to dwell,
Nor canvass what «so eminent a hand» meant;[3]
But certes it conducts to lives ascetic,
Or turning marriage into arithmetic.

XXXIX.

But Adeline, who probably presumed
That Juan had enough of maintenance,
Or *separate* maintenance, in case 't was doom'd—
As on the whole it is an even chance
That bridegrooms, after they are fairly *groom'd*,
May retrograde a little in the dance
Of marriage—(which might form a painter's fame,
Like Holbein's «Dance of Death»—but 't is the same);—

XL.

But Adeline determined Juan's wedding
In her own mind, and that 's enough for woman.
But then, with whom? There was the sage Miss Reading,
Miss Raw, Miss Flaw, Miss Showman, and Miss Knowman,
And the two fair co-heiresses Giltbedding.
She deem'd his merits something more than common:
All these were unobjectionable matches,
And might go on, if well wound up, like watches.

XLI.

There was Miss Millpond, smooth as summer's sea,
That usual paragon, an only daughter,
Who seem'd the cream of equanimity,
Till skimm'd—and then there was some milk and water,
With a slight shade of Blue too it might be,
Beneath the surface; but what did it matt
Love 's riotous, but marriage should have quiet,
And, being consumptive, live on a milk diet.

XLII.

And then there was the Miss Audacia Shoestring,
A dashing demoiselle of good estate,
Whose heart was fix'd upon a star of bluestring;
But whether English Dukes grew rare of late,
Or that she had not harp'd upon the true string,
By which such sirens can attract our great,
She took up with some foreign younger brother,
A Russ or Turk—the one 's as good as t' other.]

XLIII.

And then there was—but why should I go on,
Unless the ladies should go off?—there was
Indeed a certain fair and fairy one,
Of the best class, and better than her class,—
Aurora Raby, a young star who shone
O'er life, too sweet an image for such glass,
A lovely being, scarcely form'd or moulded,
A rose with all its sweetest leaves yet folded;

XLIV.

Rich, noble, but an orphan; left an only
Child to the care of guardians good and kind;
But still her aspect had an air so lonely!
Blood is not water; and where shall we find
Feelings of youth like those which overthrown lie
By death, when we are left, alas! behind,
To feel, in friendless palaces, a home
Is wanting, and our best ties in the tomb?

XLV.

Early in years, and yet more infantine
In figure, she had something of sublime
In eyes which sadly shone, as seraphs' shine.
All youth—but with an aspect beyond time;
Radiant and grave—as pitying man's decline;
Mournful—but mournful of another's crime,
She look'd as if she sat by Eden's door,
And grieved for those who could return no more.

XLVI.

She was a Catholic too, sincere, austere,
As far as her own gentle heart allow'd,
And deem'd that fallen worship far more dear
Perhaps because 't was fallen: her sires were proud
Of deeds and days when they had fill'd the ear
Of nations, and had never bent or bow'd
To novel power; and as she was the last,
She held their old faith and old feelings fast

XLVII.

She gazed upon a world she scarcely knew,
As seeking not to know it; silent, lone,
As grows a flower, thus quietly she grew,
And kept her heart serene within its zone.
There was awe in the homage which she drew;
Her spirit seem'd as seated on a throne
Apart from the surrounding world, and strong
In its own strength—most strange in one so young;

XLVIII.

Now it so happen'd, in the catalogue
Of Adeline, Aurora was omitted,
Although her birth and wealth had given her vogue
Beyond the charmers we have already cited;
Her beauty also seem'd to form no clog
Against her being mention'd as well fitted,
By many virtues, to be worth the trouble
Of single gentlemen who would be double.

XLIX.

And this omission, like that of the bust
Of Brutus at the pageant of Tiberius,
Made Juan wonder, as no doubt he must.
This he express'd half smiling and half serious;
When Adeline replied with some disgust,
And with an air, to say the least, imperious,
She marvell'd «what he saw in such a baby
As that prim, silent, cold Aurora Raby?»

L.

Juan rejoined—«She was a Catholic,
And therefore fittest, as of his persuasion;
Since he was sure his mother would fall sick,
And the Pope thunder excommunication,
If——» But here Adeline, who seem'd to pique
Herself extremely on the inoculation
Of others with her own opinions, stated—
As usual—the same reason which she late did.

LI.

And wherefore not? A reasonable reason,
If good, is none the worse for repetition;
If bad, the best way 's certainly to tease on
And amplify: you lose much by concision,
Whereas insisting in or out of season
Convinces all men, even a politician;
Or—what is just the same—it wearies out.
So the end 's gain'd, what signifies the route?

LII.

Why Adeline had this slight prejudice—
For prejudice it was—against a creature
As pure as sanctity itself from vice,
With all the added charm of form and feature,
For me appears a question far too nice,
Since Adeline was liberal by nature;
But nature 's nature, and has more caprices
Than I have time, or will, to take to pieces.

LIII.

Perhaps she did not like the quiet way
With which Aurora on those baubles look'd,
Which charm most people in their earlier day:
For there are few things by mankind less brook'd,
And womankind too, if we so may say,
Than finding thus their genius stand rebuked,
Like «Anthony's by Cæsar,» by the few
Who look upon them as they ought to do.

LIV.

It was not envy—Adeline had none;
Her place was far beyond it, and her mind.
It was not scorn—which could not light on one
Whose greatest *fault* was leaving few to find.
It was not jealousy, I think: but shun
Following the «ignes fatui» of mankind.
It was not——but 't is easier far, alas!
To say what it was not, than what it was.

LV.

Little Aurora deem'd she was the theme
Of such discussion. She was there a guest,
A beauteous ripple of the brilliant stream
Of rank and youth, though purer than the rest,
Which flow'd on for a moment in the beam
Time sheds a moment o'er each sparkling crest.
Had she known this, she would have calmly smiled—
She had so much, or little, of the child.

LVI.

The dashing and proud air of Adeline
Imposed not upon her: she saw her blaze
Much as she would have seen a glow-worm shine,
Then turn'd unto the stars for loftier rays.
Juan was something she could not divine,
Being no Sibyl in the new world's ways;
Yet she was nothing dazzled by the meteor,
Because she did not pin her faith on feature.

LVII.

His fame too,—for he had that kind of fame
Which sometimes plays the deuce with womankind,
A heterogeneous mass of glorious blame,
Half virtues and whole vices being combined;
Faults which attract because they are not tame;
Follies trick'd out so brightly that they blind:—
These seals upon her wax made no impression,
Such was her coldness or her self-possession.

LVIII.

Juan knew nought of such a character—
High, yet resembling not his lost Haidée;
Yet each was radiant in her proper sphere:
The Island girl, bred up by the lone sea,
More warm, as lovely, and not less sincere,
Was nature's all: Aurora could not be
Nor would be thus;—the difference in them
Was such as lies between a flower and gem.

LIX.

Having wound up with this sublime comparison,
Methinks we may proceed upon our narrative,
And, as my friend Scott says, « I sound my Warison;»
Scott, the superlative of my comparative—
Scott, who can paint your Christian knight or Saracen,
Serf, lord, man, with such skill as none would share it, if
There had not been one Shakspeare and Voltaire,
Of one or both of whom he seems the heir.

LX.

I say, in my slight way I may proceed
To play upon the surface of humanity.
I write the world, nor care if the world read,
At least for this I cannot spare its vanity.
My muse hath bred, and still perhaps may breed
More foes by this same scroll: when I began it, I
Thought that it might turn out so—*now* I *know* it,
But still I am, or was, a pretty poet.

LXI.

The conference or congress (for it ended
As congresses of late do) of the Lady
Adeline and Don Juan rather blended
Some acids with the sweets—for she was heady;
But, ere the matter could be marr'd or mended,
The silvery bell rung, not for « dinner ready,»
But for that hour, call'd *half-hour*, given to dress,
Though ladies' robes seem scant enough for less.

LXII.

Great things were now to be achieved at table,
With massy plate for armour, knives and forks
For weapons; but what muse since Homer 's able
(His feasts are not the worst part of his works)
To draw up in array a single day-bill
Of modern dinners? where more mystery lurks
In sord, b[illegible]r sauces, or a sole ragoût,
Tha[illegible]itches, b—ches, or physicians brew.

LXIII.

There was a goodly « soupe à la *bonne femme*,»
Though God knows whence it came from; there was too
A turbot for relief of those who cram,
Relieved with dindon à la Périgueux;
There also was——the sinner that I am?
How shall I get this gourmand stanza through?—
Soupe à la Beauveau, whose relief was Dory,
Relieved itself by pork, for greater glory.

LXIV.

But I must crowd all into one grand mess
Or mass; for should I stretch into detail,
My muse would run much more into excess,
Than when some squeamish people deem her frail.
But though a « bonne vivante,» I must confess
Her stomach 's not her peccant part: this tale
However doth require some slight refection,
Just to relieve her spirits from dejection.

LXV.

Fowls à la Condé, slices eke of salmon,
With sauces Genevoises, and haunch of venison;
Wines too which might again have slain young Ammon,
A man like whom I hope we shan't see many soon;
They also set a glazed Westphalian ham on,
Whereon Apicius would bestow his benison;
And then there was champagne with foaming whirls,
As white as Cleopatra's melted pearls.

LXVI.

Then there was God knows what « à l'Allemande,»
« A l'Espagnole,» « timballe,» and « Salpicon»—
With things I can't withstand or understand,
Though swallow'd with much zest upon the whole;
And « entremets» to piddle with at hand,
Gently to lull down the subsiding soul;
While great Lucullus' (*robe triomphale*) muffles—
(*There 's fame*)—young partridge fillets, deck'd with truffles.[4]

LXVII.

What are the *fillets* on the victor's brow
To these? They are rags or dust. Where is the arch
Which nodded to the nation's spoils below?
Where the triumphal chariot's haughty march?
Gone to where victories must like dinners go.
Further I shall not follow the research:
But oh! ye modern heroes with your cartridges,
When will your names lend lustre even to partridges?

LXVIII.

Those truffles too are no bad accessaries,
Follow'd by « petits puits d'amour»—a dish
Of which perhaps the cookery rather varies,
So every one may dress it to his wish,
According to the best of dictionaries,
Which encyclopædise both flesh and fish;
But even sans « confitures,» it no less true is,
There 's pretty picking in those « petits puits.»[5]

LXIX.

The mind is lost in mighty contemplation
Of intellect expended on two courses;
And indigestion's grand multiplication
Requires arithmetic beyond my forces.
Who would suppose, from Adam's simple ration,
That cookery could have call'd forth such resources,
As form a science and a nomenclature
From out the commonest demands of nature?

LXX.

The glasses jingled, and the palates tingled;
The diners of celebrity dined well;
The ladies with more moderation mingled
In the feast, pecking less than I can tell;
Also the younger men too; for a springald
Can't like ripe age in gourmandise excel,
But thinks less of good eating than the whisper
(When seated next him) of some pretty lisper.

LXXI.

Alas! I must leave undescribed the gibier,
The salmi, the consommé, the purée,
All which I use to make my rhymes run glibber
Than could roast beef in our rough John Bull way:
I must not introduce even a spare rib here,
«Bubble and squeak» would spoil my liquid lay;
But I have dined, and must forego, alas!
The chaste description even of a «becasse,»

LXXII.

And fruits, and ice, and all that art refines
From nature for the service of the goût,—
Taste or the *gout*,—pronounce it as inclines
Your stomach! Ere you dine, the French will do;
But *after*, there are sometimes certain signs
Which prove plain English truer of the two.
Hast ever *had* the *gout*? I have not had it—
But I may have, and you too, reader, dread it.

LXXIII.

The simple olives, best allies of wine,
Must I pass over in my bill of fare?
I must, although a favourite «plat» of mine
In Spain, and Lucca, Athens, every where:
On them and bread 't was oft my luck to dine,
The grass my table-cloth, in open air,
On Sunium or Hymettus, like Diogenes,
Of whom half my philosophy the progeny is.

LXXIV.

Amidst this tumult of fish, flesh, and fowl,
And vegetables, all in masquerade,
The guests were placed according to their roll,
But various as the various meats display'd:
Don Juan sat next an «à l'Espagnole»—
No damsel, but a dish, as hath been said;
But so far like a lady, that 't was drest
Superbly, and contain'd a world of zest.

LXXV.

By some odd chance too he was placed between
Aurora and the Lady Adeline—
A situation difficult, I ween,
For man therein, with eyes and heart, to dine.
Also the conference which we have seen
Was not such as to encourage him to shine;
For Adeline, addressing few words to him,
With two transcendent eyes seem'd to look through him.

LXXVI.

I sometimes almost think that eyes have ears:
This much is sure, that, out of ear-shot, things
Are somehow echoed to the pretty dears,
Of which I can't tell whence their knowledge springs;
Like that same mystic music of the spheres,
Which no one hears so loudly though it rings.
'T is wonderful how oft the sex have heard
Long dialogues which pass'd without a word!

LXXVII.

Aurora sat with that indifference
Which piques a preux chevalier—as it ought:
Of all offences that 's the worst offence,
Which seems to hint you are not worth a thought.
Now Juan, though no coxcomb in pretence,
Was not exactly pleased to be so caught;
Like a good ship entangled among ice,
And after so much excellent advice.

LXXVIII.

To his gay nothings, nothing was replied,
Or something which was nothing, as urbanity
Required. Aurora scarcely look'd aside,
Nor even smiled enough for any vanity.
The devil was in the girl! Could it be pride?
Or modesty, or absence, or inanity?
Heaven knows! But Adeline's malicious eyes
Sparkled with her successful prophecies.

LXXIX.

And look'd as much as if to say, «I said it;»—
A kind of triumph I 'll not recommend,
Because it sometimes, as I 've seen or read it,
Both in the case of lover and of friend,
Will pique a gentleman, for his own credit,
To bring what was a jest to a serious end;
For all men prophesy what *is* or *was*,
And hate those who won't let them come to pass.

LXXX.

Juan was drawn thus into some attentions,
Slight but select, and just enough to express,
To females of perspicuous comprehensions,
That he would rather make them more than less.
Aurora at the last (so history mentions,
Though probably much less a fact than guess)
So far relax'd her thoughts from their sweet prison,
As once or twice to smile, if not to listen.

LXXXI.

From answering, she began to question: this
With her was rare; and Adeline, who as yet
Thought her predictions went not much amiss,
Began to dread she 'd thaw to a coquette—
So very difficult, they say, it is
To keep extremes from meeting, when once set
In motion; but she here too much refined—
Aurora's spirit was not of that kind.

LXXXII.

But Juan had a sort of winning way,
A proud humility, if such there be,
Which show'd such deference to what females say,
As if each charming word were a decree.
His tact too temper'd him from grave to gay,
And taught him when to be reserved or free:
He had the art of drawing people out,
Without their seeing what he was about.

LXXXIII.

Aurora, who in her indifference
Confounded him in common with the crowd
Of flutterers, though she deem'd he had more sense
Than whispering foplings, or than witlings loud,—
Commenced (from such slight things will great commence)
To feel that flattery which attracts the proud
Rather by deference than compliment,
And wins even by a delicate dissent.

LXXXIV.

And then he had good looks;—that point was carried
Nem. con. amongst the women, which I grieve
To say leads oft to *crim. con.* with the married—
A case which to the juries we may leave,
Since with digressions we too long have tarried.
Now though we know of old that looks deceive,
And always have done, somehow these good looks
Make more impression than the best of books.

LXXXV.

Aurora, who look'd more on books than faces,
Was very young, although so very sage,
Admiring more Minerva than the Graces,
Especially upon a printed page.
But virtue's self, with all her tightest laces,
Has not the natural stays of strict old age;
And Socrates, that model of all duty,
Own'd to a penchant, though discreet, for beauty.

LXXXVI.

And girls of sixteen are thus far Socratic,
But innocently so, as Socrates:
And really, if the sage sublime and Attic
At seventy years had phantasies like these,
Which Plato in his dialogues dramatic
Has shown, I know not why they should displease
In virgins—always in a modest way,
Observe; for that with me 's a «sine quâ.»[6]

LXXXVII.

Also observe, that like the great Lord Coke,
(See Littleton) whene'er I have express'd
Opinions two, which at first sight may look
Twin opposites, the second is the best.
Perhaps I have a third too in a nook,
Or none at all—which seems a sorry jest;
But if a writer should be quite consistent,
How could he possibly show things existent?

LXXXVIII.

If people contradict themselves, can I
Help contradicting them, and every body,
Even my veracious self!—but that 's a lie;
I never did so, never will—how should I?
He who doubts all things, nothing can deny;
Truth's fountains may be clear—her streams are muddy,
And cut through such canals of contradiction,
That she must often navigate o'er fiction.

LXXXIX.

Apologue, fable, poesy, and parable,
Are false, but may be render'd also true
By those who sow them in a land that 's arable.
'T is wonderful what fable will not do!
'T is said it makes reality more bearable:
But what 's reality? Who has its clue?
Philosophy? No; she too much rejects.
Religion? *Yes;* but which of all her sects?

XC.

Some millions must be wrong, that 's pretty clear:
Perhaps it may turn out that all were right.
God help us! Since we have need on our career
To keep our holy beacons always bright,
'T is time that some new prophet should appear,
Or old indulge man with a second sight.
Opinions wear out in some thousand years,
Without a small refreshment from the spheres.

XCI.

But here again, why will I thus entangle
Myself with metaphysics? None can hate
So much as I do any kind of wrangle;
And yet, such is my folly, or my fate,
I always knock my head against some angle
About the present, past, or future state:
Yet I wish well to Trojan and to Tyrian,
For I was bred a moderate Presbyterian.

XCII.

But though I am a temperate theologian,
And also meek as a metaphysician,
Impartial between Tyrian and Trojan,
As Eldon on a lunatic commission,—
In politics, my duty is to show John
Bull something of the lower world's condition.
It makes my blood boil like the springs of Hecla,
To see men let these scoundrel sovereigns break law.

XCIII.

But politics, and policy, and piety,
Are topics which I sometimes introduce,
Not only for the sake of their variety,
But as subservient to a moral use;
Because my business is to *dress* society,
And stuff with *sage* that very verdant goose.
And now, that we may furnish with some matter all
Tastes, we are going to try the supernatural.

XCIV.

And now I will give up all argument:
And positively henceforth no temptation
Shall «fool me to the top up of my bent;»
Yes, I 'll begin a thorough reformation.
Indeed I never knew what people meant
By deeming that my Muse's conversation
Was dangerous;—I think she is as harmless
As some who labour more and yet may charm less.

XCV.

Grim reader! did you ever see a ghost?
No; but you have heard—I understand—be dumb!
And don't regret the time you may have lost,
For you have got that pleasure still to come:
And do not think I mean to sneer at most
Of these things, or by ridicule benumb
That source of the sublime and the mysterious:—
For certain reasons, my belief is serious.

XCVI.

Serious? You laugh:—you may; that will I not;
My smiles must be sincere or not at all.
I say I do believe a haunted spot,
Exists—and where? That shall I not recal,
Because I 'd rather it should be forgot.
«Shadows the soul of Richard» may appal,
In short, upon that subject I 've some qualms very
Like those of the Philosopher of Malmsbury.[7]

XCVII.

The night (I sing by night—sometimes an owl,
And now and then a nightingale)—is dim,
And the loud shriek of sage Minerva's fowl
Rattles around me her discordant hymn:
Old portraits from old walls upon me scowl—
I wish to heaven they would not look so grim;
The dying embers dwindle in the grate—
I think too that I have sate up too late:

XCVIII.

And therefore, though 't is by no means my way
To rhyme at noon—when I have other things
To think of, if I ever think,—I say
I feel some chilly midnight shudderings,
And prudently postpone, until mid-day,
Treating a topic which, alas! but brings
Shadows;—but you must be in my condition
Before you learn to call this superstition.

XCIX.

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge:
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be! The eternal surge
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar
Our bubbles; as the old burst, new emerge,
Lash'd from the foam of ages; while the graves
Of empires heave but like some passing waves.

CANTO XVI.

I.

The antique Persians taught three useful things,—
To draw the bow, to ride, and speak the truth.
This was the mode of Cyrus—best of kings—
A mode adopted since by modern youth.
Bows have they, generally with two strings;
Horses they ride without remorse or ruth;
At speaking truth perhaps they are less clever,
But draw the long bow better now than ever.

II.

The cause of this effect, or this defect,—
« For this effect defective comes by cause,»—
Is what I have not leisure to inspect;
But this I must say in my own applause,
Of all the Muses that I recollect,
Whate'er may be her follies or her flaws
In some things, mine 's beyond all contradiction
The most sincere that ever dealt in fiction.

III.

And as she treats all things, and ne'er retreats
From any thing, this Epic will contain
A wilderness of the most rare conceits,
Which you might elsewhere hope to find in vain.
'T is true there be some bitters with the sweets,
Yet mix'd so slightly that you can't complain,
But wonder they so few are, since my tale is
« De rebus cunctis et quibusdam aliis.»

IV.

But of all truths which she has told, the most
True is that which she is about to tell.
I said it was a story of a ghost—
What then? I only know it so befel.
Have you explored the limits of the coast,
Where all the dwellers of the earth must dwell?
'T is time to strike such puny doubters dumb as
The sceptics who would not believe Columbus.

V.

Some people would impose now with authority,
Turpin's or Monmouth Geoffry's Chronicle;
Men whose historical superiority
Is always greatest at a miracle.
But Saint Augustine has the great priority,
Who bids all men believe the impossible,
Because 't is so. Who nibble, scribble, quibble, he
Quiets at once with « *quia* impossibile.»

VI.

And therefore, mortals, cavil not at all;
Believe:—if 't is improbable you *must*;
And if it is impossible, you *shall*:
'T is always best to take things upon trust.
I do not speak profanely to recal
Those holier mysteries, which the wise and just
Receive as gospel, and which grow more rooted,
As all truths must, the more they are disputed.

VII.

I merely mean to say what Johnson said,
That in the course of some six thousand years,
All nations have believed that from the dead
A visitant at intervals appears;
And what is strangest upon this strange head,
Is, that whatever bar the reason rears
'Gainst such belief, there 's something stronger still
In its behalf, let those deny who will.

VIII.

The dinner and the soirée too were done,
The supper too discuss'd, the dames admired,
The banqueteers had dropp'd off one by one—
The song was silent, and the dance expired:
The last thin petticoats were vanish'd, gone
Like fleecy clouds into the sky retired,
And nothing brighter gleam'd through the saloon
Than dying tapers—and the peeping moon.

IX.

The evaporation of a joyous day
Is like the last glass of champagne, without
The foam which made its virgin bumper gay;
Or like a system coupled with a doubt;
Or like a soda-bottle when its spray
Has sparkled and let half its spirit out;
Or like a billow left by storms behind,
Without the animation of the wind;

X.

Or like an opiate which brings troubled rest,
Or none; or like—like nothing that I know
Except itself:—such is the human breast;
A thing, of which similitudes can show
No real likeness,—like the old Tyrian vest
Dyed purple, none at present can tell how,
If from a shell-fish or from cochineal.
So perish every tyrant's robe piece-meal!

XI.

But next to dressing for a rout or ball,
Undressing is a woe; our robe de chambre
May sit like that of Nessus and recal
Thoughts quite as yellow, but less clear than amber.
Titus exclaim'd, « I 've lost a day!» Of all
The nights and days most people can remember,
(I have had of both, some not to be disdain'd)
I wish they 'd state how many they have gain'd.

XII.

And Juan, on retiring for the night,
Felt restless and perplexed, and compromised;
He thought Aurora Raby's eyes more bright
Than Adeline (such is advice) advised;
If he had known exactly his own plight,
He probably would have philosophised;
A great resource to all, and ne'er denied
Till wanted; therefore Juan only sigh'd.

XIII.

He sigh'd;—the next resource is the full moon,
Where all sighs are deposited; and now
It happen'd luckily, the chaste orb shone
As clear as such a climate will allow;
And Juan's mind was in the proper tone
To hail her with the apostrophe—« Oh, thou!»
Of amatory egotism the *tuism*,
Which further to explain would be a truism.

XIV.

But lover, poet, or astronomer,
Shepherd, or swain, whoever may behold,
Feel some abstraction when they gaze on her:
Great thoughts we catch from thence (besides a cold
Sometimes, unless my feelings rather err);
Deep secrets to her rolling light are told;
The ocean's tides and mortal's brains she sways,
And also hearts, if there be truth in lays.

XV.

Juan felt somewhat pensive, and disposed
For contemplation rather than his pillow:
The Gothic chamber, where he was enclosed,
Let in the rippling sound of the lake's billow,
With all the mystery by midnight caused;
Below his window waved (of course) a willow;
And he stood gazing out on the cascade
That flash'd and after darken'd in the shade.

XVI.

Upon his table or his toilet—*which*
Of these is not exactly ascertained—
(I state this, for I am cautious to a pitch
Of nicety, where a fact is to be gain'd)
A lamp burn'd high, while he leant from a niche,
Where many a Gothic ornament remain'd,
In chisel'd stone and painted glass, and all
That time has left our fathers of their hall.

XVII.

Then, as the night was clear though cold, he threw
His chamber-door wide open—and went forth
Into a gallery, of a sombre hue,
Long, furnish'd with old pictures of great worth,
Of knights and dames heroic and chaste too,
As doubtless should be people of high birth.
But by dim lights the portraits of the dead
Have something ghastly, desolate, and dread.

XVIII.

The forms of the grim knights and pictured saints
Look living in the moon; and as you turn
Backward and forward to the echoes faint
Of your own footsteps—voices from the urn
Appear to wake, and shadows wild and quaint
Start from the frames which fence their aspects stern,
As if to ask how can you dare to keep
A vigil there, where all but death should sleep.

XIX.

And the pale smile of beauties in the grave,
The charms of other days, in starlight gleams
Glimmer on high; their buried locks still wave
Along the canvas; their eyes glance like dreams
On ours, or spars within some dusky cave,
But death is imaged in their shadowy beams.
A picture is the past; even ere its frame
Be gilt, who sate hath ceased to be the same.

XX.

As Juan mused on mutability,
Or on his mistress—terms synonymous—
No sound except the echo of his sigh
Or step ran sadly through that antique house,
When suddenly he heard, or thought so, nigh,
A supernatural agent—or a mouse,
Whose little nibbling rustle will embarrass
Most people, as it plays along the arras.

XXI.

It was no mouse, but lo! a monk, array'd
In cowl and beads and dusky garb, appear'd,
Now in the moonlight, and now lapsed in shade,
With steps that trod as heavy, yet unheard;
His garments only a slight murmur made;
He moved as shadowy as the sisters weird,
But slowly; and as he pass'd Juan by,
Glanced, without pausing, on him a bright eye.

XXII.

Juan was petrified; he had heard a hint
Of such a spirit in these halls of old,
But thought, like most men, there was nothing in 't
Beyond the rumour which such spots unfold,
Coin'd from surviving superstition's mint,
Which passes ghosts in currency like gold,
But rarely seen, like gold compared with paper.
And *did* he see this? or was it a vapour?

XXIII.

Once, twice, thrice pass'd, repass'd—the thing of air,
Or earth beneath, or heaven, or t' other place;
And Juan gazed upon it with a stare,
Yet could not speak or move; but, on its base
As stands a statue, stood: he felt his hair
Twine like a knot of snakes around his face;
He tax'd his tongue for words, which were not granted,
To ask the reverend person what he wanted.

XXIV.

The third time, after a still longer pause,
The shadow pass'd away—but where? the hall
Was long, and thus far there was no great cause
To think his vanishing unnatural:
Doors there were many, through which, by the laws
Of physics, bodies whether short or tall
Might come or go; but Juan could not state
Through which the spectre seem'd to evaporate.

XXV.

He stood, how long he knew not, but it seem'd
An age—expectant, powerless, with his eyes
Strain'd on the spot where first the figure gleam'd;
Then by degrees recall'd his energies,
And would have pass'd the whole off as a dream,
But could not wake; he was, he did surmise,
Walking already, and return'd at length
Back to his chamber, shorn of half his strength.

XXVI.

All there was as he left it: still his taper
Burnt, and not *blue*, as modest tapers use,
Receiving sprites with sympathetic vapour;
He rubb'd his eyes, and they did not refuse
Their office; he took up an old newspaper;
The paper was right easy to peruse;
He read an article the king attacking,
And a long eulogy of «Patent Blacking.»

XXVII.

This savour'd of this world; but his hand shook—
He shut his door, and after having read
A paragraph, I think about Horne Tooke,
Undress'd, and rather slowly went to bed.
There, couch'd all snugly on his pillow's nook,
With what he had seen his phantasy he fed,
And though it was no opiate, slumber crept
Upon him by degrees, and so he slept.

XXVIII.

He woke betimes; and, as may be supposed,
Ponder'd upon his visitant or vision,
And whether it ought not to be disclosed,
At risk of being quizz'd for superstition.
The more he thought, the more his mind was posed;
In the mean time his valet, whose precision
Was great, because his master brook'd no less,
Knock'd to inform him it was time to dress.

XXIX.

He dress'd; and, like young people, he was wont
To take some trouble with his toilet, but
This morning rather spent less time upon 't;
Aside his very mirror soon was put:
His curls fell negligently o'er his front,
His clothes were not curb'd to their usual cut,
His very neckcloth's Gordian knot was tied
Almost a hair's breadth too much on one side.

XXX.

And when he walk'd down into the saloon,
He sate him pensive o'er a dish of tea,
Which he perhaps had not discover'd soon,
Had it not happen'd scalding hot to be,
Which made him have recourse unto his spoon;
So much distrait he was, that all could see
That something *was* the matter—Adeline
The first—but *what* she could not well divine.

XXXI.

She look'd, and saw him pale, and turn'd as pale
Herself; then hastily look'd down, and mutter'd
Something, but what 's not stated in my tale.
Lord Henry said, his muffin was ill butter'd;
The Duchess of Fitz-Fulke play'd with her veil,
And look'd at Juan hard, but nothing utter'd.
Aurora Raby, with her large dark eyes,
Survey'd him with a kind of calm surprise.

XXXII.

But seeing him all cold and silent still,
And every body wondering more or less,
Fair Adeline inquired, «If he were ill?»
He started, and said, «Yes—no—rather—yes.»
The family physician had great skill,
And, being present, now began to express
His readiness to feel his pulse and tell
The cause, but Juan said, «He was quite well.»

XXXIII.

«Quite well; yes; no.»—These answers were mysterious,
And yet his looks appear'd to sanction both,
However they might savour of delirious;
Something like illness of a sudden growth
Weigh'd on his spirit, though by no means serious.
But for the rest, as he himself seem'd loth
To state the case, it might be ta'en for granted
It was not the physician that he wanted.

XXXIV.

Lord Henry, who had now discuss'd his chocolate,
Also the muffin whereof he complain'd,
Said, Juan had not got his usual look elate,
At which he marvell'd, since it had not rain'd;
Then ask'd her grace what news were of the duke of late?
Her grace replied, *his* grace was rather pain'd
With some slight, light, hereditary twinges
Of gout, which rusts aristocratic hinges.

XXXV.

Then Henry turn'd to Juan and address'd
A few words of condolence on his state:
«You look,» quoth he, «as if you had had your rest
Broke in upon by the Black Friar of late.»
«What friar?» said Juan; and he did his best
To put the question with an air sedate,
Or careless; but the effort was not valid
To hinder him from growing still more pallid.

XXXVI.

«Oh! have you never heard of the Black Friar?
The spirit of these walls?»—«In truth not I.»
«Why fame—but fame you know 's sometimes a liar—
Tells an odd story, of which by the by:
Whether with time the spectre has grown shyer,
Or that our sires had a more gifted eye
For such sights, though the tale is half believed,
The friar of late has not been oft perceived.

XXXVII.

«The last time was——» «I pray,» said Adeline—
(Who watch'd the changes of Don Juan's brow,
And from its context thought she could divine
Connexions stronger than he chose to avow
With this same legend),—«if you but design
To jest, you 'll choose some other theme just now,
Because the present tale has oft been told,
And is not much improved by growing old.»

XXXVIII.

«Jest!» quoth Milor, «Why, Adeline, you know
That we ourselves—'t was in the honey-moon—
Saw——» «Well, no matter, 't was so long ago;
But, come, I 'll set your story to a tune.»
Graceful as Dian when she draws her bow,
She seized her harp, whose strings were kindled soon
As touch'd, and plaintively began to play
The air of «'T was a Friar of Orders Gray.»

XXXIX.

« But add the words,» cried Henry, « which you made;
For Adeline is half a poetess,»
Turning round to the rest, he smiling said.
Of course the others could not but express
In courtesy their wish to see display'd
By one *three* talents, for there were no less—
The voice, the words, the harper's skill, at once
Could hardly be united by a dunce.

XL.

After some fascinating hesitation,—
The charming of these charmers, who seem bound,
I can't tell why, to this dissimulation—
Fair Adeline, with eyes fix'd on the ground
At first, then kindling into animation,
Added her sweet voice to the lyric sound,
And sang with much simplicity,—a merit
Not the less precious, that we seldom hear it.

1.

Beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
Who sitteth by Norman stone,
For he mutters his prayer in the midnight air,
And his mass of the days that are gone.
When the Lord of the Hill, Amundeville,
Made Norman Church his prey,
And expell'd the friars, one friar still
Would not be driven away.

2.

Though he came in his might, with King Henry's right,
To turn church lands to lay,
With sword in hand, and torch to light
Their walls, if they said nay,
A monk remain'd, unchased, unchain'd,
And he did not seem form'd of clay,
For he's seen in the porch, and he's seen in the church,
Though he is not seen by day.

3.

And whether for good, or whether for ill,
It is not mine to say;
But still to the house of Amundeville
He abideth night and day.
By the marriage-bed of their lords, 'tis said,
He flits on the bridal eve;
And 'tis held as faith, to their bed of death,
He comes—but not to grieve.

4.

When an heir is born, he is heard to mourn,
And when aught is to befal
That ancient line, in the pale moon-shine
He walks from hall to hall.
His form you may trace, but not his face,
'T is shadow'd by his cowl;
But his eyes may be seen from the folds between,
And they seem of a parted soul.

5.

But beware! beware! of the Black Friar,
He still retains his sway,
For he is yet the church's heir
Whoever may be the lay.
Amundeville is lord by day,
But the monk is lord by night.
Nor wine nor wassail could raise a vassal
To question that friar's right.

6.

Say nought to him as he walks the hall,
And he'll say nought to you;
He sweeps along in his dusky pall,
As o'er the grass the dew.
Then grammercy! for the Black Friar;
Heaven sain him! fair or foul,
And whatsoe'er may be his prayer,
Let ours be for his soul.

XLI.

The lady's voice ceased, and the thrilling wires
Died from the touch that kindled them to sound;
And the pause follow'd, which, when song expires,
Pervades a moment those who listen round;
And then of course the circle much admires,
Nor less applauds, as in politeness bound,
The tones, the feeling, and the execution,
To the performer's diffident confusion.

XLII.

Fair Adeline, though in a careless way,
As if she rated such accomplishment
As the mere pastime of an idle day,
Pursued an instant for her own content,
Would now and then as 't were *without* display,
Yet *with* display in fact, at times relent
To such performances with haughty smile,
To show she *could,* if it were worth her while.

XLIII.

Now this (but we will whisper it aside)
Was—pardon the pedantic illustration—
Trampling on Plato's pride with greater pride,
As did the Cynic on some like occasion;
Deeming the sage would be much mortified,
Or thrown into a philosophic passion,
For a spoil'd carpet—but the « Attic Bee»
Was much consoled by his own repartee.[2]

XLIV.

Thus Adeline would throw into the shade
(By doing easily whene'er she chose,
What dilettanti do with vast parade),
Their sort of *half profession:* for it grows
To something like this when too oft display'd,
And that it is so, every body knows,
Who have heard Miss That or This, or Lady T'other,
Show off—to please their company or mother.

XLV.

Oh! the long evenings of duets and trios!
The admirations and the speculations;
The « Mamma Mia's!» and the « Amor Mio's!»
The « Tanti palpiti's» on such occasions:
The « Lasciami's,» and quavering « Addio's!»
Amongst our own most musical of nations;
With « Tu mi chamas's» from Portingale,
To soothe our ears, lest Italy should fail.[3]

XLVI.

In Babylon's bravuras—as the home
Heart-ballads of Green Erin or Grey Highlands,
That brings Lochaber back to eyes that roam
O'er far Atlantic continents or islands,
The calentures of music which o'ercome
All mountaineers with dreams that they are nighlands,
No more to be beheld but in such visions,—
Was Adeline well versed, as compositions.

XLVII.

She also had a twilight tinge of «*Blue*,»
Could write rhymes, and compose more than she wrote;
Made epigrams occasionally too
Upon her friends, as every body ought.
But still from that sublimer azure hue,
So much the present dye, she was remote;
Was weak enough to deem Pope a great poet,
And, what was worse, was not ashamed to show it.

XLVIII.

Aurora—since we are touching upon taste,
Which now-a-days is the thermometer
By whose degrees all characters are class'd—
Was more Shakspearian, if I do not err.
The worlds beyond this world's perplexing waste
Had more of her existence, for in her
There was a depth of feeling to embrace
Thoughts, boundless, deep, but silent too as space.

XLIX.

Not so her gracious, graceful, graceless grace,
The full-grown Hebe of Fitz-Fulke, whose mind,
If she had any, was upon her face,
And that was of a fascinating kind.
A little turn for mischief you might trace
Also thereon,—but that's not much; we find
Few females without some such gentle leaven.
For fear we should suppose us quite in heaven.

L.

I have not heard she was at all poetic,
Though once she was seen reading the «Bath Guide,»
And «Hayley's Triumphs,» which she deem'd pathetic,
Because, she said, *her temper* had been tried
So much, the bard had really been prophetic
Of what she had gone through with,—since a bride.
But of all verse, what most insured her praise
Were sonnets to herself, or «bouts rimés.»

LI.

'T were difficult to say what was the object
Of Adeline, in bringing this same lay
To bear on what appear'd to her the subject
Of Juan's nervous feelings on that day.
Perhaps she merely had the simple project
To laugh him out of his supposed dismay;
Perhaps she might wish to confirm him in it,
Though why I cannot say—at least this minute.

LII.

But so far the immediate effect
Was to restore him to his self-propriety,
A thing quite necessary to the elect,
Who wish to take the tone of their society:
In which you cannot be too circumspect,
Whether the mode be persiflage or piety,
But wear the newest mantle of hypocrisy,
On pain of much displeasing the gynocracy.

LIII.

And therefore Juan now began to rally
His spirits, and without more explanation,
To jest upon such themes in many a sally.
Her grace too also seized the same occasion,
With various similar remarks to tally,
But wish'd for a still more detail'd narration
Of this same mystic friar's curious doings,
About the present family's deaths and wooings.

LIV.

Of these few could say more than has been said;
They pass'd, as such things do, for superstition
With some, while others, who had more in dread
The theme, half credited the strange tradition;
And much was talk'd on all sides on that head;
But Juan, when cross-question'd on the vision,
Which some supposed (though he had not avow'd it)
Had stirr'd him, answer'd in a way to cloud it.

LV.

And then, the mid-day having worn to one,
The company prepared to separate:
Some to their several pastimes, or to none;
Some wondering 't was so early, some so late.
There was a goodly match too, to be run
Between some greyhounds on my lord's estate,
And a young race-horse of old pedigree,
Match'd for the spring, whom several went to see.

LVI.

There was a picture-dealer who had brought
A special Titian, warranted original,
So precious that it was not to be bought,
Though princes the possessor were besieging all.
The king himself had cheapen'd it, but thought
The civil list (he deigns to accept, obliging all
His subjects by his gracious acceptation)
Too scanty, in these times of low taxation.

LVII.

But as Lord Henry was a connoisseur,—
The friend of artists, if not arts,—the owner,
With motives the most classical and pure,
So that he would have been the very donor,
Rather than seller, had his wants been fewer,
So much he deem'd his patronage an honour,
Had brought the capo d'opéra, not for sale,
But for his judgment,—never known to fail.

LVIII.

There was a modern Goth, I mean a Gothic
Bricklayer of Babel, call'd an architect,
Brought to survey these grey walls, which, though so thick,
Might have from time acquired some slight defect;
Who, after rummaging the abbey through thick
And thin, produced a plan, whereby to erect
New buildings of correctest conformation,
And throw down old, which he call'd *restoration*.

LIX.

The cost would be a trifle—an «old song»
Set to some thousands ('t is the usual burthen
Of that same tune, when people hum it long)—
The price would speedily repay its worth in
An edifice no less sublime than strong,
By which Lord Henry's good taste would go forth in
Its glory, through all ages shining sunny,
For Gothic daring shown in English money.

LX.

There were two lawyers busy on a mortgage
Lord Henry wish'd to raise for a new purchase;
Also a lawsuit upon tenures burgage,
And one on tithes, which sure are Discord's torches,
Kindling Religion till she throws down *her* gage,
«Untying» squires «to fight against the churches;»
There was a prize ox, a prize pig, and ploughman,
For Henry was a sort of Sabine showman.

LXI.

There were two poachers caught in a steel trap,
Ready for jail, their place of convalescence;
There was a country girl in a close cap
And scarlet cloak (I hate the sight to see, since—
Since—since—in youth, I had the sad mishap—
But luckily I have paid few parish fees since)
That scarlet cloak, alas! unclosed with rigour,
Presents the problem of a double figure.

LXII.

A reel within a bottle is a mystery,
One can't tell how it e'er got in or out,
Therefore the present piece of natural history
I leave to those who are fond of solving doubt,
And merely state, though not for the consistory,
Lord Henry was a justice, and that Scout
The constable, beneath a warrant's banner,
Had bagg'd this poacher upon Nature's manor.

LXIII.

Now justices of peace must judge all pieces
Of mischief of all kinds, and keep the game
And morals of the country from caprices
Of those who have not a licence for the same;
And of all things, excepting tithes and leases,
Perhaps these are most difficult to tame:
Preserving partridges and pretty wenches
Are puzzles to the most precautious benches.

LXIV.

The present culprit was extremely pale,
Pale as if painted so; her cheek being red
By nature, as in higher dames less hale
'T is white, at least when they just rise from bed.
Perhaps she was ashamed of seeming frail,
Poor soul! for she was country born and bred,
And knew no better in her immorality
Than to wax white—for blushes are for quality.

LXV.

Her black, bright, downcast, yet espiègle eye,
Had gather'd a large tear into its corner,
Which the poor thing at times essay'd to dry,
For she was not a sentimental mourner,
Parading all her sensibility,
Nor insolent enough to scorn the scorner,
But stood in trembling, patient tribulation
To be call'd up for her examination.

LXVI.

Of course these groups were scatter'd here and there,
Not nigh the gay saloon of ladies gent.
The lawyers in the study; and in air
The prize pig, ploughman, poachers; the men sent
From town, viz. architect and dealer, were
Both busy (as a general in his tent
Writing dispatches) in their several stations,
Exulting in their brilliant lucubrations.

LXVII.

But this poor girl was left in the great hall,
While Scout, the parish guardian of the frail,
Discuss'd (he hated beer yclept the «small»)
A mighty mug of *moral* double ale:
She waited until Justice could recal
Its kind attentions to their proper pale,
To name a thing in nomenclature rather
Perplexing for most virgins—a child's father.

LXVIII.

You see here was enough of occupation
For the Lord Henry, link'd with dogs and horses.
There was much bustle too and preparation
Below stairs on the score of second courses,
Because, as suits their rank and situation,
Those who in counties have great land resources,
Have «public days,» when all men may carouse,
Though not exactly what 's call'd «open house.»

LXIX.

But once a week or fortnight, *uninvited*
(Thus we translate a *general invitation*),
All country gentlemen, esquired or knighted,
May drop in without cards, and take their station
At the full board, and sit alike delighted
With fashionable wines and conversation;
And, as the isthmus of the grand connexion,
Talk o'er themselves, the past and next election.

LXX.

Lord Henry was a great electioneerer,
Burrowing for boroughs like a rat or rabbit,
But county contests cost him rather dearer,
Because the neighbouring Scotch Earl of Giftgabbit
Had English influence, in the self-same sphere here;
His son, the Honourable Dick Dicedrabbit,
Was member for the «other Interest» (meaning
The same self-interest, with a different leaning).

LXXI.

Courteous and cautious therefore in his county,
He was all things to all men, and dispensed
To some civility, to others bounty,
And promises to all—which last commenced
To gather to a somewhat large amount, he
Not calculating how much they condensed;
But what with keeping some, and breaking others,
His word had the same value as another's.

LXXII.

A friend to freedom and freeholders—yet
No less a friend to government—he held,
That he exactly the just medium hit
'T wixt place and patriotism—albeit compell'd,
Such was his sovereign's pleasure (though unfit,
He added modestly, when rebels rail'd),
To hold some sinecures he wish'd abolish'd,
But that with them all law would be demolish'd.

LXXIII.

He was «free to confess»—(whence comes this phrase?
Is 't English? No—'t is only parliamentary)
That innovation's spirit now-a-days
Had made more progress than for the last century.
He would not tread a factious path to praise,
Though for the public weal disposed to venture high;
As for his place, he could but say this of it,
That the fatigue was greater than the profit.

LXXIV.

Heaven, and his friends, knew that a private life
Had ever been his sole and whole ambition;
But could he quit his king in times of strife
Which threaten'd the whole country with perdition?
When demagogues would with a butcher's knife
Cut through and through (oh! damnable incision!)
The Gordian or the Geordi-an knot, whose strings
Have tied together Commons, Lords, and Kings.

LXXV.

Sooner « come place into the civil list
And champion him to the utmost»—he would keep it,
Till duly disappointed or dismiss'd:
Profit he cared not for, let others reap it;
But should the day come when place ceased to exist,
The country would have far more cause to weep it;
For how could it go on? Explain who can!
He gloried in the name of Englishman.

LXXVI.

He was as independent—ay, much more—
Than those who were not paid for independence,
As common soldiers, or a common——shore,
Have in their several arts or parts ascendance
O'er the irregulars in lust or gore
Who do not give professional attendance.
Thus on the mob all statesmen are as eager
To prove their pride, as footmen to a beggar.

LXXVII.

All this (save the last stanza) Henry said,
And thought. I say no more—I 've said too much;
For all of us have either heard or read
Of—or *upon* the hustings—some slight such
Hints from the independent heart or head
Of the official candidate. I 'll touch
No more on this—the dinner bell hath rung,
And grace is said; the grace I *should* have *sung*—

LXXVIII.

But I 'm too late, and therefore must make play.
'T was a great banquet, such as Albion old
Was wont to boast—as if a glutton's tray
Were something very glorious to behold.
But 't was a public feast and public day,—
Quite full, right dull, guests hot, and dishes cold,
Great plenty, much formality, small cheer,
And every body out of their own sphere.

LXXIX.

The squires familiarly formal, and
My lords and ladies proudly condescending,
The very servants puzzling how to hand
Their plates—without it might be too much bending
From their high places by the sideboard's stand—
Yet like their masters fearful of offending.
For any deviation from the graces
Might cost both men and master too—their *places*.

LXXX.

There were some hunters bold, and coursers keen,
Whose hounds ne'er err'd, nor greyhounds deign'd to lurch;
Some deadly shots too, Septembrizers, seen
Earliest to rise, and last to quit the search
Of the poor partridge through his stubble screen.
There were some massy members of the church,
Takers of tithes, and makers of good matches,
And several who sung fewer psalms than catches.

LXXXI.

There were some country wags too,—and alas!
Some exiles from the town, who had been driven
To gaze, instead of pavement, upon grass,
And rise at nine in lieu of long eleven.
And lo! upon that day it came to pass,
I sate next that o'erwhelming son of Heaven,
The very powerful parson, Peter Pith,
The loudest wit I e'er was deafen'd with.

LXXXII.

I knew him in his livelier London days,
A brilliant diner-out, though but a curate;
And not a joke he cut but earn'd its praise,
Until preferment, coming at a sure rate,
(Oh, Providence! how wondrous are thy ways,
Who would suppose thy gifts sometimes obdurate?)
Gave him, to lay the devil who looks o'er Lincoln,
A fat fen vicarage, and nought to think on.

LXXXIII.

His jokes were sermons, and his sermons jokes;
But both were thrown away amongst the fens;
For wit hath no great friend in aguish folks.
No longer ready ears and short-hand pens
Imbibed the gay bon-mot, or happy hoax:
The poor priest was reduced to common sense,
Or to coarse efforts very loud and long,
To hammer a hoarse laugh from the thick throng.

LXXXIV.

There *is* a difference, says the song, « between
A beggar and a queen,» or *was* (of late
The latter worse used of the two we 've seen—
But we 'll say nothing of affairs of state)—
A difference « 't wixt a bishop and a dean,»
A difference between crockery-ware and plate,
As between English beef and Spartan broth—
And yet great heroes have been bred by both.

LXXXV.

But of all Nature's discrepancies, none
Upon the whole is greater than the difference
Beheld between the country and the town,
Of which the latter merits every preference
From those who have few resources of their own,
And only think, or act, or feel with reference
To some small plan of interest or ambition—
Both which are limited to no condition.

LXXXVI.

But « en avant!» The light loves languish o'er
Long banquets and too many guests, although
A slight repast makes people love much more,
Bacchus and Ceres being, as we know,
Even from our grammar upwards, friends of yore
With vivifiying Venus, who doth owe
To these the invention of champagne and truffles:
Temperance delights her, but long fasting ruffles.

LXXXVII.

Dully pass'd o'er the dinner of the day;
And Juan took his place, he knew not where,
Confused, in the confusion, and distrait,
And sitting as if nail'd upon his chair;
Though knives and forks clang'd round as in a fray,
He seem'd unconscious of all passing there,
Till some one, with a groan, express'd a wish
(Unheeded twice) to have a fin of fish.

LXXXVIII.

On which, at the *third* asking of the banns,
He started; and perceiving smiles around
Broadening to grins, he colour'd more than once,
And hastily—as nothing can confound
A wise man more than laughter from a dunce—
Inflicted on the dish a deadly wound,
And with such hurry, that ere he could curb it,
He had paid his neighbour's prayer with half a turbot.

LXXXIX.

This was no bad mistake, as it occurr'd,
The supplicator being an amateur;
But others, who were left with scarce a third,
Were angry—as they well might, to be sure.
They wonder'd how a young man so absurd
Lord Henry at his table should endure;
And this, and his not knowing how much oats
Had fallen last market, cost his host three votes.

XC.

They little knew, or might have sympathised,
That he the night before had seen a ghost;
A prologue which but slightly harmonised
With the substantial company engross'd
By matter, and so much materialised,
That one scarce knew at what to marvel most
Of two things—how (the question rather odd is)
Such bodies could have souls, or souls such bodies.

XCI.

But what confused him more than smile or stare
From all the 'squires and 'squiresses around,
Who wonder'd at the abstraction of his air,
Especially as he had been renown'd
For some vivacity among the fair,
Even in the country circle's narrow bound—
(For little things upon my lord's estate
Were good small-talk for others still less great)—

XCII.

Was, that he caught Aurora's eye on his,
And something like a smile upon her cheek.
Now this he really rather took amiss:
In those who rarely smile, their smile bespeaks
A strong external motive; and in this
Smile of Aurora's there was nought to pique
Or hope, or love, with any of the wiles
Which some pretend to trace in ladies' smiles.

XCIII.

'T was a mere quiet smile of contemplation,
Indicative of some surprise and pity;
And Juan grew carnation with vexation,
Which was not very wise and still less witty,
Since he had gain'd at least her observation,
A most important outwork of the city—
As Juan should have known, had not his senses
By last night's ghost been driven from their defences.

XCIV.

But what was bad, she did not blush in turn,
Nor seem embarrass'd—quite the contrary;
Her aspect was as usual, still—*not* stern—
And she withdrew, but cast not down, her eye,
Yet grew a little pale—with what? concern?
I know not; but her colour ne'er was high—
Though sometimes faintly flush'd—and always clear
As deep seas in a sunny atmosphere.

XCV.

But Adeline was occupied by fame
This day; and watching, witching, condescending
To the consumers of fish, fowl, and game,
And dignity with courtesy so blending,
As all must blend whose part it is to aim
(Especially as the sixth year is ending)
At their lord's, son's, or similar connexion's
Safe conduct through the rocks of re-elections.

XCVI.

Though this was most expedient on the whole,
And usual—Juan, when he cast a glance
On Adeline while playing her grand role,
Which she went through as though it were a dance
(Betraying only now and then her soul
By a look scarce perceptibly askance
Of weariness or scorn), began to feel
Some doubt how much of Adeline was *real;*

XCVII.

So well she acted, all and every part
By turns—with that vivacious versatility,
Which many people take for want of heart.
They err—'t is merely what is call'd mobility,[6]
A thing of temperament and not of art,
Though seeming so, from its supposed facility;
And false—though true; for surely they 're sincerest,
Who are strongly acted on by what is nearest.

XCVIII.

This makes your actors, artists, and romancers,
Heroes sometimes, though seldom—sages never;
But speakers, bards, diplomatists, and dancers,
Little that 's great, but much of what is clever;
Most orators, but very few financiers.
Though all Exchequer Chancellors endeavour,
Of late years, to dispense with Cocker's rigours,
And grow quite figurative with their figures.

XCIX.

The poets of arithmetic are they
Who, though they prove not two and two to be
Five, as they would do in a modest way,
Have plainly made it out that four are three,
Judging by what they take, and what they pay.
The Sinking Fund's unfathomable sea,
That most unliquidating liquid, leaves
The debt unsunk, yet sinks all it receives.

C.

While Adeline dispensed her airs and graces,
The fair Fitz-Fulke seem'd very much at ease;
Though too well-bred to quiz men to their faces,
Her laughing blue eyes with a glance could seize
The ridicules of people in all places—
That honey of your fashionable bees—
And store it up for mischievous enjoyment;
And this at present was her kind employment.

CI.

However, the day closed, as days must close;
The evening also waned—and coffee came.
Each carriage was announced, and ladies rose,
And curtseying off, as curtsies country dame,
Retired: with most unfashionable bows
Their docile esquires also did the same,
Delighted with the dinner and their host:
But with the Lady Adeline the most.

CII.

Some praised her beauty; others her great grace;
The warmth of her politeness, whose sincerity
Was obvious in each feature of her face,
Whose traits were radiant with the rays of verity.
Yes: *she* was truly worthy *her* high place!
No one could envy her deserved prosperity;
And then her dress—what beautiful simplicity
Draperied her form with curious felicity;[7]

CIII.

Meanwhile sweet Adeline deserved their praises,
By an impartial indemnification
For all her past exertion and soft phrases,
In a most edifying conversation,
Which turn'd upon their late guests' miens and faces,
And families, even to the last relation;
Their hideous wives, their horrid selves and dresses,
And truculent distortion of their tresses.

CIV.

True, *she* said little—'twas the rest that broke
Forth into universal epigram:
But then 't was to the purpose what she spoke:
Like Addison's «faint praise,» so wont to damn,
Her own but served to set off every joke,
As music chimes in with a melo-drame.
How sweet the task to shield an absent friend!
I ask but this of mine, to——*not* defend.

CV.

There were but two exceptions to this keen
Skirmish of wits o'er the departed; one,
Aurora, with her pure and placid mien;
And Juan too, in general behind none
In gay remark on what he had heard or seen,
Sate silent now, his usual spirits gone:
In vain he heard the others rail or rally,
He would not join them in a single sally.

CVI.

'T is true he saw Aurora look as though
She approved his silence; she perhaps mistook
Its motive for that charity we owe
But seldom pay the absent, nor would look
Further; it might or it might not be so.
But Juan, sitting silent in his nook,
Observing little in his reverie,
Yet saw this much, which he was glad to see.

CVII.

The ghost at least had done him this much good,
In making him as silent as a ghost,
If in the circumstances which ensued
He gain'd esteem where it was worth the most.
And certainly Aurora had renew'd
In him some feelings he had lately lost
Or harden'd; feelings which, perhaps ideal,
Are so divine, that I must deem them real:—

CVIII.

The love of higher things and better days;
The unbounded hope, and heavenly ignorance
Of what is call'd the world, and the world's ways;
The moments when we gather from a glance
More joy than from all future pride or praise,
Which kindle manhood, but can ne'er entrance
The heart in an existence of its own,
Of which another's bosom is the zone.

CIX.

Who would not sigh Αι αι την Κυθειαν!
That *hath* a memory, or that *had* a heart?
Alas! *her* star must wane like that of Diana;
Ray fades on ray, as years on years depart.
Anacreon only had the soul to tie an
Unwithering myrtle round the unblunted dart
Of Eros; but, though thou hast play'd us many tricks,
Still we respect thee, «Alma Venus Genetrix»

CX.

And full of sentiments, sublime as billows
Heaving between this world and worlds beyond,
Don Juan, when the midnight hour of pillows
Arrived, retired to his; but to despond
Rather than rest. Instead of poppies, willows
Waved o'er his couch; he meditated, fond
Of those sweet bitter thoughts which banish sleep,
And make the worldling sneer, the youngling weep.

CXI.

The night was as before: he was undrest,
Saving his night-gown, which is an undress;
Completely «sans culotte,» and without vest;
In short, he hardly could be clothed with less;
But, apprehensive of his spectral guest,
He sate, with feelings awkward to express
(By those who have not had such visitations),
Expectant of the ghost's fresh operations.

CXII.

And not in vain he listen'd—Hush! what 's that?
I see—I see—Ah, no! 't is not—yet 't is—
Ye powers! it is the—the—the—Pooh! the cat!
The devil may take that stealthy pace of his!
So like a spiritual pit-a-pat,
Or tiptoe of an amatory Miss,
Gliding the first time to a rendezvous,
And dreading the chaste echoes of her shoe.

CXIII.

Again—what is 't? The wind? No, no,—this time
It is the sable friar as before,
With awful footsteps, regular as rhyme,
Or (as rhymes may be in these days) much more.
Again, through shadows of the night sublime,
When deep sleep fell on men, and the world wore
The starry darkness round her like a girdle
Spangled with gems—the monk made his blood curdle

CXIV.

A noise like to wet fingers drawn on glass,[8]
Which sets the teeth on edge; and a slight clatter
Like showers which on the midnight gusts will pass,
Sounding like very supernatural water,—
Came over Juan's ear, which throbb'd, alas!
For immaterialism 's a serious matter:
So that even those whose faith is the most great
In souls immortal, shun them tête-à-tête.

CXV.

Were his eyes open?—Yes! and his mouth too.
Surprise has this effect—to make one dumb,
Yet leave the gate which eloquence slips through
As wide as if a long speech were to come.
Nigh and more nigh the awful echoes drew,
Tremendous to a mortal tympanum:
His eyes were open, and (as was before
Stated) his mouth. What open'd next?—the door.

CXVI.

It open'd with a most infernal creak,
Like that of hell. «Lasciate ogni speranza
Voi che entrate!» The hinge seem'd to speak,
Dreadful as Dante's rima, or this stanza;
Or—but all words upon such themes are weak:
A single shade 's sufficient to entrance a
Hero—for what is substance to a spirit?
Or how is 't *matter* trembles to come near it?

CXVII.

The door flew wide, not swiftly—but, as fly
The sea-gulls, with a steady, sober flight—
And then swung back; nor close—but stood awry,
Half letting in long shadows on the light,
Which still in Juan's candlesticks burn'd high,
For he had two, both tolerably bright,—
And in the door-way, darkening darkness, stood
The sable friar in his solemn hood.

CXVIII.

Don Juan shook, as erst he had been shaken
The night before; but, being sick of shaking,
He first inclined to think he had been mistaken,
And then to be ashamed of such mistaking;
His own internal ghost began to awaken
Within him, and to quell his corporal quaking—
Hinting, that soul and body on the whole
Were odds against a disembodied soul.

CXIX.

And then his dread grew wrath, and his wrath fierce;
And he arose, advanced—the shade retreated;
But Juan, eager now the truth to pierce,
Follow'd; his veins no longer cold, but heated,
Resolved to thrust the mystery carte and tierce,
At whatsoever risk of being defeated:
The ghost stopp'd, menaced, then retired, until
He reach'd the ancient wall, then stood stone still.

CXX.

Juan put forth one arm—Eternal Powers!
It touch'd no soul, nor body, but the wall,
On which the moonbeams fell in silvery showers
Chequer'd with all the tracery of the hall:
He shudder'd, as no doubt the bravest cowers
When he can't tell what 'tis that doth appal.
How odd, a single hobgoblin's non-entity
Should cause more fear than a whole host's identity. 9

CXXI.

But still the shade remain'd; the blue eyes glared,
And rather variably for stony death;
Yet one thing rather good the grave had spared—
The ghost had a remarkably sweet breath.
A straggling curl show'd he had been fair-hair'd;
A red lip, with two rows of pearls beneath,
Gleam'd forth, as through the casement's ivy shroud
The moon peep'd, just escaped from a gray cloud.

CXXII.

And Juan, puzzled, but still curious, thrust
His other arm forth—Wonder upon wonder!
It press'd upon a hard but glowing bust,
Which beat as if there was a warm heart under.
He found, as people on most trials must,
That he had made at first a silly blunder,
And that in his confusion he had caught
Only the wall instead of what he sought.

CXXIII.

The ghost, if ghost it were, seem'd a sweet soul
As ever lurk'd beneath a holy hood:
A dimpled chin, a neck of ivory, stole
Forth into something much like flesh and blood;
Back fell the sable frock and dreary cowl,
And they reveal'd (alas! that e'er they should!)
In full, voluptuous, but *not oer*grown bulk,
The phantom of her frolic grace—Fitz-Fulke!

NOTES.

CANTO I.

Note 1. Stanza v.

Brave men were living before Agamemnon.

« Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona,» etc.—Horace.

Note 2. Stanza xvii.

Save thine « incomparable oil,» Macassar!

« Description des *vertus incomparables* de l'huile de Macassar.»—See the advertisement.

Note 3. Stanza xlii.

Although Longinus tells us there is no hymn
Where the sublime soars forth on wings more ample.

See Longinus, Section 10, Ἵνα μὴ ἔν τι περὶ αὐτὴν πάθος φαίνηται, παθῶν δὲ σύνοδος.»

Note 4. Stanza xliv.

They only add them all in an appendix.

Fact. There is, or was, such an edition, with all the obnoxious epigrams of Martial placed by themselves at the end.

Note 5. Stanza lxxxviii.

The bard I quote from does not sing amiss.

Campbell's Gertrude of Wyoming; (I think) the opening of Canto II. but quote from memory.

Note 6. Stanza cxlviii.

Is it for this that General Count O'Reilly,
Who took Algiers, declares I used him vilely?

Donna Julia here made a mistake. Count O'Reilly did not take Algiers—but Algiers very nearly took him; he and his army and fleet retreated with great loss, and not much credit, from before that city, in the year 17—

Note 7. Stanza ccxvi.

My days of love are over, me no more.

« Me nec fœmina, nec puer
Jam, nec spes animi credula mutui,
Nec certare juvat mero,
Nec vincire novis tempora floribus.»

CANTO III.

Note 1. Stanza xlv.

For none likes more to bear himself converse.

Rispose allor' Margatte, a dirtel tosto,
Io non credo più al nero ch' all' azzurro;
Ma nel cappone, o lesso, o vuogli arrosto,
E credo alcuna volta anco nel burro;
Nella cervogia, e quando io n'ho nel mosto,
E molto più nell' espro che il mangurro;
Ma sopra tutto nel buon vino ho fede,
E credo che sia salvo chi gli crede.

Pulci, Morgante Maggiore, Canto 18, Stanza 151.

Note 2. Stanza lxxi.

That e'er by precious metal was held in.

This dress is Moorish, and the bracelets and bar are worn in the manner described. The reader will perceive hereafter, that, as the mother of Haidee was of Fez, her daughter wore the garb of the country.

Note 3. Stanza lxxii.

A like gold bar, above her instep roll'd.

The bar of gold above the instep is a mark of sovereign rank in the women of the families of the Deys, and is worn as such by their female relatives.

Note 4. Stanza lxxiii.

Her person at allow'd at large to run.

This is no exaggeration; there were four women whom I remember to have seen, who possessed their hair in this profusion; of these, three were English, the other was a Levantine. Their hair was of that length and quantity that, when let down, it almost entirely shaded the person, so as nearly to render dress a superfluity. Of these, only one had dark hair; the Oriental's had, perhaps, the lightest colour of the four.

Note 5. Stanza cvii.

Oh Hesperus! thou bringest all good things.

Εσπερε παντα φερεις,
Φερεις οινον, φερεις αιγα,
Φερεις ματερι παιδα.

Fragment of Sappho.

Note 6. Stanza cviii.

Soft hour! which wakes the wish and melts the heart.

« Era già l' ora che volge 'l disio,
A' naviganti, e 'ntenerisce il cuore,
Lo dì ch' han detto a' dolci amici a dio;
E che lo nuovo peregrin' d' amore
Punge, se ode Squilla di lontano,
Che paja 'l giorno pianger che si muore.»

DANTE's *Purgatory*, Canto viii.

This last line is the first of Gray's Elegy, taken by him without acknowledgment.

Note 7. Stanza cix.

Some hands unseen strew'd flowers upon his tomb.

See Suetonius for this fact.

CANTO IV.

Note 1. Stanza xii.

« Whom the gods love die young,» was said of yore.

See Herodotus.

Note 2. Stanza lix.

A vein had burst.

This is no very uncommon effect of the violence of conflicting and different passions. The Doge Francis Foscari, on his deposition, in 1457, hearing the bell of St Mark announce the election of his successor, « mourut subitement d'une hémorrhagie causée par une veine qui s'éclata dans sa poitrine.» (see Sismondi and Daru, vols. i. and ii.) at the age of eighty years, when « *who would have thought the old man had so much blood in him?*» Before I was sixteen years of age, I was witness to a melancholy instance of the same effect of mixed passions upon a young person; who, however, did not die in consequence, at that time, but fell a victim some years afterwards to a seizure of the same kind, arising from causes intimately connected with agitation of mind.

Note 3. Stanza lxxx.

But sold by the impresario at no high rate.

This is a fact. A few years ago a man engaged a company for some foreign theatre; embarked them at an Italian port, and carrying them to Algiers, sold them all. One of the women, returned from her captivity, I heard sing, by a strange coincidence, in Rossini's opera of « L'Italiana in Algieri,» at Venice, in the beginning of 1817.

Note 4. Stanza lxxxvi.

« From all the Pope makes yearly 't would perplex
To find three perfect pipes of the *third* sex.»

It is strange that it should be the Pope and the Sultan who are the chief encouragers of this branch of trade—women being prohibited as singers at St Peter's, and not deemed trust-worthy as guardians of the haram.

Note 5. Stanza ciii.

While weeds and ordure rankle round the base.

The pillar which records the battle of Ravenna is about two miles from the city, on the opposite side of the river to the road towards Forli. Gaston de Foix, who gained the battle, was killed in it; there fell on both sides twenty thousand men. The present state of the pillar and its site is described in the text.

CANTO V.

Note 1. Stanza iii.

The ocean stream.

This expression of Homer has been much criticised. It hardly answers to our Atlantic ideas of the ocean, but is sufficiently applicable to the Hellespont, and the Bosphorus, with the Ægean intersected with islands.

Note 2. Stanza v.

« The Giant's Grave.»

« The Giant's Grave» is a height on the Adriatic shore of the Bosphorus, much frequented by holiday parties: like Harrow and Highgate.

Note 3. Stanza xxxiii.

And running out as fast as I was able.

The assassination alluded to took place on the eighth of December, 1820, in the streets of R——, not a hundred paces from the residence of the writer. The circumstances were as described.

Note 4. Stanza xxxiv.

Kill'd by five bullets from an old gun-barrel.

There was found close by him an old gun-barrel, sawn half off: it had just been discharged, and was still warm.

Note 5. Stanza liii.

Prepared for supper with a glass of rum.

In Turkey nothing is more common than for the Mussulmans to take several glasses of strong spirits by way of appetizer. I have seen them take as many as six of raki before dinner, and swear that they dined the better for it; I tried the experiment, but was like the Scotchman, who having heard that the birds called kittiewiaks were admirable whets, ate six of them, and complained that « *he was no hungrier than when he began* »

Note 6. Stanza lv.

Splendid but silent, save in one, where, dropping,
A marble fountain echoes.

A common furniture.—I recollect being received by

Ali Pacha, in a room containing a marble basin and fountain, etc. etc. etc.

Note 7. Stanza lxxxvii.

The gate so splendid was in all its *features*.

Features of a *gate*—a ministerial metaphor; «the *feature* upon which this question *hinges*.»—See the «Fudge Family,» or hear Castlereagh.

Note 8. Stanza cvi.

Though on more *thorough-bred* or fairer fingers.

There is perhaps nothing more distinctive of birth than the hand: it is almost the only sign of blood which aristocracy can generate.

Note 9. Stanza cxlvii.

Save Solyman, the glory of their line.

It may not be unworthy of remark, that Bacon, in his essay on «Empire,» hints that *Solyman* was the *last* of his line; on what authority, I know not. These are his words: «The destruction of Mustapha was so fatal to Solyman's line, as the succession of the Turks from Solyman, until this day, is suspected to be untrue, and of strange blood; for that Solymus the Second was thought to be supposititious.» But Bacon, in his historical authorities, is often inaccurate. I could give half a dozen instances from his apophthegms only.

Being in the humour of criticism, I shall proceed, after having ventured upon the slips of Bacon, to touch on one or two as trifling in the edition of the British Poets, by the justly-celebrated Campbell.—But I do this in good will, and trust it will be so taken.—If any thing could add to my opinion of the talents and true feeling of that gentleman, it would be his classical, honest, and triumphant defence of Pope, against the vulgar cant of the day, and its existing Grub-street.

The inadvertencies to which I allude are,—

Firstly, in speaking of *Anstey*, whom he accuses of having taken «his leading characters from *Smollett*.» Anstey's Bath Guide was published in 1766. Smollett's Humphry Clinker, (the only work of Smollett's from which Tabitha, etc. etc. *could* have been taken) was written during *Smollett's last residence* at Leghorn, in 1770.—«*Argal*,» if there has been any borrowing, Anstey must be the creditor, and not the debtor. I refer Mr Campbell to his *own* data in his lives of *Smollett* and *Anstey*.

Secondly, Mr Campbell says in the life of Cowper (note to page 358, vol. 7), that «he knows not to whom Cowper alludes in these lines:

«Nor he who, for the bane of thousands born,
Built *God a church*, and laugh'd his word to scorn.»

The Calvinist meant Voltaire, and the church of Ferney, with its inscription, «Deo erexit Voltaire.»

Thirdly, in the life of Burns, Mr C. quotes Shakspeare thus,—

«To gild refined gold, to paint *the rose*,
Or add fresh perfume *to* the violet.»

This version by no means improves the original, which is as follows:

«To gild refined gold, to paint the *lily*,
To throw a perfume on the violet,» etc.
KING JOHN.

A great poet quoting another should be correct; he should also be accurate when he accuses a Parnassian brother of that dangerous charge «borrowing:» a poet had better borrow any thing (excepting money) than the thoughts of another—they are always sure to be reclaimed; but it is very hard, having been the *lender*, to be denounced as the debtor, as is the case of Anstey versus Smollett.

As there is «honour amongst thieves,» let there be some amongst poets, and give each his due,—none can afford to give it more than Mr Campbell himself, who, with a high reputation for originality, and a fame which cannot be shaken, is the only poet of the times (except Rogers) who can be reproached (and *in him* it is indeed a reproach) with having written *too little*.

CANTO VI.

Stanza lxxv.

A «wood obscure,» like that where Dante found.

«Nel mezzo del Cammin' di nostra vita
Mi ritrovai per una Selva oscura,» etc. etc. etc.

CANTO VII.

Stanza li.

Was teaching his recruits to use the bayonet.

Fact: Souvaroff did this in person.

CANTO VIII.

Note 1. Stanza viii.

All sounds it pierceth, «Allah! Allah! Hu!»

«Allah! Hu!» is properly the war-cry of the Mussulmans, and they dwell long on the last syllable, which gives it a very wild and peculiar effect.

Note 2. Stanza ix.

«Carnage» (so Wordsworth tells you) is God's daughter.

«But *thy* most dreaded instrument
In working out a pure intent,
Is man array'd for mutual slaughter;
Yea, *Carnage is thy daughter!*»
WORDSWORTH'S Thanksgiving Ode.

To wit, the deity's. This is perhaps as pretty a pedigree for murder, as ever was found out by Garter-King-at-arms.—What would have been said had any free-spoken people discovered such a lineage?

Note 3. Stanza xviii.

Was printed *Grove*, although his name was Grose.

A fact; see the Waterloo Gazettes. I recollect remarking at the time to a friend:—«*There* is *fame!* a man is killed, his name is Grose, and they print it Grove.» I was at college with the deceased, who was a very amiable and clever man, and his society in great request for his wit, gaiety, and «chansons à boire.»

Note 4. Stanza xxiii.

As any other notion, and not national.

See Major Vallency and Sir Lawrence Parsons.

Note 5. Stanza xxv.

'Tis pity « that such meanings should pave hell.»

The Portuguese proverb says that « Hell is paved with good intentions.»

Note 6. Stanza xxxiii.

By thy humane discovery, Friar Bacon!

Gunpowder is said to have been discovered by this friar.

Note 7. Stanza xlvii.

Which scarcely rose much higher than grass blades.

They were but two feet high above the level.

Note 8. Stanza xcvii.

That you and I will win St George's collar.

The Russian military order.

Note 9. Stanza cxxxiii.

Powers
Eternal! such names mingled!) « Ismail's oure!»

In the original Russian—

« Slava bogu! slava vam!
Krepost Vzala, y ia tam.»

A kind of couplet; for he was a poet.

CANTO IX.

Note 1. Stanza i.

Humanity would rise, and thunder « Nay!»

Query, *Ney*?—PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Note 2. Stanza vi.

And send the sentinel before your gate
A slice or two from your luxurious meals.

« I at this time got a post, being for fatigue, with four others.—We were sent to break biscuit, and make a mess for Lord Wellington's hounds. I was very hungry, and thought it a good job at the time, as we got our own fill while we broke the biscuit,—a thing I had not got for some days. When thus engaged, the Prodigal Son was never once out of my mind; and I sighed, as I fed the dogs, over my humble situation and my ruined hopes.»—*Journal of a Soldier of the 71st Regt. during the war in Spain.*

Note 3. Stanza xxxiii.

Because he could no more digest his dinner.

He was killed in a conspiracy, after his temper had been exasperated, by his extreme costivity, to a degree of insanity.

Note 4. Stanza xlvii.

And had just buried the fair-faced Lanskoi

He was the « grande passion» of the grande Catherine.—See her Lives, under the head of « Lanskoi.»

Note 5. Stanza xlix.

Bid Ireland's Londonderry's Marquess show
His parts of speech

This was written long before the suicide of that person.

Note 6. Stanza lxiii.

Your « fortune» was in a fair way « to swell
A man,» as Giles says.

« His fortune swells him, it is rank, he 's married.»—Sir Giles Overreach; MASSINGER.—See « *A New Way to Pay Old Debts.*»

CANTO X.

Note 1. Stanza xiii.

Would scarcely join again the « reformadoes.»

« Reformers,» or rather « Reformed.» The Baron Bradwardine, in Waverley, is authority for the word.

Note 2. Stanza xv.

The endless soot bestows a tint far deeper
Than can be hid by altering his shirt.

Query, *suit*?—PRINTER'S DEVIL.

Note 3. Stanza xviii.

Balgounie's Brig's *black wall*.

The brig of Don, near the « auld toun» of Aberdeen, with its one arch and its black deep salmon stream below, is in my memory as yesterday. I still remember, though perhaps I may misquote, the awful proverb which made me pause to cross it, and yet lean over it with a childish delight, being an only son, at least by the mother's side. The saying as recollected by me was this—but I have never heard or seen it since I was nine years of age;—

« Brig of Balgounie, *black's* your *wa'*;
Wi' a wife's *ae* son and a mear's *ae foal*,
Doun ye shall fa'!»

Note 4. Stanza xxxiv.

Oh, for a *forty-parson power* to chaunt
Thy praise, Hypocrisy!

A metaphor taken from the « forty-horse power» of a steam-engine. That mad wag, the Reverend S. S., sitting by a brother-clergyman at dinner, observed afterwards that his dull neighbour had a « *twelve-parson power*» of conversation.

Note 5. Stanza xxxvi.

To strip the Saxons of their *hydes*, like tanners.

« Hyde.»—I believe a hyde of land to be a legitimate word, and as such subject to the tax of a quibble.

Note 6. Stanza xlix.

Was given to her favourite, and now *bore his*.

The Empress went to the Crimea, accompanied by the Emperor Joseph, in the year—I forget which.

Note 7. Stanza lviii.

Which gave her dukes the graceless name of « Biron.»

In the Empress Anne's time, Biren her favourite assumed the name and arms of the « Birons» of France, which families are yet extant with that of England. There are still the daughters of Courland of that name; one of them I remember seeing in England in the blessed year of the Allies—the Duchess of S.—to whom the English Duchess of S———t presented me as a namesake.

Note 8. Stanza lxii.

Eleven thousand maidenheads of bone,
The greatest number flesh hath ever known.

St Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins were still extant in 1816, and may be so yet as much as ever.

Note 9. Stanza lxxxi.

Who butcher'd half the earth, and bullied t'other.

India. America.

CANTO XI.

Note 1. Stanza xix.

Who on a lark, with black-eyed Sal (his blowing),
So prime, so swell, so nutty, and so knowing?

The advance of science and of language has rendered it unnecessary to translate the above good and true English, spoken in its original purity by the select mobility and their patrons. The following is a stanza of a song which was very popular, at least in my early days:—

« On the high t[illegible]-spice flash the muzzle,
In spite of co[illegible] gallows old scout;
If you at the spelken can't hustle,
You'll be hobbled in making a Clout.

Then your blowing will wax gallows haughty,
When she hears of your scaly mistake,
She'll surely turn snitch for the forty,
That her Jack may be regular weight.»

If there be any gem'man so ignorant as to require a traduction, I refer him to my old friend and corporeal pastor and master, John Jackson, Esq., Professor of pugilism; who I trust still retains the strength and symmetry of his model of a form, together with his good humour, and athletic as well as mental accomplishments.

Note 2. Stanza xxix.

St James's Palace and St James's « Hells.»

«Hells,» gaming-houses. What their number may now be in this life, I know not. Before I was of age I knew them pretty accurately, both «gold» and «silver.» I was once nearly called out by an acquaintance, because when he asked me where I thought that his soul would be found hereafter, I answered, «In Silver Hell.»

Note 3. Stanza xliii.

And therefore even I wont anent
This subject quote.

« Anent» was a Scotch phrase, meaning «concerning,» —«with regard to.» It has been made English by the Scotch Novels; and, as the Frenchman said—«If it *be not, ought to be* English.»

Note 4. Stanza xlix.

The milliners who furnish « drapery misses.»

« Drapery misses»—This term is probably any thing now but a *mystery*. It was however almost so to me when I first returned from the East in 1811—1812. It means a pretty, a highborn, a fashionable young female, well instructed by her friends, and furnished by her milliner with a wardrobe upon credit, to be repaid, when *married*, by the *husband*. The riddle was first read to me by a young and pretty heiress, on my praising the « drapery» of an «*untouchered*» but «pretty virginities» (like Mrs Anne Page) of the *then* day, which has now been some years yesterday:—she assured me that the thing was common in London; and as her own thousands, and blooming looks, and rich simplicity of array, put any suspicion in her own case out of the question, I confess I gave some credit to the allegation. If necessary, authorities might be cited, in which case I could quote both « drapery» and the wearers. Let us hope, however, that it is now obsolete.

Note 5. Stanza lx.

'T is strange the mind, that very fiery particle,
Should let itself be snuff'd out by an article.

« Divinæ particulam auræ.»

CANTO XII.

Note 1. Stanza xix.

Gives, with Greek truth, the good old Greek the lie.

See MITFORD'S *Greece*. « Græcia *Verax*.» His great pleasure consists in praising tyrants, abusing Plutarch, spelling oddly, and writing quaintly; and what is strange after all, *his* is the best modern history of Greece in any language, and he is perhaps the best of all modern historians whatsoever. Having named his sins, it is but fair to state his virtues—learning, labour, research, wrath, and partiality. I call the latter virtues in a writer, because they make him write in earnest.

Note 2. Stanza xxxvii.

A hazy widower turn'd of forty 's sure.

This line may puzzle the commentators more than the present generation.

Note 3. Stanza lxxiii.

Like Russians rushing from hot baths to snows.

The Russians, as is well known, run out from their hot baths to plunge into the Neva; a pleasant practical antithesis, which it seems does them no harm.

Note 4. Stanza lxxxii.

The world to gaze upon those northern lights.

For a description and print of this inhabitant of the polar region and native country of the aurora borealis, see PARRY'S *Voyage in search of a North-West Passage*.

Note 5. Stanza lxxxvi.

As Philip's son proposed to do with Athos.

A sculptor projected to hew Mount Athos into a statue of Alexander, with a city in one hand, and, I believe, a river in his pocket, with various other similar devices. But Alexander 's gone, and Athos remains, I trust, ere long to look over a nation of freemen.

CANTO XIII.

Note 1. Stanza vii.

Right honestly, « he liked an honest hater.»

« Sir, I like a good hater.»—See the *Life of Dr Johnson*, etc.

Note 2. Stanza xxvi.

Also there bin another pious reason.

«With every thing that pretty *bin*,
My lady sweet arise.»—SHAKSPEARE.

Note 3. Stanza xlv.

They and their bills, «Arcadians both,» are left.

«Arcades ambo.»

Note 4. Stanza lxxi.

Or wilder group of savage Salvatore's.

Salvator Rosa.

Note 5. Stanza lxxii.

His bell-mouth'd goblet makes me feel quite Danish.

If I err not, «Your Dane» is one of Iago's Catalogue of Nations «exquisite in their drinking.»

Note 6. Stanza lxxviii.

Even Nimrod's self might leave the plains of Dura.

In Assyria.

Note 7. Stanza xcvi.

«That Scriptures out of church are blasphemies.»

«Mrs Adams answered Mr Adams, that it was blasphemous to talk of Scripture out of church.» This dogma was broached to her husband—the best Christian in any book. See *Joseph Andrews,* in the latter chapters.

Note 8. Stanza cvi.

The quaint, old, cruel coxcomb, in his gullet,
Should have a book, and a small trout to pull it.

It would have taught him humanity at least. This sentimental savage, whom it is a mode to quote (amongst the novelists) to show their sympathy for innocent sports and old songs, teaches how to sew up frogs, and break their legs by way of experiment, in addition to the art of angling, the cruellest, the coldest, and the stupidest of pretended sports. They may talk about the beauties of nature, but the angler merely thinks of his dish of fish; he has no leisure to take his eyes from off the streams, and a single *bite* is worth to him more than all the scenery around. Besides, some fish bite best on a rainy day. The whale, the shark, and the tunny fishery have somewhat of noble and perilous in them; even net-fishing, trawling, etc. are more humane and useful—but angling!—No angler can be a good man.

«One of the best men I ever knew—as humane, delicate-minded, generous, and excellent a creature as any in the world—was an angler: true, he angled with painted flies, and would have been incapable of the extravagances of I. Walton.»

The above addition was made by a friend in reading over the MS.—«Audi alteram partem»—I leave it to counterbalance my own observation.

CANTO XIV.

Note 1. Stanza xxxiii.

And never *craned*, and made but few «faux pas.»

Craning.—«To *crane*» is, or was, an expression used to denote a gentleman's stretching out his neck over a hedge, «to look before he leaped:»—a pause in his «vaulting ambition,» which in the field doth occasion some delay and execration in those who may be immediately behind the equestrian sceptic. «Sir, if you don't choose to take the leap, let me»—was a phrase which generally sent the aspirant on again; and to good purpose: for though «the horse and rider» might fall, they made a gap, through which, and over him and his steed, the field might follow.

Note 2. Stanza xlviii.

Go to the coffee-house, and take another.

In SWIFT'S or HORACE WALPOLE'S *Letters* I think it is mentioned that somebody regretting the loss of a friend, was answered by an universal Pylades: «When I lose one, I go to the Saint James's Coffee-house, and take another.»

I recollect having heard an anecdote of the same kind. Sir W. D. was a great gamester. Coming in one day to the club of which he was a member, he was observed to look melancholy. «What is the matter, Sir William?» cried Hare, of facetious memory. «Ah!» replied Sir W. «I have just *lost* poor Lady D.» «*Lost!* What *at*—*Quinze* or *Hazard*?» was the consolatory rejoinder of the querist.

Note 3. Stanza lix.

And I refer you to wise Oxenstiern.

The famous Chancellor Oxenstiern said to his son, on the latter expressing his surprise upon the great effects arising from petty causes in the presumed mystery of politics: «You see by this, my son, with how little wisdom the kingdoms of the world are governed.»

CANTO XV.

Note 1. Stanza xviii.

And thou, Diviner still,
Whose lot it is by man to be mistaken.

As it is necessary in these times to avoid ambiguity, I say, that I mean, by «Diviner still,» CHRIST. If ever God was Man—or Man God—he was *both*. I never arraigned his creed, but the use—or abuse—made of it. Mr Canning one day quoted Christianity to sanction Negro Slavery, and Mr Wilberforce had little to say in reply. And was Christ crucified, that black men might be scourged? If so, he had better been born a Mulatto, to give both colours an equal chance of freedom, or at least salvation.

Note 2. Stanza xxxv.

When Rapp the Harmonist remburgoed marriage
In his harmonious settlement.

This extraordinary and flourishing German colony in America does not entirely exclude matrimony, as the «Shakers» do; but lays such restrictions upon it as prevent more than a certain quantum of births within a certain number of years; which births (as Mr Hulme observes, generally arrive «in a little flock like those of a farmer's lambs, all within the same month perhaps.» These Harmonists (so called from the name of their settlement) are represented as a remarkably flourishing, pious, and quiet people. See the various recent writers on America.

Note 3. Stanza xxxviii.

Nor canvass what «so eminent a hand» meant.

Jacob Tonson, according to Mr Pope, was accustomed to call his writers «able pens»—«persons of honour,» and especially «eminent hands.» Vide Correspondence, etc. etc.

Note 4. Stanza lxvi.

While great Lucullus' (robe triomphale) muffles—
(There's Fame)—young Partridge fillets, deck'd with truffles.

A dish «à la Lucullus.» This hero, who conquered the East, has left his more extended celebrity to the transplantation of cherries (which he first brought into Europe) and the nomenclature of some very good dishes; —and I am not sure that (barring indigestion) he has not done more service to mankind by his cookery than by his conquests. A cherry-tree may weigh against a bloody laurel; besides, he has contrived to earn celebrity from both.

Note 5. Stanza lxviii.

But even sans «confitures,» it no less true is,
There 's pretty picking in those «petits puits.»

«Petits puits d'amour garnis de confitures,» a classical and well-known dish for part of the flank of a second course.

Note 6. Stanza lxxxvi.

For that with me 's a «sine qua.»

Subauditur «*Non*,» omitted for the sake of euphony.

Note 7. Stanza xcvi.

In short upon that subject I've some qualms very
Like those of the philosopher of Malmsbury.

Hobbes; who, doubting of his own soul, paid that compliment to the souls of other people as to decline their visits, of which he had some apprehension.

CANTO XVI.

Note 1. Stanza x.

If from a shell-fish or from cochineal.

The composition of the old Tyrian purple, whether from a shell-fish, or from cochineal, or from kermes, is still an article of dispute; and even its colour—some say purple, others scarlet: I say nothing.

Note 2. Stanza xliii.

For a spoil'd carpet—but the «Attic Bee»
Was much consoled by his own repartee.

I think that it *was* a *carpet* on which Diogenes trod, with—«Thus I trample on the pride of Plato!»—«With greater pride,» as the other replied. But as *carpets* are *meant* to be trodden upon, my memory probably misgives me, and it might be a robe, or tapestry, or a table-cloth, or some other expensive and uncynical piece of furniture.

Note 3. Stanza xlv.

With «Tu mi chamas'» from Portingale,
To soothe our ears, lest Italy should fail.

I remember that the mayoress of a provincial town, somewhat surfeited with a similar display from foreign parts, did rather indecorously break through the applauses of an intelligent audience—intelligent, I mean, as to music,—for the words, besides being in recondite languages (it was some years before the peace, ere all the world had travelled, and while I was a collegian)—were sorely disguised by the performers;—this mayoress, I say, broke out with, «Rot your Italianos! for my part, I loves a simple ballat!» Rossini will go a good way to bring most people to the same opinion, some day. Who would imagine that he was to be the successor of Mozart? However, I state this with diffidence, as a liege and loyal admirer of Italian music in general, and of much of Rossini's: but we may say, as the connoisseur did of painting, in the *Vicar of Wakefield*, «that the picture would be better painted if the painter had taken more pains.»

Note 4. Stanza lix.

For Gothic daring shown in English money.

«Ausu Romano, ære Veneto» is the inscription (and well inscribed in this instance) on the sea walls between the Adriatic and Venice. The walls were a republican work of the Venetians; the inscription, I believe, imperial; and inscribed by Napoleon.

Note 5. Stanza lx.

«Untying» squires «to fight against the churches.»

«Though ye *untie* the winds and bid them fight
Against the *churches*.»—*Macbeth*.

Note 6. Stanza xcvii.

They err—'t is merely what is call'd mobility.

In French «mobilité.» I am not sure that mobility is English; but it is expressive of a quality which rather belongs to other climates, though it is sometimes seen to a great extent in our own. It may be defined as an excessive susceptibility of immediate impressions—at the same time without *losing* the past; and is, though sometimes apparently useful to the possessor, a most painful and unhappy attribute.

Note 7. Stanza cii.

Draperied her form with curious felicity.

«Curiosa felicitas.»—PETRONIUS ARBITER.

Note 8. Stanza cxiv.

A noise like to wet fingers drawn on glass.

See the account of the ghost of the uncle of Prince Charles of Saxony raised by Schroepfer—«Karl—Karl—was—walt wolt mich?»

Note 9. Stanza cxx.

How odd, a single hobgoblin's non-entity
Should cause more fear than a whole host's identity!

«*Shadows* to-night
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard
Than can the *substance* of ten thousand soldiers,» etc. *etc.*

See *Richard III.*

Poems.

[Although never publicly acknowledged by Lord Byron, the following have been generally attributed to his pen: and, aware of the interest attached to his most trifling efforts, the Publishers, without vouching for their authenticity, have not hesitated to add them to this edition.]

CHILDISH RECOLLECTIONS.

"I cannot but remember such things were,
And were most dear to me."

MACBETH.

"—et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos."

VIRGIL.

When slow Disease with all her host of pains,
Chills the warm tide which flows along the veins;
When Health, affrighted, spreads her rosy wing,
And flies with every changing gale of spring;
Not to the aching frame alone confined,
Unyielding pangs assail the drooping mind.
What grisly forms, the spectre train of woe,
Bid shuddering Nature shrink beneath the blow,
With Resignation wage relentless strife,
While Hope retires appall'd, and clings to life.
Yet less the pang, when, through the tedious hour,
Remembrance sheds around her genial power,
Calls back the vanish'd days to rapture given,
When love was bliss, and beauty form'd our heaven:
Or, dear to youth, portrays each childish scene,
Those fairy bowers, where all in turn have been.
As when, through clouds that pour the summer storm,
The orb of day unveils his distant form,
Gilds with faint beams the crystal dews of rain,
And dimly twinkles o'er the watery plain;
Thus, while the future dark and cheerless gleams,
The sun of memory, glowing through my dreams,
Though sunk the radiance of his former blaze,
To scenes far distant points his paler rays,
Still rules my senses with unbounded sway
The past confounding with the present day.

Oft does my heart indulge the rising thought,
Which still recurs, unlook'd for and unsought;
My soul to Fancy's fond suggestion yields,
And roams romantic o'er her airy fields;
Scenes of my youth developed crowd to view,
To which I long have paid a last adieu!

LORD BYRON TO HIS LADY,

ON THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR MARRIAGE.

How strangely time his course has run,
Since first I pair'd with you;
Six years ago we ride but ONE,
Now five have made us TWO.

ODE

TO

THE ISLAND OF ST HELENA.

Peace to thee, isle of the ocean!
Hail to thy breezes and billows!
Where, rolling its tides in perpetual devotion,
The white wave its plumy surf pillows!
Rich shall the chaplet be history shall weave thee!
Whose undying verdure shall bloom on thy brow,
When nations that now in obscurity leave thee,
To the wand of oblivion alternately bow!
Unchanged in thy glory—unstain'd in thy fame—
The homage of ages shall hallow thy name!

Hail to the chief who reposes
On thee the rich weight of his glory!
When, fill'd to its limit, life's chronicle closes,
His deeds shall be sacred in story!
His prowess shall rank with the first of all ages,
And monarchs hereafter shall bow to his worth—
The songs of the poets—the lessons of sages—
Shall hold him the wonder and grace of the earth.
The meteors of history before thee shall fall—
Eclipsed by thy splendour—thou meteor of Gaul!

Hygeian breezes shall fan thee—
Island of glory resplendent!
Pilgrims from nations far distant shall man thee—
Tribes, as thy waves independent!
On thy far gleaming strand the wanderer shall stay him
To snatch a brief glance at a spot so renown'd—
Each turf, and each stone, and each cliff, shall delay him
Where the step of thy exile hath hallow'd thy ground.
From him shalt thou borrow a lustre divine;
The wane of his sun was the rising of thine!

Whose were the hands that enslaved him?
Hands which had weakly withstood him—
Nations, which while they had oftentimes braved him,
Never till now had subdued him!
Monarchs—who oft to his clemency stooping,
Received back their crowns from the plunder of war—
The vanquisher vanquish'd—the eagle now drooping—
Would quench with their sternness the ray of his star!
But cloth'd in new splendour thy glory appears—
And rules the ascendant—the planet of years!

Pure be the heath of thy mountains!
Rich be the green of thy pastures!

Limpid and lasting the streams of thy fountains!
Thine annals unstain'd by disasters!
Supreme in the ocean a rich altar swelling
Whose shrine shall be hail'd by the prayers of mankind—
Thy rock beach the rage of the tempest repelling—
The wide-wasting contest of wave and of wind—
Aloft on thy battlements long be unfurl'd
The eagle that decks thee—the pride of the world!

Fade shall the lily, now blooming—
Where is the hand which can nurse it?
Nations who rear'd it shall watch its consuming—
Untimely mildews shall curse it.
Then shall the violet that blooms in the vallies
Impart to the gale its reviving perfume—
Then, when the spirit of liberty rallies
To chant forth its anthems on tyranny's tomb,
Wide Europe shall fear lest thy star should break forth,
Eclipsing the pestilent orbs of the north!

TO THE

LILY OF FRANCE.

Ere thou scatterest thy leaf to the wind,
False emblem of innocence, stay—
And yield as thou fadest, for the use of mankind,
The lesson that marks thy decay.

Thou wert fair as the beam of the morn,
And rich as the pride of the mine:
Thy charms are all faded, and hatred and scorn,
The curses of freedom, are thine.

Thou wert gay in the smiles of the world,
Thy shadow protection and power;
But now thy bright blossom is shrivell'd and curl'd—
The grace of thy country no more.

For corruption hath fed on thy leaf,
And bigotry weaken'd thy stem;
Now those who have fear'd thee shall smile at thy grief,
And those who adored thee condemn.

The valley that gave thee thy birth
Shall weep for the hope of its soil;
The legions, that fought for thy beauty and worth,
Shall hasten to share in thy spoil.

As a by-word, thy blossom shall be
A mock and a jest among men;
The proverb of slaves, and the sneer of the free,
In city, and mountain, and glen.

Oh! 't was Tyranny's pestilent gale
That scatter'd thy buds on the ground;
That threw the blood-stain on the virgin-white veil,
And pierced thee with many a wound!

Then the puny leaf shook to the wind,
Thy stem gave its strength to the blast;
Thy full-bursting blossom its promise resign'd,
And fell to the storm as it pass'd.

For no patriot vigour was there,
No arm to support the weak flower;
Destruction pursued its dark herald—Despair,
And wither'd its grace in an hour.

Yet there were who pretended to grieve,
There were who pretended to save;
Mere shallow empyrics who came to deceive—
To revel and sport on its grave.

Oh! thou land of the lily! in vain
Thou strugglest to raise its pale head!
The faded bud never shall blossom again—
The violet will bloom in its stead!

As thou scatterest thy leaf to the wind—
False emblem of innocence, stay—
And yield, as thou fadest, for the use of mankind,
This lesson to mark thy decay!

MADAME LAVALETTE.

Let Edinburgh critics o'erwhelm with their praises
Their Madame de Stael, and their famed L'Epinasse:
Like a meteor at best proud philosophy blazes,
And the fame of a wit is as brittle as glass:
But cheering 's the beam, and unfading the splendour
Of thy torch, wedded love! and it never has yet
Shone with lustre more holy, more pure, or more tender,
Than it sheds on the name of the fair LAVALETTE.

Then fill high the wine cup, e'en virtue shall bless it,
And hallow the goblet which foams to her name;
The warm lip of beauty shall piously press it,
And Hymen shall honour the pledge to her fame:
To the health of the woman, who freedom and life too
Has risk'd for her husband, we 'll pay the just debt;
And hail with applauses the heroine and wife too,
The constant, the noble, the fair LAVALETTE.

Her foes have awarded, in impotent malice,
To their captive a doom which all Europe abhors,
And turns from the stairs of the priest-haunted palace,
While those who replaced them there blush for their cause.
But in ages to come, when the blood-tarnish'd glory
Of dukes, and of marshals, in darkness hath set,
Hearts shall throb, eyes shall glisten, at reading the story
Of the fond self-devotion of fair LAVALETTE.

ADIEU TO MALTA.

ADIEU the joys of La Valette:
Adieu sirocco, sun, and sweat;
Adieu thou palace, rarely enter'd;
Adieu ye mansions, where I 've ventured;
Adieu ye cursed streets of stairs—
How surely he who mounts them swears;
Adieu ye merchants, often failing;
Adieu thou mob for ever railing:
Adieu ye packets without letters;
Adieu ye fools, who ape your betters;

Adieu thou damn'dest quarantine,
That gave me fever and the spleen;
Adieu that stage which makes us yawn, sirs;
Adieu his excellency's dancers;
Adieu to Peter, whom no fault's in,
But could not teach a colonel waltzing;
Adieu ye females, fraught with graces;
Adieu red coats, and redder faces;
Adieu the supercilious air
Of all that strut *en militaire:*
I go—but God knows where or why—
To smoky towns and cloudy sky;
To things, the honest truth to say,
As bad, but in a different way:—
Farewell to these, but not adieu
Triumphant sons of truest blue,
While either Adriatic shore,
And fallen chiefs, and fleets no more,
And nightly smiles, and daily dinners,
Proclaim you war and women's winners.

Pardon my muse, who apt to prate is,
And take my rhyme because 't is gratis:
And now I 've got to Mrs Fraser,
Perhaps you think I mean to praise her;
And were I vain enough to think
My praise was worth this drop of ink,
A line or two were no hard matter,
As here, indeed, I need not flatter:
But she must be content to shine
In better praises than in mine:
With lively air and open heart,
And fashion's ease without its art,
Her hours can gaily glide along,
Nor ask the aid of idle song.

And now, Oh, Malta! since thou 'st got us,
Thou little military hot-house!
I 'll not offend with words uncivil,
And wish thee rudely at the devil—
But only stare from out my casement,
And ask—for what is such a place meant:
Then, in my solitary nook,
Return to scribbling, or a book;
Or take my physic, while I 'm able,
Two spoonsful, hourly, by this label;
Prefer my nightcap to my beaver,
And bless my stars I've got a fever.

ENIGMA.

'T was whisper'd in heaven, 't was mutter'd in hell,
And echo caught faintly the sound as it fell:
On the confines of earth 't was permitted to rest,
And the depths of the ocean its presence confest.
'T will be found in the sphere when 't is riven asunder,
Be seen in the light'ning, and heard in the thunder.
'T was allotted to man with his earliest breath,
Attends at his birth, and awaits him in death;
It presides o'er his happiness, honour, and health,
Is the prop of his house and the end of his wealth:
Without it the soldier, the seaman, may roam,
But woe to the wretch who expels it from home.
In the whispers of conscience its voice will be found,
Nor e'en in the whirlwind of passion be drown'd:
'T will not soften the heart; and though deaf to the ear,
'T will make it acutely and instantly hear.
But in shade let it rest, like a delicate flow'r—
Oh! breathe on it softly—it dies in an hour.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE WHALE.

Io Pæan! Io! sing
To the finny people's king—
Not a mightier whale than this
In the vast Atlantic is;
Not a fatter fish than he
Flounders round the Polar sea;
See his blubber—at his gills
What a world of drink he swills!
From his trunk as from a spout
Which next moment he pours out.
Such his person: next declare
Muse! who his companions are:
Every fish of generous kind
Scuds aside or slinks behind,
But about his person keep
All the monsters of the deep;
Mermaids with their tales, and singing,
His delighted fancy stinging;—
Crooked dolphins, they surround him;
Dog-like seals, they fawn around him;
Following hard, the progress mark
Of the intolerant salt sea shark—
For his solace and relief
Flat fish are his courtiers chief;—
Last, and lowest of his train,
Ink fish, libellers of the main,
Their black liquor shed in spite—
(Such on earth the things that write).
In his stomach, some do say,
No good thing can ever stay;
Had it been the fortune of it
To have swallow'd the old prophet,
Three days there he 'd not have dwell'd,
But in one have been expell'd.
Hapless mariners are they
Who beguiled, as seamen say,
Deeming it some rock or island,
Footing sure, safe spot and dry land,
Anchor in his scaly rind;
Soon the difference they find,
Sudden, plump, he sinks beneath them—
Does to ruthless waves bequeath them:
Name or title, what has he?
Is he regent of the sea?
From the difficulty free us,
Buffon, Banks, or sage Linnæus?
With his wondrous attributes
Say—what appellation suits?
By his bulk, and by his size,
By his oily qualities,
This, or else my eye-sight fails,
This should be the—*Prince of Whales!*

TO JESSY.

[*The following Stanzas were addressed by Lord Byron to his Lady, a few months before their separation.*]

There is a mystic thread of life
So dearly wreathed with mine alone,
That destiny's relentless knife
At once must sever *both* or *none.*

There is a *form* on which these eyes
Have often gazed with fond delight—
By day that form their joy supplies,
And dreams restore it through the night.

There is a *voice* whose tones inspire
Such thrills of rapture through my breast—
I would not hear a seraph choir
Unless that voice could join the rest.

There is a *face* whose blushes tell
Affection's tale upon the cheek—
But pallid at one fond farewell,
Proclaims more love than words can speak.

There is a *lip*, which mine hath prest,
And none had ever press'd before,
It vow'd to make me sweetly blest,
And mine—mine only, prest it more.

There is a *bosom*—all my own—
Hath pillow'd oft this aching head;
A *mouth* which smiles on me alone,
An *eye* whose tears with mine are shed.

There are two *hearts* whose movements thrill
In unison so closely sweet;
That, pulse to pulse responsive still,
They both must heave—or cease to beat.

There are two *souls* whose equal flow,
In gentle streams so calmly run,
That when they part—*they part!*—ah, no!
They cannot part—*those souls are one.*

TO MY DAUGHTER,

ON THE MORNING OF HER BIRTH.

Hail—to this teeming stage of strife!
Hail, lovely miniature of life!
Pilgrim of many cares untold!
Lamb of the world's extended fold!
Fountain of hopes and doubts and fears!
Sweet promise of ecstatic years!
How could I fainly bend the knee,
And turn idolater to thee!

'T is nature's worship—felt—confess'd,
Far as the life which warms the breast:—
The sturdy savage, 'midst his clan,
The rudest portraiture of man,
In trackless woods and boundless plains,
Where everlasting wildness reigns,
Owns the still throb—the secret start—
The hidden impulse of the heart.

Dear babe! ere yet upon thy years
The soil of human vice appears—
Ere Passion hath disturb'd thy cheek,
And prompted what thou darest not speak—
Ere that pale lip is blanch'd with Care,
Or from those eyes shoot fierce Despair,
Would I could wake thine untuned ear,
And gust it with a father's prayer.

But little reck'st thou, oh my child!
Of travel on life's thorny wild!
Of all the dangers—all the woes
Each tottering footstep which inclose—
Ah, little reck'st thou of the scene
So darkly wrought that spreads between
The little all we here can find,
And the dark mystic sphere behind!

Little reck'st thou, my earliest born—
Of clouds which gather round thy morn—
Of arts to lure thy soul astray—
Of snares that intersect thy way—
Of secret foes—of friends untrue—
Of fiends who stab the hearts they woo:
Little thou reck'st of this sad store—
Would thou might'st never reck them more!

But thou wilt burst this transient sleep,
And thou wilt wake, my babe, to weep—
The tenant of a frail abode,
Thy tears must flow, as mine have flow'd;
Beguiled by follies, every day,
Sorrow must wash the faults away;
And thou may'st wake, perchance, to prove
The pang of unrequited love.

Unconscious babe! though on that brow
No half-fledged misery nestles now—
Scarce round those placid lips a smile
Maternal fondness shall beguile,
Ere the moist footsteps of a tear
Shall plant their dewy traces there,
And prematurely pave the way
For sorrows of a riper day.

Oh! could a father's prayer repel
The eye's sad grief, the bosom's swell!
Or could a father hope to bear
A darling child's allotted care,
Then thou, my babe, shouldst slumber still,
Exempted from all human ill,
A parent's love thy peace should free,
And ask its wounds again for thee.

Sleep on, my child! the slumber brief
Too soon shall melt away to grief;
Too soon the dawn of woe shall break,
And briny rills bedew that cheek:
Too soon shall sadness quench those eyes—
That breast be agonized with sighs—
And anguish o'er the beams of noon
Lead clouds of care—ah! much too soon!

Soon wilt thou reck of cares unknown,
Of wants and sorrows all their own—
Of many a pang, and many a woe,
That thy dear sex alone can know—
Of many an ill—untold, unsung—
That will not, may not find a tongue—
But, kept conceal'd, without control,
Spread the fell cancers of the soul!

Yet be thy lot, my babe, more blest!
May joy still animate thy breast!
Still, midst thy least propitious days,
Shedding its rich inspiring rays!

A father's heart shall daily bear
Thy name upon its secret prayer,
And as he seeks his last repose,
Thine image ease life's parting throes.

Then, hail, sweet miniature of life!
Hail to this teeming stage of strife!
Pilgrim of many cares untold!
Lamb of the world's extended fold!
Fountain of hopes and doubts and fears!
Sweet promise of ecstatic years!
How could I fainly bend the knee,
And turn idolater to thee!

TO LADY CAROLINE LAMB.

And say'st thou that I have not felt,
Whilst thou wert thus estranged from me?
Nor know'st how dearly I have dwelt
On one unbroken dream of thee?
But love like ours must never be,
And I will learn to prize thee less;
As thou hast fled, so let me flee,
And change the heart thou mayst not bless.

They 'll tell thee, Clara! I have seem'd,
Of late, another's charms to woo,
Nor sigh'd, nor frown'd, as if I deem'd
That thou wert banish'd from my view.
Clara! this struggle—to undo
What thou hast done too well, for me—
This mask before the babbling crew—
This treachery—was truth to thee!

I have not wept while thou wert gone,
Nor worn one look of sullen woe;
But sought, in many, all that one
(Ah! need I name her?) could bestow.
It is a duty which I owe
To thine—to thee—to man—to God,
To crush, to quench, this guilty glow,
Ere yet the path of crime be trod.

But, since my breast is not so pure,
Since still the vulture tears my heart,
Let me this agony endure,
Not thee—oh! dearest as thou art!
In mercy, Clara! let us part,
And I will seek, yet know not how,
To shun, in time, the threatening dart;
Guilt must not aim at such as thou.

But thou must aid me in the task,
And nobly thus exert thy power;
Then spurn me hence—'t is all I ask—
Ere time mature a guiltier hour;
Ere wrath's impending vials shower
Remorse redoubled on my head;
Ere fires unquenchably devour
A heart, whose hope has long been dead.

Deceive no more thyself and me,
Deceive not better hearts than mine;
Ah! shouldst thou, whither wouldst thou flee,
From woe like ours—from shame like thine?
And, if there be a wrath divine,
A pang beyond this fleeting breath,
E'en now all future hope resign,
Such thoughts are guilt—such guilt is death.

THE FAREWELL.

TO A LADY.

When man expell'd from Eden's bower,
A moment linger'd near the gate,
Each scene recall'd the vanish'd hour,
And bade him curse his future fate.

But wandering on through distant climes,
He learn'd to bear its load of grief,
And gave a sigh to other times,
And found in busier scenes relief.

Thus, lady, will it be with me,
And I shall view thy charms no more;
For whilst I linger near to thee,
I sigh for all I knew before.

In flight I shall be surely wise,
Escaping from temptation's snare:
I cannot view my paradise
Without a wish to enter there.

LINES,

Addressed by Lord Byron to Mr Hobhouse on his Election for Westminster.

«Mors Janua vitæ.»

Would you get to the house through the true gate,
Much quicker than ever Whig Charley went;
Let Parliament send you to Newgate—
And Newgate will send you to—Parliament.

VERSES,

Stated to have been written by Lord Byron, in the Album of the Union Hotel, at Chamouni near Geneva.

All hail, Mont Blanc! Mont en Vert, hail!
With thee I can associate still;
And, should all other pleasures fail,
I 'll stretch me by the murmuring rill;
Or into solitude I 'll fly,
And commune with the Deity.

Far from the pride and scorn of man,
The worthless objects of their care,
The works of nature I can scan,
And sometimes bold, yet fearful, dare
Express those feelings kindly given
By the benevolence of Heaven!

Alone I come! alone I go!
Alike unnoticed and unknown!
Press'd by a weight of lasting woe,
From east to west by tempests blown;
No rest—no peace, until I fly
From time into eternity.

Yet why? Why should I thus complain?
Are not some other joys my own?
Joys which the multitude disdain,
To duller, happier souls unknown?
Yes, I will bravely dare my lot
Until I die and be forgot.

No need to add my humble name,
Ne'er mention'd yet by babbling fame;
Few will demand to whom belong
These transports of a child of song,—
One who would wish with poet's fire,
And daring hand to sweep the lyre!

TO A LADY.

And wilt thou weep when I am low?
Sweet lady! speak those words again:
Yet, if they grieve thee, say not so—
I would not give that bosom pain.

My heart is sad, my hopes are gone,
My blood runs coldly through my breast,
And when I perish, thou alone
Wilt sigh above my place of rest.

And yet methinks a gleam of peace
Doth thro' my cloud of anguish shine;
And for a while my sorrows cease,
To know thy heart hath felt for mine.

Oh, Lady! blessed be that tear,
It falls for one who cannot weep;
Such precious drops are doubly dear
To those whose eye no tear may steep.

Sweet Lady! once my heart was warm
With every feeling soft as thine,
But beauty's self hath ceased to charm
A wretch created to repine.

Yet wilt thou weep when I am low?
Sweet lady! speak those words again;
Yet if they grieve thee, say not so—
I would not give that bosom pain.

STANZAS.

I heard thy fate without a tear,
Thy loss with scarce a sigh;
And yet thou wert surpassing dear—
Too loved of all to die.
I know not what hath sear'd mine eye;
The tears refuse to start;
But every drop its lids deny
Falls dreary on my heart.

Yes—deep and heavy, one by one,
They sink, and turn to care;
As cavern'd waters wear the stone,
Yet, dropping, harden there.—
They cannot petrify more fast
Than feelings sunk remain,
Which, coldly fix'd, regard the past,
But never melt again.

LINES,

FOUND IN THE TRAVELLER'S BOOK AT CHAMOUNI.

How many number'd are, how few agreed,
In age, or clime, or character, or creed!
Here wandering genius leaves a deathless name,
And Folly writes—for others do the same.
Italian treachery, and English pride,
Dutch craft, and German dulness, side by side!
The hardy Russian hails congenial snow;
The Spaniard shivers as these breezes blow.
Knew men the objects of this varied crew,
To stare how many, and to feel how few!
Here Nature's child, ecstatic from her school;
And travelling problems, that admire by rule.
The timorous poet woos his modest muse,
And thanks his stars he 's safe from all reviews.
The pedant drags from out his motley store
A line some hundred hills have heard before.
Here critics too (for where 's the happy spot
So blest by nature as to have them not?)
Spit their vile slander o'er some simple phrase
Of foolish wonder or of honest praise;
Some pompous hint, some comment on mine host,
Some direful failure, or some empty boast.
Not blacker spleen could fill these furious men,
If Jeffrey's soul had perch'd on Gifford's pen.
Here envy, hatred, and the fool of fame,
Join'd in one act of wonder when they came:
Here beauty's worshipper in flesh or rock,
The incarnate fancy, or the breathing block,
Sees the white giant in his robe of light,
Stretch his huge form to look o'er Jura's height;
And stops, while hastening to the blest remains,
And calmer beauties of the classic plains.
And here, whom hope beguiling bids to seek
Ease for his breast, and colour for his cheek,
Still steals a moment from Ausonia's sky,
And views and wonders on his way to die.

But he, the author of these idle lines,
What passion leads him, and what tie confines?
For him what friend is true, what mistress blooms,
What joy elates him, and what grief consumes?
Impassion'd, senseless, vigorous, or old,
What matters?—bootless were his story told.
Some praise at least *one* act of sense may claim;
He wrote these verses, but he hid his name.

LINES,

FOUND IN LORD BYRON'S BIBLE.

Within this awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries.
Oh! happiest they of human race,
To whom our God has given grace
To hear, to read, to fear, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way;
But better had they ne'er been born,
Who read to doubt, or read to scorn.

THE END.